“THE AMUSEMENT WORLD”: THEATRE AS SOCIAL PRACTICE IN EIGHTEEN-NINETIES TORONTO.

by

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Abstract


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This thesis places a selection of performances that took place in Toronto’s commercial theatres during the eighteen nineties in their historical context in order to consider determinants of meaning that influenced the social practice in one Canadian city - Toronto. These performances are selected to explore a range of performance activity across the decade and include: the debut performance by Canadian violinist Nora Clench at the Academy of Music in 1889; a fund-raising amateur “entertainment” The Marriage Dramas, performed for local adolescents at the Grand Opera House in 1892; The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, an example of the touring legitimate drama, performed by veteran acting couple the Kendals in 1894; another touring performance, in this instance a popular-theatre favorite, True Irish Hearts, by Dan McCarthy at the Toronto Opera House in 1893 and a rare example of Canadian playwriting from the decade, a performance of Catherine Nina Merritt’s United Empire Loyalist history play When George the Third was King in 1897. The analysis of all performances in this dissertation considers a range of determinants of meaning that Toronto audiences may have drawn upon when viewing a given performance and argues that the following constraints not only influenced the construction of a situated identity in Toronto but also suppressed domestic professional theatre production: a) a system of patronage that stigmatized the professional commercial theatre as frivolous or decadent; b) a utilitarian bias that was at odds with the post-materialist sensibilities of newer and more innovative forms of the late nineteenth-century drama;
c) an economic and business practice that centralized production outside of the country to assure profit; and perhaps most significantly: d) a cultural hegemony that deemed Canadian drama to be immature and thus deterred works of aesthetic expression. This thesis is further informed by an understanding that history is written under the influence of the author’s own situated set of determinants and its goal in conducting an associative reading of Toronto’s nineties theatre practice is to locate theatre and performance history as part of a struggle among social, economic, cultural and political hierarchies.
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For

Marlowe

“A good guy for all the right reasons”
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1.1 “Faust Up-To-Date.”: Mephistopheles Plays Toronto.

When the Toronto press advertised that Canadian actor John Griffith (1867? - 1911) would bring his production of Faust to popular-price melodrama venue the Toronto Opera House (TOH) for six consecutive evenings beginning January 14th  1895, it was the fourth version of the drama to be performed by a touring company on Toronto stages in as many months. In fact productions featuring the Faust myth, most often dramatic adaptations of Goethe’s and Marlowe’s originals, but also a burlesque titled Faust-Up-To-Date, played frequently on Toronto stages during the first eight years of the eighteen nineties. In all dramatic versions, the lead actor of the company, including Henry Irving (1838-1905), Joseph Callahan (?)-?, Lewis Morrison (1845-1906) and Griffith, played the Mephistopheles role.

It would be satisfying for a cultural historian to read some special significance into such a pattern, into so frequent a rendering of a drama that responded to the themes of decadence, alienation and spiritual crisis associated with the Modernist and fin-de-siècle ethos. Furthermore a Canadian writing today might find it tempting to argue that the Faust narrative bore special thematic reference to the late nineteenth-century Canadian social temperament; tantalisingly so, when a young Canadian talent plays devil’s advocate to his European counterpart. At the very least, it would be rewarding to suggest that Griffith’s very presence as a regular on a combination circuit was an instance of a developing Canadian aesthetic and professional practice.

Unfortunately it is difficult if not impossible to measure the affective relationship between a given theatrical performance and its reception, even when supported, as was not the case here, by
substantial documentary or statistical evidence. For Griffith’s production of *Faust*, in particular, such a correlation between the key themes of the narrative to its reception by a turn-of-the-century Toronto audience would be misguided. In the most direct sense, Toronto’s theatre throughout the eighteen nineties was a touring practice controlled by international interests, most of these located in the United States, that sought to uphold the broad values of the *status quo* in order to profit financially. While Germany’s cautionary myth might well have served as a warning for many alienated Moderns, the pragmatic reasons for a theatre company of the period selecting and producing the German parable had much to do with factors such as technical innovations in production, a fashion created by competition with Britain’s leading legitimate actor Henry Irving or the loyalty of fans to the comic machinations of American favourite Lewis Morrison.

Nevertheless, Griffith’s production of *Faust*, as part of a network of such productions, can be viewed as representative of the type of theatre production to perform in Toronto during the eighteen nineties in the following sense: his was a production conceived and produced outside Canada and as such was shaped by a set of external controlling determinants, e.g., social, political, economic, aesthetic hierarchies and hegemonies that were in many senses alien to Canadian culture; however, when presented to Toronto audiences, his production was viewed through a situated hegemonic lens cultivated across this Canadian site. This relationship, then, between an other’s mode of production mediated through a situated production of meaning accompanied much of the social practice associated with theatre attendance throughout the eighteen nineties in Toronto. Premised on a resistance to the notion that no individual theatregoer’s reception is part of a universal or monolithic act of reception but is simultaneously collaborative and idiosyncratic, this study of a selection of performances that took place in Toronto’s professional theatres during the eighteen
nineties considers determinants of meaning and practice, both situated and external, in relation to the reception of theatre throughout the eighteen nineties in one Canadian city - Toronto.

As a history and analysis of an eighteen-nineties social practice related to the attendance and reception of theatre in Toronto, this study further understands individual theatregoers to be active producers of meaning and accepts that while disparate meaning was generated by individual Toronto theatregoers, these readings influenced both individual and collective constructions of identity. It is beyond the scope of this history to provide conjecture on what these might be. This dissertation rather provides a menu of influences that Toronto audiences might have drawn upon when viewing a given production and argues that the following constraints not only influenced the reception of theatre and drama in Toronto but also suppressed situated professional theatre production:

a) a system of patronage that stigmatized the professional commercial theatre as unattainable, frivolous and decadent while at the same time promoting more “worthy” local musical and amateur “entertainments”;

b) a utilitarian bias that privileged theatre performance that served a purpose, i.e., one that either instructed, amused or both. This was a philosophy that was at odds with the post-materialist values of the newer and more innovative forms of late nineteenth-century drama;

c) an economic and business practice that centralized production outside of the country to assure profit both by New York booking agents and by resident theatre managers; and perhaps most significantly:

d) a cultural hegemony that recognized Canadian drama to be in its infancy, one that promoted the tenet that excellence in the arts was earned after lengthy study and
application. This was accompanied by the conviction that Canada was to learn from its cultural betters before creating work of merit.

1.2 The Eighteen Nineties as Historical and Aesthetic Construct.

For the most part, theatre performed in Toronto in the late nineteenth century was generated by artists who created their works in response to two contradictory dictates: a European aesthetic hegemony that increasingly legitimated a high culture of Modernist values and a capitalistic business practice conducted by managers and booking agencies from American theatre centres, New York City in particular. Furthermore, while it is true that the majority of Toronto’s population had strong historical ties and loyalties to Great Britain, it would be an oversimplification to suggest that the mix and match of Scots, Irish, Welsh and English (as well as a sizeable German minority); of Roman Catholics and Protestant Christians as well as a smattering of Jews; of Political Unionists, Annexationists, Conservatives, Liberals, Reformers, Loyalists; of factory workers, professionals, wealthy mercantile leaders and members of the leisure classes all viewed their country and theatre in one sympathy, although many were resistant to productions that reflected what they believed to be the elitist, immoral and irrelevant culture of a Europe in moral decline and of the impact of the decade’s mythic markers, of the decadence, malaise or untenured creativity of the fin-de-siècle.

The predominant myth of the fin-de-siècle as an ideological or historical construct can be found in the writings of Max Nordau (1849-1923), in particular in his text Degeneration, translated and published in English in 1895, which hypothesized that the white races were in a decline that would lead to their eventual passing. While not all shared in Nordau’s xenophobia, many artists and dramaticists agreed that the final years of the nineteenth century marked a period of decline. This pessimism did not translate well to the new Dominion of Canada. Even if, as wasn’t the case,
Toronto audiences rather than American booking agents were able to play a direct role in selecting the repertoire of their professional theatres, it is likely that the post-materialist sensibilities of new dramatists such as Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), August Strindberg (1849-1912), and Anton Chekhov (1860-1904) would have had little appeal for many Torontonians. Most, after all, were interested in forging a new constructive tradition at their country’s dawn rather than being overshadowed by the malaise of Nordau’s “dusk of nations.” As a city of 144,023 in 1890 (Census), Toronto was quickly establishing itself as the industrial centre of English Canada. Even when the rest of North America faced a series of recessions in the eighties and nineties, Toronto grew and prospered (Aitken 392).

Torontonians weren’t isolated, however, mostly thanks to the popular periodical press, from the debate taking place in what were considered cultural-mentor nations such as Britain, France, Russia, and Scandinavia, although in the eighteen nineties the majority of Torontonians still looked predominantly to Britain for cultural direction. There, as British critic Holbrook Jackson (1874-1948) argues in his review of British cultural history *The Eighteen-nineties*, the closing decade of the nineteenth century was an era of paradox, a period of both renaissance and decadence, one of a tremendous energy and desire to embrace all that was “new” in the arena of art and theory.

The nineties were also a decade influenced by new and radical European sociological theories. Following in the wake of Karl Marx’s (1818-1883) work earlier in the century, influential sociologists, Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), Max Weber (1864-1920) and Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) among others all contributed influential social visions that contradicted the earlier offerings of philosopher John Stuart Mill (1806-73), economist Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) and Utilitarian Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). In Britain, a fresh debate on the “condition of man,” one that
frequently found its way into the thematic content of the new and “New” dramas, ultimately influenced legislators who improved working and social conditions for working-class British families.

Alternatively, Britain’s dominant world position allowed the nation to engage in acts of disturbing imperial expansion and aggression that culminated in the second Boer War (1899-1902), a war Torontonians would participate in. Despite slow reform on the British home front, class and gender warfare ignited by dissatisfaction with harsh working conditions and civil inequity escalated throughout the decade. If as Jackson argues, a cultural renaissance contributed to “much mental activity and a quickening of the imagination, combined with pride of [sic] material prosperity, the conquests of arms and imperial expansion, as well as a desire for social service and order,” the decadence for Jackson “was to be seen in a perverse and finicking glorification [sic] of the fine arts and mere artistic virtuosity on the one hand, and a militant commercial movement on the other” (24). This militant commercial movement, in particular, the jingoism of a rapidly expanding popular press, Jackson believed, was responsible for fueling imperial chauvinism.

Editors Sally Ledger and Rodger Luckhurst expand on the paradox and change prevalent in Britain’s eighteen nineties in their “Introduction” to The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History, c. 1880-1900. They too argue that the “nineties” was “an epoch of paradox, of endings and beginnings. The collision between the old and the new that characterized the turn-of-the-century marks it as an exciting volatile and transitional period; a period when British and cultural politics were caught between two ages, the Victorian and the Modern; a time fraught with anxiety and with an exhilarating sense of possibility” (xii).

To some extent, turn-of-the-century Canada shared in some of Great Britain’s exhilaration
and uncertainty. No longer a British colony but a confederation of six provinces, the Dominion of Canada, after twenty-six years of economic uncertainty and twenty-nine years of Conservative party stewardship - the majority of these in the precarious but competent hands of John A. Macdonald (1815-91) - voted for change in 1896 and elected its seventh prime minister, the French-Canadian Roman Catholic Liberal Wilfred Laurier (1841-1919). Laurier was a new breed of nationalist who rhetorically placed “Canada first, Canada forever, nothing but Canada.” He effected a departure, in tone if not in practice, from the policy of compromise engineered by the pragmatic Sir John A. who had balanced the federal policy of a newly sovereign nation with one eye to his immediate constituency, the United Empire Loyalist stock resident in Kingston, and another to a sceptical British government who remained responsible for governance of the new nation. Laurier’s optimism aside, the factions, allegiances and enmities, not just those of ethnicity, but religion, political persuasion, and class and gender that had preceded Confederation remained simmering beneath the surface of Canada’s new-found coalition.

Jackson is careful to stipulate in the “Introduction” to his survey of fin-de-siècle writings that he is describing a cultural movement that takes place in Britain only, and that, while there may be similar or related patterns of activity in other nations, they are not the subject matter of his analysis. Rather it is Eurocentrists such as Hector Charlesworth (1872-1945), the influential Toronto theatre critic who began his career in the nineties, who chose to appropriate similar albeit diminished “awakenings” for Canada. In 1925, he recalls:

The eighteen-nineties - the fin de siècle period, as they were called - was a glorious and stimulating time for young men with artistic predilections, - a period of awakenings throughout the English-speaking world in connection with all the arts; of recognition of earlier awakenings in other lands such as Russia, Germany, Scandinavia, and Spain. In English-speaking countries all the more excellent work in various fields of artistic endeavour owes its existence to seeds sown three decades
ago in the new springtime of the closing century [...]. Even such parochial centres as the cities of Canada felt this awakening, and in the end have profited from it. (*Candid Chronicles* 316)

What is most intriguing is that although Charlesworth remembers nostalgically, more than thirty years after the fact, that a “new springtime” for the arts influenced Canadian theatre at the turn of the century, this claim seems at odds with much of the evidence found in Toronto newspapers at the time.

1.3 **Touring Theatre: Social Practices and an Associative Historiography.**

1.3.1 *Producing Meaning in the Eighteen-Nineties Theatre.*

Theatre advertisements and promotional columns in Toronto’s eight daily papers and one weekly arts magazine published during the eighteen nineties place the onus on the professional theatre’s entertainment value and spectacle rather than artifice; on legitimating a repertoire of professional touring theatre that provided Torontonians with utility either as a mode of moral instruction or, more frequently as the decade progressed as a vehicle for that most ambiguous of terms “amusement.” An article by journalist Charles Barnard (1838-1920) in an 1892 edition of the *New York Dramatic Mirror* defines the term amusement as a means to any of the following: “to divert, to entertain, or excite moderate mirth or merriment” (3).

This construction of amusement appears to have had more currency with Toronto audiences as the decade progressed, although education in the form found in history dramas, i.e., an understanding of the consequences of pride or hubris that led to the fall of “great” men, was also privileged. Any hint of moral ambiguity was not. Columns and reviews throughout the decade and theatre critics such as Charlesworth and E(dwin) R(odie) Parkhurst (1848 -1924) report that the houses for popular entertainment were more numerous than those of the few truly new or
controversial dramas to visit Toronto. The nineteenth-century canon of melodrama, history plays, and comedy, i.e., popular favourites in the tradition of *The Corsican Brothers* (Alexandre Dumas, 1845; Dion Boucicault, 1852), *Richelieu* (Edward Bulwer-Lytton, 1838), or *Caste* (T. W. Robertson, 1867) played time and again throughout the decade.

Much of the evidence related to patterns of attendance in this study is mediated primarily through the observations of critic-journalists working for Toronto’s popular press at the time, and this medium is a notoriously unreliable source subject to the vagaries of competition, human error and personal bias; however, because Toronto produced anywhere between five and eight major daily newspapers that all featured theatre coverage to varying degrees, the theatre historian is granted the luxury of comparing and deconstructing a number of critical perspectives and reportage, an unprecedented choice compared to that of any other decade in Toronto’s history. Despite the political and ideological differences presented within the pages of these newspapers, it remains clear that all journalists believed that theatre in the eighteen nineties, although produced elsewhere, allowed Toronto critics and audiences to participate in an international discourse of sorts. Any criticism of a particular production most frequently was voiced within the context of past productions, both local and international, and Toronto’s audiences viewed productions within this discursive context. In this sense, while all critics agreed that theatre performance should serve a functional role in society no consensus on the role and direction of a new drama emerged.

With little locally-produced drama to consider, a history that considers Toronto’s theatre in the nineties runs the risk of providing a narrative that constructs the city as little more than a medium to small-sized touring destination. Such a record might ably recount how Sir Henry Irving, or some such luminary, impressed locals in a production of note at the Grand Opera House (GOH), or how,
according to a reporter for the *World* newspaper, audiences enjoyed a performance of that American favourite *Shenandoah* during the week of March 23\(^{rd}\) 1890 at the TOH. The newspaper accounts are certainly there to draw on, but such a record of this nature could only reveal the role theatre played in the life of Toronto’s citizens in the most passive sense. While it is true that Toronto theatregoers had little to no direct control over repertoire in these years of centralized circuit management, it is possible to construct a history that shows the Toronto theatregoer’s relationship to the touring theatre was a more dynamic one. If the daily newspapers can be granted any competence, reports show that during the eighteen nineties, certain forms, genres and practitioners were granted greater legitimacy than others by particular sectors of society and that theatre played a role in shaping cultural identities.

Given the lack of discipline-specific resources related to Canadian theatre in the eighteen nineties, and a broader Western historical tradition that valorizes the written playtext or virtuoso performance artist as well as the nation or site that controls the means of production, a record of touring theatre in Toronto throughout the eighteen nineties presents a number of methodological difficulties, and perhaps for these reasons, no historical survey of eighteen-nineties theatre in Toronto has been written. Toronto performance in the nineties is included in studies with a broader historical focus, however, such as *Early Stages: Theatre in Ontario 1800-1900*, a series of essays that show patterns of theatre management, repertoire and theatre construction or *Establishing Our Boundaries* which includes essays on theatre criticism in the period.

An attempt to restore the role of theatre for Torontonians in the eighteen nineties would provide a further obstacle in that such a limited history runs the risk of establishing a similar bias to that of Charlesworth’s. With this approach a Canadian theatre practice is either placed within the Western tradition, or with a desire to re-envision Toronto outside this tradition, a history might,
while still working within Western theatre history’s discursive tropes and hegemony, show Toronto’s activity to be at odds with it. The latter focus thereby constructs a new site of privilege for Toronto’s theatre production.

Either approach has some value, but a history that understands the relationship between the two provides the possibility of a theatre historiography that at once recognizes and destabilizes either system. Ultimately, the inscribed danger in any cultural study is that it will create new sites of privilege, and of course any history in itself valorizes the past in some sense, nor is it entirely possible for any text, historical or otherwise, in its selection of subject matter and choice of narrative structure, to eliminate authorial privilege. At best, an associative historiography that identifies and challenges the hierarchies influencing theatre’s social practice seems a useful compromise.

1.3.2 Social Practices and an Associative Historiography.

This dissertation, then, will apply an associative historiography in the following manner:

a) As a study of Toronto’s eighteen-nineties theatre practice, it will be a cultural study that recognizes an associative relationship between such hierarchical social determinants as economic and political policy, religious authority, cultural *habitus*\(^1\) informed by constructions of taste and beauty, and social mores that may direct an individual Torontonian theatregoer’s attendance patterns and response to a given performance;

b) A cumulative pattern of theatre attendance and response is understood to be a

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1. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* defines the *habitus* as “the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgements and the system of classification (*principium divisionis*) of these practices. It is in the relationship between the capacities which define the habitus, the capacity to produce classifiable practices and works, and the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products (taste), that the represented social world, i.e. the space of life-styles, is constituted” (170).
social practice; a practice that is shaped by an associative interplay of influences both at the individual theatregoer’s level and as part of the collective audience’s experience through a web of identification with various social groupings called “generalized others” (Mead 158).

Andy Ruddock argues that “cultural studies ha[ve] concentrated on establishing the discursive dynamics producing subject positions that accept, reject or negotiate with centres of hegemonic power” (14), and this history will be one that recognizes and destabilizes patterns of authority or sites of privilege when reading texts for meaning. Furthermore, because cultural theory privileges the study of texts for meaning, it understands that:

the task of the anti-essentialist, anti-reductionist cultural historian is to seek out ever more complex patterns of social development, to enrich our understanding of society by adding more and more pieces to the puzzle of how and why cultures develop in the manner that they do [...] we should consider how so-called non-critical research traditions have informed our understanding of audiences. (Ruddock 35)

For cultural theory architect and pioneer Raymond Williams, any text, a theatre performance, a written play text or the site of theatregoing, is not to be considered merely as an object or artifact, but “as a practice with a particular nature and formed by certain conditions”. However, in order to avoid a “crude Marxist formulation of all cultural practices being dependent on and reducible to economic practices” (4), he suggests that a historian begin with an analysis of the social production and consumption patterns of a particular society:

To see art as a particular process in the general human process of creative discovery and communication is at once a redefinition of the status of art and the finding of means to link it with our social life. It is of the utmost importance to realize this sense of communication as a whole social process. If we have done so, we can then usefully look at particular kinds and means of communication, which have, as it were, separated out, but not separated out altogether. The fatally wrong approach, to any such study, is from the assumption of separate orders, as when we ordinarily assume that political institutions and conventions are of a different and separate order
from artistic institutions and conventions. Politics and art, together with science, religion, family life and the other categories we speak of as absolutes, belong in a whole world of interactive relationships which is our common associative life. If we begin with the whole texture, we can go on to study particular activities and their bearings on other kinds. Yet we begin, normally, from the categories themselves, and this has led again and again to a very damaging suppression of relationships. Each kind of activity in fact suffers, if it is wholly abstracted and separated. (55-56)

Rather than isolating and deconstructing the reception of a coded performance or literary text, this study attempts to understand theatre as part of a fluid act of intercourse, one that recognizes performance as historical artifact and cultural media both by theatregoers in the eighteen nineties and after. It further understands, as does art historian Griselda Pollock, who expands on Williams’ concept of a social practice, that the historian must view these relationships through a dual lens that recognizes the problematic or “the theoretical and methodological field from which statements are made and knowledge produced” (8). This makes it necessary to:

[...] view historical event through a double frame: (a) the specificity of its effects as a particular practice with its own materials, resources, conditions, and constituencies, modes of training, competence, rhetorics;(b) the interdependence for its intelligibility and meaning with a range of other discourses and social practices [...]. (9)

Ultimately it is this study’s goal in conducting an associative reading of Toronto’s nineties theatre practice to locate theatre and performance as part of a struggle among social, economic, cultural and political hierarchies, to “analyse what any specific practice is doing, what meaning is being produced, and how and for whom” (Pollock 7).

In the absence of a comprehensive collection of primary evidence related to touring theatre in eighteen-nineties Toronto (e.g. memoirs, letters, box office receipts, statistical surveys), it is not possible to provide a cohesive pattern of agency or a representative “Torontonian” response to theatre performance. Even if such documents did exist in convincing numbers, a reading of them would be problematic given the complexity of the demographic and psychological mix of any given
audience; however, this thesis proposes that individual theatregoers operate from an idiosyncratic subject position that places itself in relation to other “generalized” social constructions.

While the impact of theatre attendance and performance on the expressive agency of individual theatregoers is under consideration here only in the objective sense, this dissertation does recognize and privilege the theory that a multiplicity of disparate readings is generated by any given audience of any given theatre performance or text that may form a pattern of reception but dismisses the notion of the necessary shared-theatre experience of the type made myth by practitioners from Aristotle to Tyrone Guthrie (1900-71), as well as the notion of a national perspective or cohesive collective situated identity made manifest through shared taste as promoted by theatre critics such as Matthew Arnold (1822-88) and British National Theatre architects, Harley Granville-Barker (1877-1946) and William Archer (1856-1924).

This history does, on the other hand, recognize a collection of common determinants primarily economic and political but also social and cultural, that interact and influence the construction of a national or regional culture or identity in relation to the social practice of attending and viewing theatrical representation. It holds that any audience member’s reading is situated by time and site and is subject to material forces; consequently, a national identity is both materially and historically determined as well as being a phenomenon with negative properties, both a discursive field, and the product of Symbolic Interaction. In this sense, the theatre can play a role in the shaping of a national identity if only as a medium of or site that facilitates Symbolic Interaction.

As a branch of sociology, Symbolic Interaction, is associated with the work of George Herbert Mead (1863 - 1931), who argues that social selves have the ability to be both subject and object, that the development of the self is a reflexive process developed through “social gestures”,
most commonly speech but physical gesture also. It is a process that is formed through social relationships and experience. The production and reception of theatre, then, did play a role in shaping an individual, social and cultural identity if only in that it allowed for a comparison to the representation of social structures and institutions of other nations or cultures, and through an identification with or in opposition to the aesthetic standards and moral/ethical dilemmas proposed by these texts.

For Mead, the self is able to take on the role of “generalized other” or a perceived culture, community or social group:

\[
\text{[s]o the self reaches its full development by organizing these individual attitudes of others into the organized social or group attitudes, and by thus becoming an individual reflection of the general systematic pattern of social or group behaviour in which it and others are involved - a pattern which enters as a whole into the individual’s experience in terms of these organized group attitudes which, through the mechanism of his central nervous system, he takes toward himself, just as he takes the individual attitude of others. (158)}
\]

Mead further points out that a self can belong to a number of generalized others or social groups.

It goes without saying that a resident in eighteen-nineties Toronto was part of an evolving and situated culture, separate in many respects from that of an individual from other regions and sites in Canada; furthermore, the majority of Torontonians in the eighteen nineties identified both with a subculture of “Torontonians” but also with the larger and newly-formed community called Canada. As such, they understood their country in the sense proposed by Benedict Anderson as “an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because even the members of the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their community” (15).

By analysing the events and determinants that contributed to the creation of selected
performances in Toronto during the eighteen nineties and by exploring a range of possible and available influences associated with the interpretation or reading of the performance by individual Toronto theatregoers, this history seeks to destabilize constructions of situated commonalities or social myths. The hierarchies that informed the production of theatre practice at the time and the ongoing construction of an imagined community materially situated in Toronto will be considered with the understanding that the individual’s expressive faculty has the potential to transcend and remake any generalized construction and must, therefore, be privileged in such a hierarchy.

1.4 Methodology.

A methodology that historicizes theatre production and attendance as a social practice, and that reads theatre events by linking historically-situated discourses and events with contemporary theory in order to recognize a shifting pattern of determinants seems precarious. What hierarchy, for example, determines the discourses given attention and what is left out? Undoubtedly events, relationships, discourses and determinants are overlooked here, and this cannot be helped. It is widely conceded that any history is the historian’s selection of events determined by her/his particular methodology and the material or ideological determinants that influence this selection and reading. But the selection of events and their relationship to various discourses in this history is neither entirely arbitrary nor random.

First, this study recognizes only performance activity between September 1889 and June 1899 in Toronto’s professional theatre spaces. This is the most restrictive of its choices. Why this decade only? Why these productions? Why not, for example, consider a long eighteen nineties? Why not begin with the death of the stock system and end with birth of the moving picture for example? One reason for choosing such a strict time limit is that studies and theses of Toronto practice in the
eighties and early twentieth century already exist, while one that focuses on the eighteen nineties as a contained cultural construct does not. More pertinent, the nineties, as shown earlier in this introduction, are held to constitute a decade of significance in arts and literary discourses. For this reason, productions have been selected that interact in some fashion with the common and conflicting myths of this period; in particular, those that present the nineties as a decade of decadence or a period of hyper-artistic creativity or obsession and those that reflect a period of conflict between innovation and growing capitalistic control of theatre performance. The rationale for these choices is discussed in more detail below (See Sections 1.4.1 through 1.4.4).

This dissertation, then, is divided into the five chapters described below. Chapter One serves as an introduction. Chapters Two and Five focus on native performance activity. Chapter Three and Four consider legitimate and popular dramatic forms respectively as performed by touring theatre companies. Each chapter considers the economic, political and social context that the productions were performed in against a narrative of the events leading to the performance and is followed by an analysis of the critical reception and a description of the performance text’s post history. Each narrative is further contextualized by recent criticism.

1.4.1 Local Performance Production I

1.4.1.1 Chapter Two: “Music and the Drama”: Receiving Nora Clench and The Marriage Dramas: Patronage, Musical Entertainments and Amateur Performance for Charity in Nineties Toronto.

By the eighteen nineties the city of Toronto had not housed an enduring resident stock company since 1878 when Charlotte Morrison (1832-1910) left the GOH. With little locally-produced theatre in the city, amateur theatricals, school performances and charitable
“entertainments” became part of a local tradition that legitimated amateur productions for charitable ends. A significant distraction from the growth of locally-produced professional theatre derives, however, from the dominant position of the city’s music practice. Toronto prided itself on being the “Musical City” and was a leader in the production of musical instruments, pianos in particular, and of sheet music. Toronto’s social elite patronized local concerts and in some cases participated in their organization and performance. It was a concern for many, however, that the city didn’t possess a suitable venue for musical concerts.

In 1889, the manager of the new Academy of Music (AOM) Percival T. Greene, attempted to provide a repertoire that combined local musical performance and professional touring theatre. Hailed as a new and much needed home for musical performance at its opening, the AOM ultimately failed to strike a balance between the needs of local musicians and the demands of touring theatre companies and booking agents. Poor box office resulted in at least three changes of management in as many years and ultimately seasons comprised of touring combinations took hold. By 1894, the AOM advertised itself as “The People’s Popular Theatre” (Advertisement. Star [Toronto] 1 Sept. 1894:3). The AOM was only one of a number of failed attempts to create a legitimate home for native and international music performance. It wasn’t until 1895, when farm implements merchant Hart Massey (1823-1896), as a memorial to his favoured son Charles, donated the Hart Massey Music Hall to the city, that professional and local music found a home in Toronto.

Locals interested in participating in theatre performance were limited in funding opportunities and handicapped by the presence of a non-native touring industry that booked space in the professional theatres throughout the “season.” Theatre owners such as O(lever) B(arton) Sheppard (1848-1928) of the GOH did, however, make their stages available to “worthy” and non-
competitive amateur causes.

Chapter Two, then, chronicles a pattern of native performance activity throughout the decade. Beginning early in the first season of the nineties, it narrates the events leading up to and including the opening evening of the inaugural performance at the new AOM, a musical evening that featured Ontario-born violinist Nora Clench (1867-1938) in her Canadian debut. The chapter begins with this concert because it not only occurs early in, and therefore frames, the first season of the decade but because it recognizes an important competitive dialectic between musical and dramatic performance in Toronto. The chapter shows that the privileging of musical performance in Toronto during the nineties was the result not only of the constraints imposed on theatre performance by centralized American management structures or by a socio-moral stigma that denigrated professional commercial theatre, but also because of a local system of patronage that encouraged a musical practice in the city.

In addition to this account of a musical concert, an amateur charity entertainment titled the *Marriage Dramas* presented in the GOH (1892) is considered. Such entertainments performed throughout the decade were an outlet for amateur thespians. This performance of skits, tableau, dance and song presented by young adults in aid of the Grace Homeopathic Hospital is an example of how amateur drama was legitimated through its association with charitable acts and educational ends and, in this instance, served as a form of courting ritual.

1.4.2 *Legitimate Theatre Practice:*

Chapter Three considers the impact of the new dramatic genres of the legitimate theatre performed during the decade, in particular those understood to be the New Drama, the Problem Play and the Society Drama. Because these genres were rarely performed in Toronto, Sir Arthur Wing Pinero’s (1855-1934) *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* (1892) when performed by British veteran acting couple the Kendals was perhaps the most reported example to visit the city. In London the role of Paula Ray Tanqueray had been played with a morally ambiguous complexity by the young and attractive matron Mrs. Patrick Campbell (Beatrice Stella Campbell [née Tanner] (1865-1940)), but Madge Kendal’s (née Margaret Shafto Robertson) (1855-1934) willful representation of a weak and irretrievably flawed femme fatale robbed the play of any nuance it might have possessed and resulted in a rather conventional staging of a woman-with-a-past saga.

In particular, this chapter will consider the role of the local press in mediating theatre reception for Toronto audiences. With six to eight daily newspapers on the market, Toronto’s press was highly competitive. Although many were financed by political parties, the need to expand a paper’s subscriber base resulted in the introduction or expansion of leisure sections with drama and music features included. This chapter will further consider the strategies employed by each paper to relate theatre to its targeted readership and will show a shifting critical taste as the decade progressed.

1.4.3 *Popular Theatre Practice:*

1.4.3.1 Chapter Four: “At the Playhouses”: Show Business and *True Irish Hearts.*

Theatre Management and the Popular Theatre in Eighteen-Nineties Toronto.

Chapter Four traces the evolution of Toronto management practices throughout the decade and further considers the practice attendant to the popular theatre in relation to the performances of
Irish Dialect actor-manager Dan McCarthy (1860-1899). By the end of the decade, the New York-based Theatrical Syndicate controlled most touring theatre productions, and it became increasingly difficult for rival theatre owners and managers to realize a profit. When the Syndicate formed in 1896, the newly renovated Princess Theatre (formerly the AOM) and the GOH, both managed by Sheppard, were legitimate houses. Required by Syndicate bylaws to maintain one principal house in each city, Sheppard responded by installing the Cummings Stock Co. in the newer theatre, leaving the GOH free for touring productions. Sheppard’s primary competition in Toronto, Ambrose J. Small (1863 - 1919?), manager of the local popular-price house the TOH, faced rivalry from two successful theatres, as well as from the Massey Music Hall in musical categories.

This last portion of Chapter Four considers McCarthy’s management strategies in relation to changing economic and production practices on the road during the nineties, as well as the extent to which his plays served as a outlet for a Toronto-based Irish diaspora. While plays featuring ethnic stereotypes were common and well-received on the eighteen-nineties popular stage, Irish melodramas were particularly popular with Toronto audiences.

1.4.4 **Local Performance Production II:**

1.4.4.1 Chapter Five: “From the Foyer”: A Nation in Waiting: Catherine Nina Merritt’s *When George the Third was King*: Amateur Theatricals and Playmaking.

If Canadian theatre artists wanted to work in the professional theatre, they had little choice but to become part of a professional touring combination production. McKee Rankin (1844-1914), Julia Arthur (1869-1950), and Ida Van Cortland (1854-1924) are a few notable examples. Plays written by Canadians, significantly Gilbert Parker’s (1862-1932) adaptation of his novel *The Seats of the Mighty* which opened Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s (1853-1917) new London theatre Her
Majesty’s Theatre in 1897, occasionally found their way to Toronto theatres as well. It was rare, however, for a drama written and performed by a resident Canadian to be staged in a professional theatre. Chapter Five considers a rare instance of a native play that saw production in Toronto’s GOH, Catherine Nina Merritt’s (1859-1926) Jubilee drama, *When George the Third was King*, performed June 17-19, 1897, a production designed to privilege a professional class with loyalties to Great Britain.

1.5. *Faust Outdated or Outdone?*

To return to John Griffith and his relationship to the Toronto theatregoer, it is necessary to understand that he first came to the city during a time of economic crisis in North America. Below a theatre critic for *Saturday Night* describes an indifferent season and a theatre industry in crisis as touring costs escalate and audiences, threatened by recession in many North American centres, diminish. This critic also shows that a core of regular theatregoers in Toronto valued theatre despite indifferent offerings and uncertain economical conditions in the rest of North America, an audience that would perhaps be more enthusiastic if the productions they attended included a Canadian context. This *Saturday Night* critic (Joseph T Clark? See Chapter 3: Section 3.8.3.2) further argues that Griffith’s production of *Faust*, was a rare treat in an otherwise mediocre 1895/96 season:

> [T]his is undoubtedly one of the worst theatrical seasons on record, and that many companies which in other years have gone on tour have not been formed this season, or if they have, have become so discouraged with the result of business on tour that they have either disbanded or returned to the larger cities of the States. Across the line business until very recently has been worse than it has ever been known to be before, and a short time since I learned of no less than five companies having cancelled their dates in a city not removed many miles from New York. From a play-going point of view, however, Toronto cannot be said to have been very much affected by the hard times; however much they may grumble about the scarcity of money, people generally manage to find sufficient to give a tolerably fair patronage to the places of entertainment, and that the theaters would have still larger houses if a better class of plays were advertised I have no doubt. To prove this it is only
necessary to point to the splendid business done during the present week at the Toronto Opera House, where Faust has been the attraction [...]. Possibly additional interest was lent to the performance at the “Toronto” this week because the star happens to be a young Canadian actor. (“The Drama.” Saturday Night. [Toronto]. 19 Jan. 1985:6)

The reporter explains that this is Griffith’s “first professional appearance” in Toronto and much is made of his nationality in the local press. It was not uncommon to advertise a Canadian actor’s contribution to a touring production as part of advance press, but few received the attention that Griffith did both in advance columns and reviews. The Sunday World notes:

“A Great Young Canadian is to Play the Part of Mephistopheles [...] /FAUST” / The Toronto Opera House makes a departure from its usual field next week, entering the field of the legitimate drama, and that, too, with a new star, John Griffith, a young Canadian, who will essay the characterization of Goethe’s great masterwork. ‘Faust’.


In a promotional notice, the News records that “the young Canadian [advertised to be twenty-seven, really thirty-one] enjoys the distinction of being the youngest actor of legitimate roles now on the stage, in a leading role” (“Bill At the Theatres.” News [Toronto]. 14 Jan. 1895:2) and goes on to cite an American critic who has made complimentary comparisons between Griffith and Sir Henry Irving.

Griffith’s production opened to reports of a full house, all the more remarkable in light of stormy weather. One reason for this, according to Saturday Night, was that TOH manager Small had lowered ticket prices during the previous season, and his theatre was now highly competitive in this sense with its rival, Sheppard’s GOH. What the GOH offered in quality fare, the TOH made up for in “popular-price” entertainment, and while Griffith had not attained the stature of Henry Irving or Lewis Morrison, he provided legitimate drama at an affordable price. Comparable seats at the GOH for top attractions ranged from one to three dollars more than the fifty cents charged by Ambrose,
a considerable markup.

In general, Toronto reviews of Griffith’s *Faust* were favourable. All agreed that the scenery in particular, which included “an exact reproduction of the quaint and quiet, yet charming city of Nuremberg” (“Toronto Opera House.” *Sunday World* [Toronto]. 6 Jan. 1895:6) and a number of electrical effects were of superior quality. Reaction to Griffith the actor was less decided, although most critics found his performance to be an original creation. Those who praised Griffith admired his serious tone: “He is not the same urbane individual with the mocking smile, [a reference to Morrison] but a vindictive Devil with a leering fiendish grin - the very embodiment of Evil.” (“On the Stage.”*News* [Toronto]. 15 Jan. 1895 15: 2). With reservations, Charlesworth (writing under the *nom de plume* Touchstone) found the performance “crude, but powerful” (Touchstone “Theatricals.” 2) or as the critic politically phrased it, “more strenuously strong than it is subtle and finished” (Touchstone 8). He felt, however, that Griffith showed promise and that, given time and “subjected to enlightened discipline, he would make a fine actor” (Touchstone. “Theatricals.” 2).

All papers reported the production as an event of note, a serious and promising young Canadian actor-manager heading a company of legitimate theatre, and it seemed that the admiration was reciprocal. As the *Globe* reports: “Sometimes the fact that an actor is a Canadian is a claim for indulgence, but not so in this case. At the close of the third act he was brought before the curtain and called upon for a speech. ‘Tonight I am proud from the bottom of my heart that I am Canadian,’ was his short response” (Touchstone 8).

Griffith’s advance agent promoted his Mephisto as a subtle departure from the coarse representations of his peers. In fact, it is uncertain but unlikely that Irving’s performance would have been considered to have lacked subtlety; nonetheless, his agent describes Griffith in the *Ottawa
*Citizen* as “a skillful worker, an artist in villainy. Man adores art and must have his devilry done artistically especially on the stage” (“Russell Theatre.” *Citizen* [Ottawa]. 7 Jan. 1898:6).

This reference to artifice is consistent with nineties’ rhetoric, an instance of the “finicking glorification of the fine arts and mere artistic virtuosity” (24) that Jackson refers to in his study of the eighteen nineties. It was not at all unusual for a citizen in this decade to refer to the “art of advertising,” or even, the “art of murder.” Much of this rhetoric harkens back to the Aesthetic and Art for Art’s Sake Movements which began with the Pre-Raphaelite painters in the eighteen fifties and were enjoying a renaissance with advocates such as Oscar Wilde and James Whistler (1834-1903) in the eighties and nineties. Griffith’s advance press shows that the actor was conversant with, and borrowing from, the aesthetic fashions of the eighteen nineties.

According to critics, however, what was offered in principle failed in practice. Griffith came to Toronto four times: his first performance in 1895 at the TOH, once at the GOH, the week of Oct. 12th, 1896 with productions of *Faust* and *Richard III*, and for two further productions at the TOH with a production of E(dward) Southern’s (1859-1933) vehicle *An Enemy of the King*, the first weeks of January in 1898 and 1899. As the decade passes, however, reviews become increasingly unkind even if he maintains favour with his audiences. His *Richard III* is found to be:

liable to the charge of a lack of subtlety. The Richard of the play is made to thoroughly unmask himself to the audience, but surely it was intended that for a time at least he should completely deceive many of the characters with whom he has to deal. One may venture to think that Mr. Griffith’s Richard deceives no one, his simulation and dissimulation appear to be assumed with a grim humour of intent that they should be at once transparent. His representation, however, met with the general approval of the audiences, as could be judged by the frequent applause which greeted his audiences. (“Music and Drama.” *Mail and Empire* [Toronto]. 16 Oct. 1896:8)

During the first week of January 1898, Toronto was asked to choose between Griffith’s *An Enemy of the King*, and Robert B Mantell’s (1854 - 1928) repertoire of Shakespearean tragedies and
history plays at the GOH. Despite Mantell’s greater reputation, as Saturday Night points out, Griffith played to a couple of advantages unavailable to the senior actor. Griffith, in collaboration with manager Small, continued to offer quality entertainment at affordable prices, and Griffith was a native son. The Saturday Night critic muses;

"This week we have had two romantic actors: one at the Toronto Opera House and one at the Grand. One is a comparatively new man, the other is an established favourite. One plays at popular and the other at fashionable prices. Both give full return for the money asked. Perhaps it would be ungracious, considering the difference in what is asked, to say which we like the better. Still, the difference between fifty cents and a dollar and a half does not express the superiority of the one over the other. They are nearer than that - perhaps in time they will be equals. Griffith is a Canadian, and some Canadians expect him to do great things. ("The Drama." Saturday Night. [Toronto]. 7 Jan. 1899:6)"

As it happens, Griffith’s claim to kinship is called into question a year later on a return engagement with the same play:

"Mr John Griffith, the actor, who filled his engagement at the Toronto Opera House last week in “An Enemy of the King,” writes to the Globe complaining that the statement published elsewhere that he is not Canadian is untrue. Mr. Griffiths [sic] states that he was born in Hamilton, Ont in 1868 and lived there for many years, and that his relatives are all there. He adds that his birth at Hamilton can be easily verified by a reference to the record of births for 1868. ("Music and Drama." Globe [Toronto]. 10 Jan. 1899:12)"

Two days later the Globe follows with:

"In view of incorrect statements that have been made concerning the nationality of Mr. John Griffith of “An Enemy of the King.” Mr. James Millbee [sic?] of Dalston, Simcoe County, an uncle of Mr. Griffith, affirms that Mr John Griffith was born in 1867 on Locke Street, Hamilton […] parents, John and Agnes Griffith. They lived in Hamilton until the actor was ten years old, when they moved to Pittsburg, then to Springfield, then to Decatur, then to Joliette and returned to Springfield in 1878, John residing all this time at his home, his father being a workman in the roller mills. In 1879 John Griffith started out on the stage in “Damon and Pythias,” and has followed the stage ever since. ("Music and Drama." Globe [Toronto]. 12 Jan. 1899:10)"

Was Griffith a native Canadian? Federal birth records begin an inconvenient one year after
Griffith’s alleged birth date of September 18, 1868 (or 67 depending on the above source. Obituaries show him to be born in 1862 ("Record of Death." New York Dramatic Mirror. 29 Nov. 1911:13). It isn’t known which “records of birth” Griffith refers to in the Globe article above. Considering the narrative of childhood transience provided by alleged relative “Mllbee”, he left Canada when he was very young, and his claim to Canadian nationality was a technicality at best if it is to be granted credence at all. On completion of his 1899 engagement in Toronto, Griffith moved on to Ottawa for a brief three day run at the Russell Theatre. In his Ottawa press he was not identified as a Canadian.

Certainly, Griffith’s story raises more questions than answers, perhaps because he was an “opposition” performer, i.e. an actor who appears in non-Syndicate houses. As the decade comes to a close, listings of Griffith bookings in the “Dates Ahead” section of The New York Dramatic Mirror become more sporadic. He changes managers frequently and reports bankruptcy in 1903. His list of creditors includes individuals in Canada ("Actor in Bankruptcy." New York Times. 25 Jul. 1903:2). In March of 1897, future film director D(avid) W(ark) Griffith (1875-1948) toured briefly with Griffith's Faust company and in a letter to his mother, described the actor as extravagant, inclined to “go to the finest everywhere“ (Merritt 20).

By the turn of the century, Griffith could no longer lay claim to being the “bright young actor” who had “assumed a stellar place” (“A Rising Star.” New York Dramatic Mirror. 13 Jul. 1895) on the touring stage at an early age. What became of Griffith’s promise? Was he a one-part ham actor unable to take on the challenges of other roles when road tours of Faust had exhausted audience enthusiasm or was he unable to compete with Syndicate agents who placed him in competition with more reputable and established classical actors such as Robert Mantell? Or did his unpaid debt and opportunistic lies result in a general distrust of the actor that led to fewer and fewer
bookings? All of these? When Griffith left Toronto, tainted by scandal in 1899 and the possibility of further diminished houses, he did not return. He died alone in his West 42nd Street apartment in New York in 1911. Reported causes of death range from gastritis to heart trouble to depression over his inability to break into the Broadway scene. There is no mention of Canadian citizenship ("John Griffith Dead" New York Times. 26 Nov. 1911:15.; "Record of Death." New York Dramatic Mirror. 29 Nov. 1911:13).

Careers such as Griffith’s are not typically the stuff of theatre history. His star shone dimly. Even if his story is reconstructed, one stop at a time, one inadequate reference added to another in review after review, city after city, much would remain unknown. His story is part of the lost lore of the road. Still, Griffith appears to have been important to Toronto audiences in the eighteen nineties, perhaps because he offered the exciting possibility of increased status in the theatrical arts for Canada. He was able to shine in the same night sky, or so his publicity claimed, as the likes of Morrison, Sothern, Mantell and, best of all, Irving. Or so, for a brief time, Toronto believed.

This dissertation, then, is an account of a select number of productions that and persons who, like Griffith, appeared at one stop on a theatrical circuit during one of the most innovative and formative decades in theatre history. In the simplest sense, this dissertation considers the role theatre played in the daily life of Toronto’s citizens, considers the factors that may have influenced the attendance and reception of theatre by Toronto audiences and the determinants that shaped theatre production both within the nation and without. It understands that while most professional theatre was conceived and produced outside Toronto, the Toronto theatregoer should be viewed as an active producer and contributor to the production of meaning and social practice rather than a passive observer twice removed from origin and creation.

2.1 “Music and the Drama.”

Toronto, a thriving industrial and political centre in English Canada during much of the late nineteenth century, didn’t develop a domestic drama or locally-produced professional theatre industry in the same period that saw the rise of other North American theatre centres such as Broadway or Chicago as well as increased legitimation of Western European drama and theatre. Certainly, economic factors such as the centralization of booking-agent syndicates in New York City and a cultural hegemony that viewed much European, and some American, theatre as superior encouraged a certain reticence for Canadian playwrights. It seems too easy, however, to blame the slow growth of a Canadian professional practice solely on the cultural or economic imperialism of the United States or Europe. After all these determinants remain an influence today and, yet, the city of Toronto advertises itself one of the most productive theatre centres in the Western world (Toronto Theatre Alliance).

Granted, the Dominion of Canada was a young nation in 1890, only twenty-three years old, and it is true that Toronto had made attempts to develop a professional native theatre of sorts (performance that was produced in Toronto if not a repertoire of Canadian drama) earlier in the century. The most successful attempt had been under the guidance of the Nickinson family; however, when Charlotte (Nickinson) Morrison gave up control of her company in 1878, she was not replaced by a Canadian-managed professional company of note until the following century. By the mid-eighties, Toronto’s legitimate theatre, the Grand Opera House (GOH), was managed by O. B. Sheppard, a gentle but pragmatic businessman who recognized Toronto theatregoers’ desire to see the top box-office stars and the most popular plays of the day, and who profited by bringing in
combination touring productions from America and Europe.

While the control of touring rights by American booking agencies provided a formidable obstacle for any local or independent production initiatives, there were also local deterrents to the production of native professional theatre performance to be found within Toronto’s social and economic hegemony. Certainly the financial and ideological interests of many political, social and economic leaders provided a challenge to the growth of a local professional theatre. Moreover, because a stigma of immorality associated with the professional theatre persisted, one that was linked to a perception that the professional theatre lacked utility as well as a widespread conviction that the contemporary drama had become increasingly decadent, a system of patronage in Toronto at the political, economic and social level came to favour three forms of “safer” entertainments. These consisted of a legitimate European drama and theatre that was comprised mostly of history dramas and classics, amateur charitable entertainments and elite forms of musical performance. All were categories that could be viewed as “improving” in one form or another. Government patrons, such as the governors-general and lieutenant-governors, most frequently patronized locally-produced amateur entertainments and encouraged a system of slow mentorship through European models when it came to the development of a native drama. Predominant Toronto business leaders, such as Albert (ca 1850/5-1938) and Samuel Nordheimer (1824-1912), sponsored and privileged musical performance, in part, because it was in their financial interest to do so. Along with the Nordheimers, the music mercantile and manufacturing industry in Toronto, the largest in the country, controlled the manufacture of musical instruments and sheet music sales. Music instruction was also part of the Ontario school curriculum in the elementary grades and was offered at the post secondary and university level at institutions such as the Toronto College of Music and the Conservatory of Music.
as well as privately (Keillor 122). Music as a vocation and/or occupation supported the industry of 1,987 musicians and music teachers province wide (Census 1890-91 Vol. II 166). Another source of resistance to the growth of a professional theatre derived from some sectors of the Christian church. In particular, influential industrialist Hart Massey and merchant Timothy Eaton (1823-1896) maintained an aversion to the professional theatre because of their Methodist faith and sponsored educational lectures and legitimate forms of musical entertainment.

Music alone was so much a part of the fabric of Toronto’s social and economic weave that in his memoirs of nineteenth-century Toronto, Toronto Called Back, Conyngham Crawford Taylor claimed that Torontonians proudly promoted their home as the “Musical City” of Canada, and much of the social and performance entertainment in Toronto during the eighteen nineties was directed towards maintaining and developing Toronto’s reputation as a musical centre. By the nineties music, unlike the drama, was well on its way to becoming a native practice that was performed by locals at all social and economic levels. Professional and amateur, vocal and instrumental, elite and popular all performed compositions that were either interpretive or original. Based on the scope of practice alone, the profits from musical forms of entertainment and industry far outweighed any returns from dramatic performance or related manufacture to the city.

While music could depend on patronage from most levels of government and society, recognition for the drama was less frequent and widespread. The highest level of recognition derived from government’s cultural leaders, the governors general and lieutenant governors. As a representative of the British monarchy, the serving governor general, typically a British aristocrat, brought an old world notion of patronage to Canada. He and his wife viewed their role as that of cultural stewards and avoided what was viewed as the overtly commercial taint of the professional
theatre. When they did recognize commercial productions, it was rarely in their official role, but merely as members of the audience at elite dramas usually performed by British theatre royalty such as Henry Irving or Ellen Terry (1848-1928). They more frequently provided official recognition to amateur productions that benefited local charities because such performances, usually executed by Toronto’s social elite or/military, could be viewed to serve a humanitarian purpose. Amateur theatre also saw an indirect form of support when provincial government legislation freed charitable institutions to augment their income with fundraising initiatives such as local entertainments (See page 77).

In 1889, there were three professional theatres in Toronto, the GOH, the Toronto Opera House (TOH), and the new Academy of Music (AOM), all owned and managed by Torontonians but leased and controlled by American circuit managers. Much of the profit from these theatres, then, benefitted these managers as well as non-resident touring artists. The only spoken-word performance instruction in the city could be found in elocution lessons offered by private schools in the city until Harold Nelson Shaw (See Chapter Five) expanded his classes at his School of Elocution to include acting in 1897 (Arrell 87). Furthermore local amateur Toronto theatre was overwhelmingly interpretive rather than original, i.e., in the majority of cases, the dramas and entertainments performed by Toronto thespians were written by Americans and Europeans. While it had been possible to reside in Toronto and make a living as a stock system actor earlier in the century, by the nineties, professional theatre artists of all types who hoped to make a career in the theatre were required, of necessity, to take to the road as part of the American-run combination touring network.

A Toronto theatre practice, then, evolved through a nuanced dialectic that privileged musical practices and amateur charity benefits over the development of a domestic professional theatre, i.e.,
a *habitus* developed in the city that viewed theatre as immoral at worst and frivolous at best. Native theatre production was held to be inferior and was displaced by a network of economic, religious and political support for a musical practice that supported both international and local initiatives.

However due to a lack of suitable venues, professional touring combinations and locally-produced entertainment, including amateur entertainments and music performance, coexisted in Toronto as part of a regular season of entertainment in the professional theatres until the building of the Hart Massey Music Hall in 1895. After this date, touring professional musical performances continued to be performed in the city’s professional theatres while local practitioners most frequently used the newer venue.

For this reason, this chapter considers two performances that were performed early in the first half of the eighteen nineties in order to consider the social practice and types of patronage afforded non-drama performance in Toronto’s professional theatres:

a) The opening night performance of a new professional theatre, the AOM on November 6th, 1889, a concert that featured local musicians Nora Clench, Whitney Mockridge and F. H. Torrington, and

b) an amateur production of the “entertainment” the *Marriage Dramas*, a misnomer insofar as these were neither a collection of spoken-word plays nor were they, for the most part, serious in tone, but rather a series of *tableaux vivants*, skits, dances and songs given as a charity benefit and performed by local youth. It was intended to fund Toronto’s Grace Homeopathic Hospital on December 16th - 18th, 1892.
2.2 Patronage.

Patronage, as the term was understood in late nineteenth-century Toronto, is one of the most unstable considered here. In the case of patronage for the arts, it could refer to a type of formal state recognition, i.e., a system of privilege imported from Great Britain, or it could connote a form of local acknowledgment that bestowed social legitimacy. Patronage could also imply financial support, anything from the financing of a production, an actor, a drama or a company to the price of a theatre ticket. In addition, newspapers often referred to those who attended a production as providing patronage.

Canada’s political structure as a constitutional monarchy provided some insecurity when it came to the awarding of “resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, for a person of lower status (client) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patron” (qtd. in Bourne 5). The nation’s new constitution, the British North America Act (BNA) of 1867, divided power into two categories: “Executive Power” and “Legislative Power” (The Constitution Act Sections III - IV), i.e. between the Monarchy’s representatives and the legislature in Ottawa. The Queen and her vice regal agent, the Governor General, are defined as the heads of state, the Prime Minister as the head of the government. If one is limited to this division, it then means that official government support for the arts in Canada didn’t begin until the publishing of the Canada Council’s Massey Report in 1957 (Harris 407); however, in practice, state support for the arts began pre-Confederation with recognition and initiatives from governors general, lieutenant governors and the military. This patronage had evolved by the eighteen nineties into a form of state sponsorship that paid lip-service to old world noblesse oblige while also recognizing new world notions of meritocracy.
James Scott suggests that patronage was historically understood as “a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socio-economic status (patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, for a person of lower status (client) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patron” (qtd. in Bourne 5).

J. M. Bourne in *Patronage and Society in Nineteenth Century England* observes that the traditional model of patronage:

> was an aspect of the general obligation of the privileged, wealthy and powerful to ‘rule, guide, and help’ their social inferiors. The duty of a patron was to mitigate the potential for social conflict and to alleviate the consequences of personal or family misfortune lest society dissolve into an anarchy of competitive individualism, riven by economic self-interest and the corrosive power of money. (57)

In Britain, theatre practitioners, historically a marginalised culture, required patronage first as a form of financial sponsorship that supported the practice of their craft as well as protecting their personal freedom and, subsequently, by the nineteenth century as a means of entry to privileged social circles. This latter was a form of acceptance that recognized craft or virtuosity, an artist’s merit, and perhaps in some instances such as that of the theatre’s representative respectable matron, Mrs. Kendal, his or her utility as a role model (See Chapter Three). As Bourne argues:

> To be ‘meritocratic’ in this context was to be ‘deserving’, to possess the requisite qualities, connections and status and to confront the appropriate dilemmas necessary to make family, personal or public demands on a patron. It was the duty of patrons to recognize ‘merit’ and to reward it. The recognition of ‘merit’ required disinterestedness. Clients preferred rich men as patrons for this reason. Such men’s capacity to distinguish ‘merit’ and to respond to it was less likely to be encumbered by the need to consider conflicting duties or to gratify purely personal ambitions. (31)

In Britain and in Canada, patrons were a body made up of “the rich and powerful” or “the obscure and ordinary, whose patronage was a function of their office, but which nevertheless made them also
men [or women] of great importance” (15).

2.2.1 Official Patronage.

2.2.1.1 Queen Victoria and the Theatre.

Of course, the highest level of patronage afforded the performing arts in the late nineteenth-century British Empire issued from the Monarchy. Royal patronage for the performing arts was understood to take two forms, formal state recognition or the endorsement that was implied by having been selected to be part of the Queen’s private recreational viewing. In the first instance, a performance was proclaimed and advertised as being performed under the sanction or patronage of the monarch. Such recognition was beneficial because it was widely believed by those in the theatre business that the Queen’s presence at a performance led to commercial success (Schoch 186). Royal approval was also understood to be tacitly acknowledged when a production was granted approval by the Examiner of Plays, a censor who continued to oversee the performance of all plays in Britain until 1968. This Examiner, granted authority by the Lord Chamberlain, was also required to arrange command performances and royal outings to the theatre during Victoria’s lifetime.

The Queen’s tastes and response were closely monitored and reported throughout her lifetime. Victoria’s relationship with the theatre was a complex and frequently misrepresented one. While she and her era are renowned for snobbery and abstinence, Victoria’s taste for theatre was passionate, eclectic and inclusive. As a young woman, she attended the theatre as many as two or three times a week when in London (Schoch 105). After her marriage, she, her consort Albert who was also an avid theatre fan, and their children all attended the theatre and participated in amateur theatricals and tableaux vivants (16-36).

After Albert’s death in 1861, Victoria’s enthusiasm for public outings deserted her, and she
did not attend the theatre for more than twenty years. It was after watching a private performance of F. C. Burnard’s *The Colonel* in 1881 at the encouragement of her children, that she was reminded of her earlier attachment, and after another six years of mourning, Victoria arranged for a command performance at Osborne House in 1887. She requested a double bill, a production of *Uncle’s Will* and W. S. Gilbert’s *Sweethearts* performed by Mr. and Mrs. Kendal (72). These performances apparently rekindled Victoria’s love of the drama, and while she did not return to the theatres in her lifetime, she and the Examiner of Plays arranged for frequent command performances, primarily held at Windsor Castle.

To many in the theatrical profession, these private viewings were understood as a heightened form of privilege for the dramatic profession; however, for others, Victoria selected far too many French dramas and operas (128) at the expense of local playwrights. This led some London theatre managers to accuse her of failing to support British drama and a national theatre (128). It was partially to mitigate this charge that she bestowed the theatrical profession its greatest royal honour to that date in the form of a knighthood for actor-manager Henry Irving in 1895. She followed this with another for actor-manager Squire Bancroft two years later. Still, Victoria never completely rid herself of the notion that theatre was a working-class occupation. Her diary shows that she was surprised to find actual “gentleman” performing on the stage in the Edgar Bruce’s 1881 production of *The Colonel* (72) and impressed by similar signs of respectability in Henry Irving and Mr. Kendal (193).

Towards the end of Victoria’s life, as the theatre became increasingly legitimated, it was unclear whether Victoria lent the theatre luster or the celebrities of the theatre polished her image. An article in the *Era* claimed on the eve of the great actor’s knighthood: “Mr Irving’s reputation [i]s
superior to patronage. He needs no Court influence to increase his fame, no Royal command to make him accepted as the leader of his profession” (qtd. in Schoch 96). This is an ironic turn of events when one considers that much of the new legitimacy granted the drama derived from Victoria’s passion for the performing arts, for all types of performance. As Schoch points out in Queen Victoria and the Theatre of her Age: “We ought not to underestimate, then, the degree to which Victoria’s unabated devotion to the drama precipitated the expansion of the theatre-going public. When she took her children to see Shakespeare, melodrama and farce, the aristocracy could no longer retreat to Italian opera at Covent Garden on the grounds that the national drama lacked royal patronage” (186).

2.2.1.2 The Queen’s Representatives in Canada: Patronage and Cultural Dominion.

In Canada, patronage afforded by the Governor General was not necessarily granted with the Queen’s knowledge or direct approval but was understood to be bestowed under her purview and therefore to endorse British values and culture. The governor general’s patronage of the arts also came in a similar two-tiered manner to that of the Monarch, i.e, either as official approval from the state or the privilege that was afforded when the Governor General and his wife attended a performance as part of a social outing.

Although the BNA does not provide a clear definition of the duties of the Governor General, the document offers a wide mandate to the office on paper (Sections 9-14). As Canada’s vice regal representative for Canada’s head of state, the acting Governor General served on behalf of, and was ultimately answerable to the Queen only, although s/he was expected to coordinate activities and decisions with Canada’s Privy Council. In 1867, however, as is the case today, the office was understood to be largely symbolic.
In the eighteen nineties, recognition and encouragement of Canadian culture was recognized as the particular prerogative of the office as an extension of executive privilege afforded by the British Monarchy. When a performance advertised in the Toronto press that it appeared under the immediate patronage of His Excellency the Governor General of Canada, as was the case at the Hart Massey Music Hall opening in 1895 (“Music and the Drama.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 26 May 1894:12), it was implicitly understood that this production was not only sanctioned by the government-appointed aristocrats, the Governor General and his wife, Lord and Lady Aberdeen (The Marquess and Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair; John Campbell Gordon (1874-1934), and Ishbel Maria Gordon (1857-1939)) in this case, but also that the programme in question was in accord with an aesthetic taste and set of values that could be traced all the way to Queen Victoria and the British status quo, a desirable association for most Torontonians in the eighteen nineties.

By lending their official sanction to local charitable events and “quality” touring artists, the Queen’s representatives not only legitimated these productions but reinforced the status of the moneyed classes who attended alongside them. To further assure privilege, many of these performances were more expensive than those charged by the rank and file of the road. Tickets in legitimate theatres typically ranged from fifty cents to a dollar, whereas a prestige company such as Sarah Bernhardt’s could charge as much as three dollars (“Sarah and Her Snide Company.” *World* [Toronto]. 29 Oct. 1891:8). By comparison, seats at popular houses such as the TOH ranged from ten to fifty cents depending on house policy at any given date.

In 1889, Frederick Arthur (1841-1908) was Governor General, the same Lord Stanley who lent his name to the National Hockey League trophy. Stanley, sixth Governor General, was a younger son of the 14th Earl of Derby, a peerage that prides itself on being the second oldest in Great Britain.
His wife, Constance, (née Villiers, 1840-1922) was the elder daughter of 1st Lord Clarendon. Like many of his generation, Stanley believed that Canadian culture was to be carefully nurtured. The following is taken from a speech delivered in Toronto:

Art and science claim their place in the circumstances of a new world. They must be content to wait somewhat behind and add their graces when the more material wants have been already supplied; but they follow very closely after. Intimately connected with that which makes the welfare of a people is that which trains the mind and faculties to a higher state of being. We look to those who lead us in the path of art to place before us those examples to which we must look for beauty, proportion and fitness; while science on the other hand has her mission in showing how in the best modes material can be dealt with and how difficulties can best be bridged over [...].
(qtd. in Cowan 62)

By granting equal importance to the sciences and the arts in this address, Stanley is attempting to reconcile the contemporary debate between arts critic, Matthew Arnold and scientist, Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-95, See Chapter Five) over the relative merits of either discipline. What is relevant in this speech is the notion that Canada, a young nation preoccupied with “material wants” has yet to find a voice in either field, that Stanley felt that Canadians, when ready, must learn from preceding models and international discourses, from Canada’s “cultural betters”.

Stanley, his successor, Lord Aberdeen and those that followed viewed it as their obligation to cultivate a cultural presence in Canada, and native drama, it would seem, was best cultivated outside the garish glow of the professional spotlight and its commerce. In fact, there were few Canadian professionals for the Governor General to acknowledge at the time had he been so inclined to do so, few that practiced and resided in Canada at any rate. Stanley and succeeding governors general would nurture an amateur theatre practice that included Queen Victoria-inspired home theatricals led by Lady Aberdeen in Government House to Earl Grey’s performing arts and drama competitions and Lord Bessborough’s Dominion Drama Festival in the following century.
However, the Governor General was located in Ottawa and visited Toronto infrequently, where the Queen’s provincial representative, the Lieutenant Governor, fulfilled a similar role in terms of stimulating suitable cultural activity. From 1887 to 1892 the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario was Father of Confederation Alexander Campbell (1822-92). In one of those quirks of fate that are partly serendipitous and partly political patronage, Campbell and provincial premier Oliver Mowat (1820-1903) both began their legal careers in the Kingston offices of Canadian Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald. All three went on to brighter political futures if not all as representatives of the same political stripe.

Campbell was a Scots Presbyterian who came to Canada at the age of two. He served in a number of portfolios in the pre-Confederation Liberal-Conservative union and later entered the Senate in 1867; however, appointment to the Senate was not the end of his political career. After serving as Leader of the Opposition in the Senate during the Mackenzie Administration in 1879, he served as Postmaster General, in January 1880 as Minister of Militia, in May 1881 as Minister of Justice, and in 1887 was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. Throughout his political career, he led an active social life and his name frequently appears in the social pages and theatre columns of the Toronto press. He died in 1892 and was followed by Sir George Airey Kirkpatrick (1841-99) from 30 May 1892 to 7 November 1896 and Col. Sir Casimir Stanislaus Gzowski (1813-98) from November 1896 to November 1897 after which Oliver Mowat served until his death in 1903. All with the exception of Mowat, viewed it as their obligation to attend theatre and performance throughout their terms.

Officers in the military, also the Queen’s representatives, at times served as official patrons of the theatre but most frequently endorsed musical performances performed for local charities.
Many units included an instrumental band, and it was not unusual for these units to perform in amateur productions of operetta or historical entertainments such as Merritt’s *When George the Third was King* (See Chapter “Five). Military pageants that featured regimental bands, another form of native musical entertainment, were frequent throughout the decade.

2.2.1.3 Politicians, Patronage, the Performing Arts and Change.

The majority of theatre performances in Toronto appeared within the dates of Toronto’s social “Season,” a period that typically began with the opening of the Canadian National Exhibition at the end of August and continued through to May when the weather turned warm and drew Torontonians out of the city on European tours or to summer residences and cottages north of the city. These were also roughly the same dates provincial and municipal politicians were in session.

While Montreal was the older and larger city in Canada in 1889, by the eighteen nineties Toronto had become the political and economic heart of English Canada. Despite a series of financial depressions in the rest of North America in the late nineteenth century, Toronto’s population grew from 181,000 in 1891 to 208,040 by 1901 (Census) primarily because of an active and expanding industrial sector in the city. The one-time military garrison of York was, by the nineties, a combination of university town, political capital, and mercantile centre with a demographic mix of Old Money, United Empire Loyalist, wealthy industrialist, professional, and capital entrepreneur, all mixed with a large and growing labour force ... and politicians.

The political climate in 1889 was unstable throughout the Western world. Many of the leaders who had provided security for so long such as Britain’s Prime Ministers Benjamin Disraeli (1804-81) and William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898) and Canadian Prime Minister John A. Macdonald, were either gone or were in the final years of their leadership. In one of the two nations
that most directly affected Canadian foreign policy, the newly-elected American president, Republican “Little Ben” Harrison (1805-1895), had a tenuous hold on power having squeaked into office in a narrow victory where he had lost the popular vote by 100,000 but won the Electoral College vote. Harrison is remembered for anti-trust legislation and reciprocity initiatives. Relations between protectionist Canada and America were confrontational throughout Harrison’s term (1889-93). Fishing rights and the Fenian raids were just two contentious issues.

In Britain, Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil, 3rd Marquess of Salisbury (1830-1903) was prime minister of Great Britain in 1889. Cautious and reserved, he possessed none of the political flair of his predecessors, Disraeli or Gladstone. Less interested in domestic policy than foreign, uncharacteristic for a British Prime Minister, he took on the portfolio of Foreign Minister rather than the customary occupation as First Lord of the Treasury. As such, he maintained an active interest in African politics and supported policies that led to the Boer War.

His relationship with Prime Minister John A. Macdonald was cordial - they shared a conservative ideology after all - but it was not as sympathetic as it had been between Disraeli and Macdonald. From Cecil, Macdonald could count on support from Britain as long as Canada did not depart significantly from British Conservative policy. As Cecil, noted in a letter to Lord Lorne in 1879, if Canada were attacked, “England must defend them” and therefore, “England must decide what [Canada’s] foreign policy shall be” (Creighton *Old Chieftain* 277). Cecil was defeated by Victorian politics’ own version of the Comeback Kid, Liberal leader William Gladstone, who alternated four terms in office with Disraeli and Cecil beginning in 1868. He served for two final years (1892-94) before he resigned when the House of Lords defeated his Home Rule legislation and was briefly replaced by the Earl of Rosebery (1894-95). Cecil regained power in the next election
and remained in power until 1902. He was Prime Minister of Great Britain for all but four years in the eighteen nineties.

Governments, then, were of a conservative stripe in these three English-speaking Western nations at the beginning of the century. Of course conservative values vary in degree and ideology; in England a Conservative government invited isolationist policies; in America, the Republicans privileged libertarian notions of a free economy albeit facilitated through anti-trust and reciprocity legislation. In Canada, Macdonald was pro-tariff and protectionist, an advocate of centralized federal power.

Macdonald felt that the best way to unite the nation was in a confederation that privileged British roots and traditions over an emerging American hegemony and viewed this as a move toward Canada’s survival, if not greater national independence in the long run. By 1889, Macdonald, in the final years of his tenure, had negotiated a union of Canadian provinces, had overseen the building of a trans-Canada railway and had shaped the formative political ideology of nineteenth-century Canadian politics, the National Policy. And he still had time to enjoy the theatre.

If a politician attended a Toronto theatre performance, he might be referenced by the local press, but for the most part, politicians did not afford an official or formal patronage and, in general, support for the theatre by elected officials in Canada was soft in 1889. Unlike a number of Presbyterian Scots, Macdonald did attend the theatre and even participated in amateur burlesques and entertainments, and Macdonald’s second wife Agnes (1836-1920) attended the theatre on a frequent basis (Creighton Old Chieftain 272). While it was rare for either to formally patronize a performance, as an accomplished public speaker and raconteur, Macdonald recognized the benefit of a theatrical setting and persuasive performance skills. Throughout his career, he organized
political rallies in professional theatres placing them, however briefly, at the centre of political life. In February 1891, shortly before his death, he spoke at the AOM as part of his last election campaign swing. Another connection between politics and theatre saw election results being read during scene breaks to theatregoers throughout the decade.

At the provincial level, Toronto had enjoyed the long-term leadership of Liberal maverick Oliver Mowat. The Premier was a strong advocate of provincial rights and believed Ontario’s Protestant English traditions were at odds with the French Roman Catholic culture of Quebec. He saw it as his duty to be a watchdog for any slight to his constituents by the Federal Government who, in his opinion, pandered to the political needs of French Canadians in order to win election and he became a constant critic of the centralized power of the Macdonald’s Conservative brand of federalism. He grew to deeply resent the Prime Minister’s many political reversals which he believed were designed out of political expediency rather than for the good of the nation. Consequently, Ottawa and Toronto frequently disagreed, and Macdonald would come to refer to Mowat as “the little tyrant.” Admirers in Ontario, however, called him “the plucky premier” or “the grand old man” of Liberal politics (Evans xi).

Mowat, a learned and industrious lawyer of Scots ancestry, argued that Canada as a new nation could and should uphold an exemplary level of integrity in parliament. He did this, he professed out a deep affection for his native country:

A native Canadian, I have as strong an attachment to Canada as any man can have to the land of his birth; and I feel an intense interest in all that concerns its welfare and its honour. I am proud of the progress which the country has made hitherto; I contempt with satisfaction the future which awaits it [italics mine]; and my ambition is to assist in doing what legislation can do for prosperity, enlightenment, and happiness of its habitants. (qtd. in Biggar 68)
Such expressions of Canadian nationalism were frequent in this decade but did not manifest themselves in the growth of a national drama at the time. Again, as was the case with Laurier (See page 7) and Lord Stanley (above), the myth of a nation about to flower is voiced in Mowat’s vision.

Both Macdonald and Mowat held the reins of office and the favour of the people for repeated terms, twenty-four years (1872-1896) in Mowat’s case. For the most part, Ontario was happy with the governing of the two men and, indeed they were well served by two such skilled visionaries. Nonetheless, both administrations were beleaguered by controversy, the Pacific Scandal and allegations of graft related to the awarding of the Queen’s Park Legislative Building Competition are just two examples, and perhaps for this reason, the electorate of Ontario felt that the constant debate, the checks and balances provided by opposing party agendas, was healthy for the province. While Mowat’s name does not appear as a patron to the theatre in Toronto newspapers, one distant connection between Mowat and the theatre is that he and GOH owner Alexander Manning (1819-1903) served as co-aldermen for the St Lawrence ward on city council in 1857.

At the municipal level, Toronto mayors were appointed for a one year term. E(dward) F(rederick) or “Ned” Clarke (1850-1905), Toronto’s mayor in 1889, was yet another Conservative, one of the most successful Toronto mayors of the late nineteenth century. As an elected official, Clarke managed to have his political cake and eat it too. Irish by birth, he was a printer by trade and initially gained favour with Liberals and the labour movement when he helped organize a printers’ strike in 1872; however, when he entered the mayoralty race in 1888, he did so with Conservative Party backing including that of the influential Goldwin Smith (1823-1910).

One reason for his popularity with Conservatives lay in his service as an officer of the Orange Order. After leaving his job as printer for the Globe, he founded the Orange Sentinel, the official
political organ of the Orange Order, and his administrative role in the Order along with that as an Ontario MPP provided him with both the political savvy and experience available to few of his peers. His ability to draw votes both from Conservatives and labourers who favoured Liberal or Reformer governments resulted in his holding office for four terms. His tenure was characterized by improvements in public works and economic reform. In 1894, he went on to serve as a Conservative MP for Toronto West. (Russell 115). The social pages and newspapers show Clarke in attendance at a number of concerts and charity benefits including the AOM opening described in this chapter.

By 1889 government in Canada was about to change guard from a conservative hegemony to something more progressive. As mediators between old ways and new, many politicians including Mowat, felt that it was Canada’s privilege and responsibility to borrow from British law and custom in order to develop an improved way of life - once the nation building and education were complete, once material needs were addressed.

2.2.2 Patronage from Toronto’s Social and Economic Leaders.

There was a third tier of patronage for the performing arts that was conferred by the socially and economically privileged in Toronto. Their attendance at a performance was reported in the newspapers, column upon column, and lists of their names served as a kind of newsprint “red carpet.” Their very presence at a production legitimated the performance and, in reciprocal fashion, the report of their attendance in the daily press, depending on the perceived merits of the performance, legitimated their status in society. Newspapers suggest that, like the Queen’s representatives, their taste ran to expensive legitimate theatre with celebrated stars and elite music performances that assured their status and distance from the working classes. Most important to theatre managers and practitioners, these were patrons who paid for their seats.
In fact, the single greatest contribution to the performing arts to take place in Toronto in the nineties was donated by just such a private citizen. While music has traditionally been a privileged form of performance in Toronto, it was the death of Charles Albert Massey of typhoid at the age of thirty-six in 1894 that sealed Toronto’s direction as a leader in musical entertainment and education. Charles was the oldest and favoured son of his industrialist father. Hart Massey was a Methodist who viewed theatre as immoral and frivolous and used his great wealth to sponsor a number of alternate entertainments in the city, e.g., lectures, musical concerts and social gatherings intended as part of a web of philanthropic activities designed to enlighten and improve the moral climate of the city. The Hart Massey Music Hall would open on June 14th, 1894, six years after the opening of the AOM (See Section 2.5).

By 1889, at the beginning of the events considered in this history, musical entertainments were entrenched in the city as the performance mode of choice for Toronto’s socially advantaged. One of the reasons music had legitimacy with the professional and affluent classes was because so many had received a musical education themselves as part of a privileged education. Toronto’s social elite not only attended musical events but frequently participated in them in both the professional and amateur spheres, and throughout the last decade of the nineteenth century, a native music practice evolved and flourished in Toronto.

2.3 Toronto - the “Musical City.”

The first professional musician to arrive in the city of Toronto was organist Dr Edward Hodges (1796-1867) who came to the city in the eighteen forties to play for St James Cathedral (Middleton 682). He was one in a succession of church-employed musicians who would promote and develop a Toronto music practice throughout the nineteenth century. In addition to their duties
at church services, trained musicians such as Hodges also coached choirs and provided accompaniment at socials and concerts.

A history of secular music in Toronto begins in Frank’s Hotel during the eighteen twenties, according to Crawford Taylor, with a Mr. Maxwell described as a gentleman “‘distinguished’ for his quiet manner, for the shade over one eye, and for his homely skill on the violin” (203). Historian Edgar Middleton claims that this venue was also the location of Toronto’s first theatre, a “primitive” loft that showed comedy and melodrama (680).

By the eighteen nineties the line between a secular and religious music practice was decidedly muddied. Church organist, F(rederick) H(erbert) Torrington (1837-1917), for example, had his finger in a number of musical pies that went far beyond the direct influence of the Methodist church that employed him. For example, he served as a college director, was co-founder and musical director of the annual city music festival, served as a choral master and conductor to a number of the city’s musical groups and provided accompaniment for a wide range of local vocalists and concerts (See Section 2.3.1.2).

2.3.1 Music and Industry.

One central reason for the privileging of music as a performance form in the city was the manufacture and retail of musical instruments, important within Toronto’s economic structure. Heintzman and Co., A. & S. Norheimer, Mason and Risch and Octavius Newcombe, all located in Toronto, were established piano manufacturers by the eighteen nineties (Middleton 525). A connection between the music manufacturing sector and the perception that Toronto was a locus of musical talent and cultural refinement, i.e., the music industry fulfilled a need for a select citizenry, is argued by Crawford Taylor: “No better evidence of the advancement of Toronto in wealth, culture
and refinement could be found than in the existence in her midst of extensive establishments for this branch of manufacture [pianos], and in the prospect of constantly increasing demand” (293). He adds a further claim for distinction that Toronto’s “pianos found purchasers amongst the best judges in Great Britain, and are now being used in the highest circles of musical society, including Windsor Castle and other abodes of Royalty” (293-95). For Crawford Taylor, the quality and cultural measure of a city’s citizens could be judged by the choice of their industrial exports.

In short, music was a thriving business in late nineteenth-century Toronto. Statistics in the 1890-91 Census also list thirteen piano manufacturers. Montreal, the largest city in the Dominion, by comparison, had only six. Crawford Taylor records the following industries:

a. one violin maker, b. seven organ builders,

c. one organ reed maker, d. seven piano part manufactures,

e. one harp maker and f. two band instrument factories. (265-66)

The Census shows that the musical manufacture of instruments in Toronto supported 306 men, two women, and twelve boys with a “Working Capital” of $254,800 and a “Total Value of Articles Produced” at $564,958 (Census III 227). This corresponds favourably with Toronto’s leading industrialist, Massey, who supported 575 employees and reported a “Working Capital” of $1,000,000 (Census 1890-91 Vol III 6).

The following table shows occupation listings for music-related industries in Ontario which include the numbers above:
Table 1: Ontario “Manufactures and Mechanical Industries” - Census 1890-91 Vol II: 166.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manufactures and Mechanical Industries</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musical Instrument Makers</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organ Makers</td>
<td>144 (142 men, 2 women)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano and Organ Tuners</td>
<td>198 (men)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano Makers</td>
<td>607 (9 boys under 15, 3 girls under 15, 583 men, 12 women)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the manufacturing sector, the “Professionals” section shows three boys and four girls under fifteen years of age, 547 men and a remarkable 1,433 women as “Musicians and Teachers of Music.” The music industry also supported eighty-one men and six women in retail (168). The Census, then, catalogues a total of 3,361 individuals employed in music-related professions and trades.

And business was growing. By 1901, the manufacture of musical instruments and related material yielded a “Total Value of Products, custom work and repair” of $2,810,910 (Census 1901 Vol III 83) for the province of Ontario. Toronto reports $848,523 of this from its thirteen piano manufacturers (211). Branch establishments account for much of the remaining $1,962,387 with a proportion of revenues returning to head offices in Toronto. In short, as the largest centre for the production, repair and instruction of musical instruments and sheet music, the industry was important to Toronto’s economy. Writing in 1894, Crawford Taylor boasted that: “Toronto has for some time been recognized as the musical and educational centre of Canada, and associated with its development in this respect has been the rapid extension of pianoforte manufacture, so that the trade of the Dominion may be said to be controlled from this city” (298).

Leading Toronto families and piano manufacturers included Octavius Newcombe and Co.
Octavius and brother Henry were originally from Devonshire. Crawford Taylor recalls that earlier in the century “pianofortes sold in Canada were chiefly imported from the United States” but after Henry’s arrival in 1879, “the trade was revolutionized, so that today [1895], few instruments are imported into Canada either from Europe or the United States, while an increasing export trade is being done in Canada to other countries” (300). If this wasn’t impressive enough, Newcombe Grand pianos were proudly exported to Windsor Palace.

Another piano manufacture that had a direct influence on the production of theatre and music in the city was owned and managed by the Nordheimer family. Samuel was President of A.&S. Nordheimer Piano and Music Company. Throughout the nineties his son Albert was manager and director. The Nordheimer piano factory was located in West Toronto with a retail outlet at 220 Yonge Street. In 1859 they opened a second store on King Street, and it was from this location that the majority of theatre subscriptions were sold throughout the eighteen nineties. The A.&S. Nordheimer Piano and Music store was founded by Samuel and his older brother Abraham (1816-1862) Nordheimer, Bavarians Jews, who located their music business in Toronto in 1844. In addition to the manufacture and sale of pianos, the Nordheimers were the country’s largest publishers of sheet music. The senior Nordheimers began their subscription business in order to draw top musicians such as “Swedish Nightingale” Jenny Lind (1820-87) to the city, and the business soon grew to include theatre performance. Throughout his life, Samuel promoted musical events and founded or participated in music societies, concerts and festivals. He was president of the Toronto Philharmonic Society, organized the Chamber Music Association and played an administrative role in organizing the city’s annual music festival. Equally influential in business circles, Samuel sat on a number of city boards and was president of the Federal Bank of Canada as well as German consul for Ontario.
(Kallmann). Crawford Taylor records Samuel as the partner who “undertook the outside work, traveling a great deal, and to this firm [Nordheimers] is due to a great extent the credit of having educated the taste of the people of Canada up to its present high musical standard” (46).

Albert Nordheimer, an Upper Canada College graduate, joined his father’s business in 1870 and was managing director during the eighteen nineties. Like his uncle, Abraham, who played violin, Albert was a composer who published his own music and chaired the music committee of St. James Cathedral for over fifty years. By the eighteen nineties, the Nordheimers had “branches in Montreal, Ottawa, Hamilton and London” (295).

2.3.2 Music and Education.

Music was also a valued part of Toronto’s education system. In addition to being part of an Ontario elementary school education, there were was the opportunity to continue one’s music studies in one of three reputable music schools at the higher levels, i.e., the Toronto College of Music (founded by Torrington in 1880, joins U of T in 1890), the Metropolitan School of Music, and the Toronto Conservatory of Music (Inc. 20 Nov. 1886. Affiliated with the University of Trinity College and the University of Toronto in 1896). In addition, Toronto’s many music teachers offered private classes in vocal training and a range of instruments.

Guiding much of Toronto’s musical education throughout the eighteen nineties was a single individual, church organist, choir master, conductor, accompanist and teacher, F. H. Torrington. Born in Dudley, Worcestershire, England, “Fred” Torrington learned to play the piano, organ and violin as a child. He later received training to be a cathedral organist and choir master. Torrington received a “handsome offer” (Middleton 683) to come to Toronto in 1873, and become organist-choir master of the Metropolitan Methodist Church. He would spend the rest of his life in the city.
By 1894, in addition to his position at the Metropolitan Church, Torrington served as conductor of the Toronto Philharmonic Society, director (and founder in 1888) of the Toronto College of Music, president of the College of Organists and president of the Society of Musicians (Crawford Taylor 211). He also, along with Samuel Nordheimer, “organized the first Toronto Music Festival (1886) in the Mutual Street Rink Building with a 1000-voice choir, an orchestra, a children's choir, and Lilli Lehmann and Max Heinrich as soloists” (Pincoe). This festival became an annual event.

Unassuming in appearance, weak chinned with mustache, prominent nose and receding hairline, Torrington possessed a nonetheless imposing personality, one that was energetic, temperamental and committed. Middleton claims that his “[h]is passion for oratoria was insatiable. His intensity in rehearsal attracted singers and instrumentalists despite his shows of dominant temperament. He was known more than once to stop a public performance, take a violin out of a player’s hand, play a passage correctly to show him his error, then hand back the fiddle and start all over again” (683). Until his retirement in 1912, Torrington performed unceasingly in Toronto. It seems that no week goes by that his name does not appear in the newspapers in connection with one musical event or another. He is central to the organization of two of the performances considered in this chapter, the Nora Clench concert and the Hart Massey Hall opening.

Perhaps the most accomplished of Torrington’s many students was Augustus Vogt (1861-1926), who founded the Mendelssohn Choir in 1894. Now the oldest existing mixed-voice amateur ensemble, the choir continues to garner respect and acclaim.

2.3.3 Music and the Press.

Music even had an advantage with the city’s critical press. Charlesworth’s wife, Kate Ryan, was a pianist who played in local concerts and the only full-time theatre critic, E. R. Parkhurst was
an accomplished violinist who had studied formally in Britain. Parkhurst’s obituary describes the critic as possessing “a sincere and deep musical appreciation” (Stuart 96) and certainly, Parkhurst supported musical entertainment in the city frequently at the expense of newer or controversial forms of drama (See Chapter Three). In the following century, Parkhurst would change the title of his weekly columns from “Music and the Drama” to “Music in the Home, Concerts and the Drama.”

2.3.4 Theatre Patronage.

If music was a thriving legitimate social practice in Toronto, it is difficult to determine the theatre’s social and economic impact and support other than to suggest that its profits and activities were more circumscribed because the products, i.e., those from each combination production, were not produced locally and consequently so much of the theatre’s profit left the city and the country. The Canadian Census does not list theatre as a business category nor its profits during the eighteen nineties; however, for the sake of argument, if each of Toronto’s three theatres is considered to be an individual manufacturer, its working capital would have included property values, assets such as furnishings, sets and properties, and a percentage of box office sales. Furthermore, as contributors to the local economy, Toronto’s theatre managers provided support to related service industries and craftsman involved in the maintenance of their buildings and, in addition, other related industries such as the press, local advertisers, and subscription agencies (Nordheimers or Suckling and Sons) profited from the theatre’s presence.

The extent of patronage for the theatre at the social level is even more difficult to measure. It is possible to provide quote after quote as testimony to the notion that Toronto theatregoers in the nineties found the theatre decadent and immoral; however, the reality is that Toronto supported three professional theatres throughout the decade. Each theatre was able to seat between 1200 and 1700
audience members a night. Most productions or “combinations” ran for three nights and two matinees suggesting that this was all the traffic would allow. This means that each theatre projected a possible total of approximately 6000 to 8500 audience members per combination. There is no way of determining actual attendance numbers. Throughout the decade newspapers frequently report poor or dark houses; however, they also report that the theatre was regularly, if not always well, attended and that many respectable women and their families attended the theatre on a regular basis. Furthermore, as will be shown, advertisements, programmes and repertoires all catered to a female audience as well as male. Moreover, the GOH and, later the Princess, both provided fare targeted to an affluent clientele. While it is true that a minority of Torontonians did not attend for religious reasons, the majority of those who had the means to do so attended the theatre at some time or another, many of those who criticized the theatre as immoral included, and it seems that the stigma that attended theatre had little influence on practice patterns, i.e., the habitus that viewed Toronto’s theatre as inferior or immoral did not deter enough locals from participating in the practice of attendance and reception to close theatres. In offering their patronage, Toronto’s elite attended and recognized the theatre in a selective fashion, however. Certain genres and theatres were legitimated and the term “the theatre” for many nineteenth century theatregoers, used in a pejorative sense signified popular genres only, i.e., the melodrama, burlesque and variety. In many cases, this contempt extended to performers of this class of theatre.

In some respects the professional theatre held the upper hand in 1889 Toronto, however. The city possessed two theatres, an excellent purpose-built facility that was well suited to the presentation of first-run dramatic performance, the GOH and a popular-run facility, the TOH. Furthermore, Toronto theatre had a direct relationship to political power in the city. Both Enoch J. Thompson (?-
?), who owned the new AOM and Alexander Manning, owner of the GOH were former city aldermen, and in Manning’s case, a former mayor. In addition, GOH manager Sheppard served as a popular city councillor.

Strangely while the city was home to two professional theatre buildings in 1889, it did not have a purpose-built concert hall. Whether local theatre owners placed direct impediments in the path of those hoping to build a suitable concert hall isn’t clear. Certainly, Toronto’s theatre managers in this period were fiercely competitive and would have seen the construction of any additional performance space as a source of lost revenue. Whatever the obstacles the construction of such a facility, the AOM was eventually built as a combination theatre/concert hall with the hopes that the city might become recognized in international music circles. Its opening performance provided a mix of international and Canadian musicians.

2.4 The Academy of Music.

2.4.1 A “Conveniently Fitted” Concert Hall.

A reference made in 1894 to Hart Massey’s Music Hall, four years after the AOM had failed as a concert hall, observes that “Toronto has long stood in need of a commodious and conveniently fitted hall in which concerts and public meetings on a large scale could take place, and it is a gratifying duty for a public chronicler to have to record that this need is now about to be supplied through the munificence and wise consideration of a prominent citizen” (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 7 Jun. 1894:4). Of the facilities available for concerts in 1888, Crawford Taylor describes the Mutual Street Rink as “the best building the city afforded” (Crawford Taylor 216). Large partly open-air venues such as the Crystal Palace could accommodate as many as 20,000 people, but as Crawford Taylor observed, those far from the stage could not hear well (216).
Crawford Taylor believed that “Toronto could afford to have a hall sufficient to accommodate six thousand people, and at prices within the reach of all” (217). While the AOM did not accommodate anything close to this number, plans were to accommodate 1700 in its theatre and a further six hundred in the concert/lecture hall. As the first purpose-built facility to attempt to address the city’s need for a concert hall and the only first-attraction legitimate theatre house erected during the eighteen nineties, the AOM’s construction conveniently marks the beginning of the decade considered in this study. The 1889 performance that opened the venue also serves as a demonstration of patronage patterns and the privileged place afforded native musical practice in the Toronto community.

The AOM was constructed on King Street. It appears to have been publicly owned with, as the Toronto’s Empire of November 7th states, the “well known” city councillor, J. Enoch Thompson as President of the Board, and Percival T. Greene as manager. Before the theatre was completed, an article in the New York Dramatic Mirror shows Greene to be booking productions in New York with Klaw and Erlanger, key members of the future Theatrical Syndicate. Greene is optimistic for the theatre’s prospects:

Our present intention is to open Nov. 11. The opening attraction will be either Seidl’s Orchestra or Kate Claxton in Bootles’ Baby. The new house has been built by a stock company of which the Hon. J. E. Thompson is president. The cost will be fully $225,000. It is situated on the South side of King Street, near York, not a stone’s throw from the Union Depot. The house is of brick and stone and has ten fire escapes. It will have both electric lights and gas. (“Toronto’s New Theatre.” New York Dramatic Mirror. 12 Oct. 1889:3)

Shortly after announcing that Toronto would be hosting a new theatre, the daily press announced its opening programme. The headliner was to be neither Kate Claxton nor Seidl’s Orchestra, but rather, a musical concert featuring the professional debut of Canadian violinist Nora
Clench. Clench was joined in this inaugural performance by Fannie Bloomfield-Zeisler (1863-1927), an Austrian-American pianist from Chicago, contralto Mme Moran Wyman, and local talent Mr. Whitney Mockridge, a “favorite tenor” (“New Academy.” World [Toronto]. 29 Oct. 1889. 2) of Toronto audiences. This concert was deemed so worthy that “the Government House party have signified their intention of being present” (“Music and the Drama.” World [Toronto]. 25 Oct. 1889: 2). Popular mayor “Ned” Clarke would also attend.

2.4.2 The AOM Opening - The Nora Clench Concert.

The opening night program at the AOM was a departure from Toronto performance practice on at least three fronts; the majority of talent was Canadian, three of the four headliners were women, and Clench, in a debut performance, was a singularly inexperienced choice for top billing. The latter break with practice would set into motion a chain of events that would compromise an evening that should have been a triumph for Canadian talent.

2.4.2.1 Nora Clench.

The following is from a poem written by one of Clench’s fans:

Fair Canadian violinist
Thy country welcome brings
Whilst with attentive ears we list,
As forth thy music rings.

[...]Youth and modesty combining,
With skill and talent rare,
Brightly may thy star keep shining
In Canada’s pure air. - T. E. Moserly.
(“Music and the Drama.” World [Toronto] 7 Nov. 1889:8)

This poem, which begins by welcoming the young Canadian back from her European training and ends with the hope that unlike so many other internationally-trained Canadian artists she will remain
in the country, argues that the Toronto public had some knowledge of Clench’s career and training
to date. Certainly Moserly was not the only fan to sing her praises in the periodical press. A week
prior to the opening at the AOM, a critic going by the pen name of Metronome provides the promise
of an exciting new Canadian talent:

I went to Hamilton on Wednesday to attend Miss Clench’s Canadian rentree on that
evening. [...] Miss Clench’s playing was a most pleasant surprise to me. She has a
fine, large tone, rich in sympathy, and she has a wonderful executive facility, which
enables her to play the most difficult music with ease and grace. And she has, withal,
a charming, unconscious manner, which adds to the beauty of her performances. All
of which go to make up a little artist that Canada may well be proud of. / Metronome.
(“Miss Nora Clench.” Saturday Night [Toronto]. 2 Nov. 1889:2)

In fact Nora Clench’s professional debut was not her first appearance to Toronto. She had performed
in the Toronto region on previous occasions when a girl, most recently in 1884. Rather, it was her
return from London and a European training that connoted her “finishing” as a musician and her
readiness to begin a professional career that led to her performance on the AOM stage.

Esther Leonora Clench, born in St. Marys, Ontario made her debut as a violinist at the age
of eight. Like many Canadian musicians who hoped to increase their prestige and skill as artists, she
went to study in Europe, at the Leipzig conservatoire under Adolf Brodsky (1851-1929), in Brussels
with Eugene Ysaye (1858-1931) and in Berlin with Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) when in her teens
(Button). Biographer Victoria Button describes the mature Clench as a free spirit:

a sophisticated, unconventional and outspoken woman, who smoked cigarettes,
which ‘she bought in boxes of 100’. She hennaed her hair. She spoke German and
Italian. She didn't suffer fools gladly, yet she loved ghost stories, believed in spirits
and once burst into tears because a tree was being chopped down. She owned
property. She married late. She controlled the family finances. She loved her dogs,
but was not close to her only son. Her attitudes were different. (Button).

In 1889, she was little more than a girl, by all accounts shy, talented and vulnerable.

Of the other performers featured in this opening concert, local tenor and the only featured
male artist, Whitney Mockridge, was one of Torrington’s many students. He had made his reputation on the Chatauqua circuit, and as the *Globe* reports “[o]f the latter it is unnecessary to say much, as he is a Toronto favorite, and has appeared here a number of times” (“New Academy.” *World* [Toronto]. 29 Oct. 1889:2). Austrian-American Fanny Bloomfield Zeisler, although only four years older than Clench, was a pianist who had already established a career that would span four decades with concerts across the United States and Europe (Chicago Public Library). Torrington was scheduled to accompany Mockridge. J. O’Brien of Hamilton acted for the other artists.

2.4.2.2 Ticket Sales and Box Office Practice.

Interest in the concert was reported to be high with Toronto fans. On Thursday the subscriber’s list was made available at two ticket vendors, Suckling and Son’s and A. & S. Nordheimers. (“Music and the Drama.” *World* [Toronto]. 25 Oct. 1889:2). Suckling and Son’s was a company that hoped to capitalize on “going into the music and lecture business extensively” (“Canada.” *New York Dramatic Mirror* 15 Feb. 1890:11). Ultimately, they weren’t able to erode the Nordheimer’s hold on subscription sales and by 1894, I(saac) E(dward) Suckling (1862-1938) was manager of the Hart Massey Music Hall.

The typical process for ticket sales in Toronto at the time involved four steps. Initially, registered subscribers indicated a desire to attend a performance through a subscription agency. They then returned to select their tickets at later date. Finally, they or a representative arrived at the theatre to pick up their tickets at the box office. After registered subscribers ordered their tickets, the general public were able to purchase any remaining tickets.

For the Clench concert, subscriber lists opened at 10 o’clock on Thursday to a “brisk” business and closed the same evening (“New Academy.” *World* [Toronto]. 29 Oct. 1889:2).
Nordheimers’ store “was besieged [...] by subscribers wanting seats” (2). On Friday morning, seats were made available to the general public at 9 o’clock, and the World reported that it would be “doubtful if any seats will be left by night” (2). Ticket prices were seventy-five cents and a dollar, prices typically associated with elite entertainments.

With a promising array of talent and a full house, all seemed ready for a unique and rewarding opening performance at the AOM; all was ready but the theatre itself. Construction on the new AOM was behind schedule with just a week to opening. The World reported that “[o]ver fifty men were working at the new AOM last night under the electric light” (“New Academy.” World [Toronto]. 29 Oct. 1889:2) to prepare the theatre for the November 6th concert.

2.4.2.3 Inside the AOM.

The management had promised Toronto that the new AOM would be “as beautiful and complete in its appointments as the best modern designs would permit” (“The New Academy of Music/ Filled to...” Globe [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8). As it turned out, the theatre opened with the house and lobby ready for business but all upper service rooms and backstage facilities under construction. In addition to electric lighting, the new theatre included many novelties for Toronto audiences. The stage was not as deep as its rival’s, the GOH, but was seven feet wider and the auditorium was raked. Parkhurst, who was enchanted by the new AOM, observed that “[e]ach row of fauteuils is raised above the row immediately in front, an arrangement that all people who have experienced the unpleasantness of occupying seats in a concert room all placed on one level will instinctively appreciate” (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8). The drop-curtain, designed by Buffalo artist William Baldwin, depicted “Toronto Bay in summer with a number of craft gliding over the familiar water” (“The New Academy of Music/ Filled to the Doors...” Globe
[Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8) and was advertised as the largest in Canada perhaps because of the additional width of the stage. The image on the curtain was a departure from the classical and European scenes found in Toronto’s other professional theatres and added another domestic element to the evening’s performance.

The theatre was a moderate size and accommodated between fifteen and sixteen hundred chairs which Metronome describes as “comfortable and roomy” (“Music.” Saturday Night [Toronto]. 16 Nov. 1889:6). The colour scheme, predominantly green in its appointments, was echoed in the upholstery on the chairs and the curtain lining the doors, stage and loges. Three wide double doors and steam heaters set in alcoves with mirrors above lined the walls and provided an illusion of spaciousness. The Globe reported that “[t]he gallery at the rear and the eighteen gallery loges, a new feature, will be the best seats in the Academy” (“Music and the Drama.” 7 Nov. 1889:8). These loges were "light in appearance, handsome in their appointments and very comfortable" (8).

Parkhurst also observed that the balcony or gallery did not hang so low as to obstruct the view for those sitting beneath it. At the time, the gallery was not supported by pillars that might block a view of the stage. (Photographic images of the renovated AOM, i.e., the Princess Theatre, after a fire 1915, show columns supporting a balcony (Fairfield 226). These may have been added in one of many renovations and call into question the theatre’s structural integrity in 1889).

The balcony opened onto what was then the unfinished second floor of the theatre where a ballroom/concert hall capable of accommodating six hundred people could be reached by an outside elevator. Reception rooms and supper rooms were also planned and the Globe promised the second floor would eventually contain an art gallery with art works “aggregating $100,000 in value, which would form a splendid addition to the city’s scanty art exhibitions” (“The New Academy of Music/
Filled to...” *Globe [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8*). The ground floor contained dressing rooms for the patrons and there were plans for a café.

The *Mail* reports that the theatre also planned facilities for set construction. These and the set scenery for the theatre were also unfinished (8) although the sets required for the Wood-St John theatre performance the next afternoon were in place. On opening night, theatre management hoped that the audience would overlook the theatre’s unfinished condition in recognition of the fact that they were entering what was fast becoming considered “the finest performance space in Toronto” (“Music and the Drama.” *Mail [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8*).  

2.4.2.4 Opening Night: November 6th 1889.

On the evening of November 6th 1889, the new AOM was packed. Parkhurst noted that “no space has been left unutilized as folding seats have been placed not only along the walls, but even on many of the doors” (“Music and the Drama.” *Mail [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8*). As events unfolded, the theatre’s unfinished state was the least of Manager Percival T. Greene’s worries that night.

While backstage tensions in the unfinished theatre were escalating, the performance hall filled with a brilliant group of patrons, as fine as any Toronto had to offer. In addition to Lieutenant-Governor Campbell and his daughter, Mayor Clarke and his wife, the daily press was able to report a list of Toronto’s most recognized citizens: Ex-Mayor McMurrich, J. K. Kerr, a local musical celebrity, the Reverend Septimus Jones, Rector of the Anglican Church of the Redeemer, Albert and Samuel Nordheimer, and rival manager Sheppard were all there. Also in attendance were Charlesworth’s wife, local pianist Kate Ryan and her sister Mrs. Austin Smith who occupied the last loge. In the eastern terrace sat Rev H. A. Baldwin and Col Shaw. Professor Ramsay Wright from the
University of Toronto was reported to be in attendance as well.

The evening of November 6th was windy and cool (World [Toronto]. 6 Nov. 1889:1) and the audience who entered the theatre to find a lobby full of “[w]aving palms, hydrangea, balsams and other foliage and flowers” (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8) took their seats for an 8 o’clock performance. The hall filled with chatter and laughter. Programmes rustled. Spyglasses were taken from pockets and bags. Considerate clientele removed their hats. The theatre’s resident orchestra played incidental music. By 8:30 the audience was still waiting for the performance to begin. At a quarter to nine a change in the programme was announced, and Mockridge and Moran-Wyman came to the stage to sing a duet. At this point the bewildered audience was appreciative of any entertainment, and they provided the popular vocalists with the customary ovation. Finally, after further delay, the featured performers, Clench and Bloomfield-Zeisler, performed in their scheduled order. Clench played a violin concerto by Mendelssohn, an encore of Souvenir de Posen by Wieniawski and Airs Hongrois by Ernst with encores of Legend by Wieniawski. All received ovations (“Music and the Drama.” World [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:2).

The next day, there were varied attempts by the press to account for the delay and the change in schedule. One version of events was that jealous Bloomfield-Zeisler had refused to play because she discovered her name to be in smaller print than the newcomer Clench (“Music and the Drama.” World [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:2). Parkhurst, writing for the Mail, describes a version of events that includes all performers incensed by Clench’s prominent billing in the programme and maintains that as a group turned on the younger performer (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8). Another critic claims that Bloomfield-Zeisler complained that a requested make of piano stool was missing and that she would not play until it was provided ("Music and The Drama." World
[Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:2). To appease the waiting audience, a plan to begin with Moran-Wyman and Mockridge was decided on; however, it was soon discovered that the sheet music for the improvised performance was lacking (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8). The ever reliable Torrington, present to accompany Mockridge only, agreed to play the piece by ear and the performance began.

Whatever the truth might be, the press uniformly chose to see this delay as the result of management oversights that led to the compromise of a new and vulnerable Canadian star in the making. The Globe went so far as to characterize her as the martyred "heroine of the [e]vening" (“The New Academy of Music/ Filled to....” Globe [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8). If billing was indeed the issue, then the more experienced artists had some grounds for complaint. The management most likely hoped to capitalize on Toronto’s affinity to one of their own, and all advance press does advertise Clench as the primary attraction. At the very least, critics felt, management should have mediated the situation. Metronome argues that a “little promptness of decision and a little peremptory insistence on ‘business’ would have relieved the management of the odium which was its share of the matter” (“Music.” Saturday Night [Toronto]. 16 Nov. 1889: 6). Unfortunately, no biography of Percival Greene is available although he is described in the paper as a “Toronto boy” (World [Toronto]. 29 Apr. 1890:8). There is not enough evidence to determine whether he was inexperienced and, perhaps, did not account for the egos of the senior performers, or whether he was acting on a management decision to give Clench precedence.

Parkhurst does suggest that Clench was shown unusual favouritism for an emerging artist, but he also critiques the posturing of Clench’s more experienced colleagues and argues that they should have been a little more tolerant. “[F]ew artists have made their professional debut under more
favourable circumstances” (“Music and the Drama.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8). “Few debut performers”, he argued:

had opened in Toronto with an audience comprised of one of most fashionable and music loving audiences it was possible to gather together upon an occasion of the kind - an audience eager with expectancy to be charmed by the playing of their young countrywoman, and ready to surprise her with a generous expression of the enthusiasm which inspired them. (8)

Parkhurst contends with the characteristic rhetorical evasiveness of the nineteenth century:

It is with regret that we have to say that the benefit which should have fallen to Miss Clench from the union of all these favourable circumstances was not only minimized, but even to a great extent turned to her disadvantage. We are loathe to blame the managers for the unfortunate events which placed Miss Clench in so cruel a position last night, but somebody was to blame, and if the facts are stated the public will know on whose shoulders to place the responsibility. (8)

An inauspicious beginning for President Thompson, Manager Greene and the new AOM.

2.4.2.5 Critical Response.

Reviews on the day following the concert consistently praised the new theatre but differed on the degree of Clench’s skill or readiness for a professional career. The critic from the *Globe* was impressed:

She [Clench] appeared last evening, after her absence, for the first time in Toronto, and the feeling that she was confronting the musical centre of Canada must have contributed in no small extent to a most natural feeling of trepidation. Yet when she came on stage she presented a most charming appearance, self-possessed, yet with a most engaging air of modesty and absolutely free from the slightest sign of the self-importance that usually characterises the early appearances of the budding star [...]. Of her playing one can only speak in the highest terms [...]. Her tone is large and strong, yet sweet and sympathetic, and her phrasing, though somewhat severe in feeling, is musicianly and artistic. (“The New Academy: Filled to....” 7 Nov. 1889:8).

*Saturday Night* also felt that Clench lacked a certain softness, a quality apparently found in the playing of the more practised Bloomfield-Zeisler:

She [Clench] has all the refinement and elegance, and certainly all the severity of her
school, yet I miss a something, best described as a tender, sympathetic quality in her tone, and which I think was due to both her own temperament and the instruction of Mr Joseph Baumann. [...] She [Zeisler] has a beautifully pearly, liquid touch which never loses its roundness and freshness, whether she plays loudly or softly. (“Music.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 16 Nov. 1889: 6)

In contrast, the critic for the *World* felt that both Clench and Bloomfield-Zeisler were wanting but recognizes Clench’s promise as an artist:

Miss Clench’s playing is not marked with much energy, but it is smooth, finished, full of sympathy and exquisitely attracting, and after the introductory reception the applause was given more to the artist than to the charming Canadian girl with the modest dark eyes. [...] Miss Bloomfield-Zeisler has considerable ability, but it is marred by her strained deportment. (“Music and the Drama.” *World* [Toronto] 7 Nov. 1889:2)

Overall Toronto critics recognized the talent of the Canadian novice but felt her moment to shine in a debut performance had been lost. The following passage is also from Parkhurst who, in customary form when it came to musical events, wrote at length about the concert:

Miss Clench [...] had been so excited by the delay and the attendant bickerings, that she was completely unnerved, and quite unfitted to play before an audience the exacting solos which had been announced for her. When she stepped forward to give her first number - the andante and finale of the Mendelssohn concerto - it could be plainly seen by those in the front seats that she had been greatly agitated. In fact, there were traces of tears on her cheeks. We shall not attempt to criticise her rendering of the concerto, because knowing the circumstances, and knowing, moreover, how Miss Clench can play this magnificent and unique composition, any criticism would, in the circumstances, be unjust. [...] We do not wish it to be inferred from what we have said that Miss Clench did not play the concerto in good style. Hundreds of violinists would be only too glad to play it half as well as she did last night. (“Music and the Drama.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1889:8)

Ultimately the controversy surrounding the performance did little to harm Clench’s reputation or career. While she did not return to the AOM, she did attempt to conduct a career in Canada for a brief time. An advertisement posted in a summer edition of the *Globe* publicizes that she can be booked “either separately as a violin soloist or with full concert company” (*Globe* [Toronto]. 6 Aug.
1893:15). Just four years after the AOM debut however, she finally went the way of so many Canadian performers in this period and left the country to practice her craft elsewhere.

In Clench’s case this meant immigration to London. There, she received critical acclaim and played for Kaiser Wilhelm and Queen Victoria. “‘There has appeared a great wonder,’ a London reviewer declared of her performance in 1893. At the close of the decade, the London *Daily Times* reports that 'her performance must rank with the best yet given in London' in 1899” (qtd. in Button). At the opening of the new century she founded the all-female Nora Clench Quartet, a group known for its avant-garde music and at the age of forty-one, she married Australian artist, Arthur Streeton. In 1922 the couple left for Melbourne. (Button)

2.4.3 The AOM 1890 - 1896.

The AOM’s drama offering on the evening that followed the Clench concert was considerably less controversial. In fact it received little attention at all, critical or otherwise. Advance press of the Wood-St John Company describes manager George W. Wood as a former manager of “several London theatres in which he appeared successfully as a star in some of the most difficult roles” (“Music and the Drama.” *World* [Toronto]. 4 Nov. 1889:2), and his Garrick Comedy Company as “one of the most attractive combinations travelling in Great Britain” (2). In other words, George M. Wood and his partner were part of the rank and file of the road.

The AOM juxtaposed musical and local entertainments and touring performances until the end of April (See Appendix A). On the 26th Manager Greene received his first benefit performance, a production of *Othello* and was praised in recognition of a successful season, but the following clipping hints that all was not well:

> The Academy of Music closed last evening for the season. [...] The past season had been uphill work, but he [Greene] was closing the house after a most successful run.
He thanked the press, believing that without their assistance the Academy would have been a failure. Manager Greene promised that next season the house shall be the handsomest in the Dominion, as over $25,000 was to be expended.” (World [Toronto]. 19 May 1890:2)

The World reports the same spring that this renovation will be sponsored by a change of lessees:

C. H. Garwood, who will assist Mr. Whitney in his lesseeship of the Academy of Music next season, was in the city yesterday and returned to Detroit last night. Mr. Garwood gave a flowery picture to The World last evening of all the handsome things that the new owners of the Academy would put in their theatre. In fact it is to be so thoroughly transformed that those who have seen it this season will not recognize it. The cost of remodellation, it is said, will be $20,000 and it will be completed by Aug. 1 next. (“A Bird in His Profession.” World [Toronto]. 25 Apr. 1890:2)

This, then, marks the beginning of the eventual control of legitimate Toronto theatres in the nineties by Detroit-based circuit manager C(larke) J(ames) Whitney (1832-1903). Under Whitney’s management, the AOM became a home for touring theatre only. Early in its history, the concert hall - theatre ceased to be a venue for musical concerts (See Chaper Four), and both touring performers and locals returned to making use of the city’s established, if ineffective, performance venues: the Pavilion, the Mutual Rink, the Crystal Palace, the GOH, TOH and a variety of other temporary spaces. Late in 1894, the city, with a growing music practice was still in need of a suitable home for such entertainments.

2.5 Music finds a home in Toronto - the Hart Massey Music Hall.

When Massey bequeathed the Hart Massey Music Hall and its land in 1895, a venue in which drama was not particularly welcome, it was understood that, in keeping with Massey’s Methodist faith, the space would be used for improving lectures and musical concerts only. The patriarch of the Massey Manufacturing dynasty, descended from a family of Puritans who had settled in Salem,
Massachusetts. Hart’s grandfather Daniel moved the family to Upper Canada in 1807 and began the business that would make the family name. Hart Almerrin Massey was born in Haldimand, Ontario on 29 April 1823. In 1852 he became partner and manager of his father’s foundry and machine-shop, and in 1855 his father retired leaving his son in control. The Massey manufacturing company moved to Toronto in 1879 with Hart as president and by 1890, under his guidance, the company developed into the largest manufacturer of farm machinery in Canada.

Initially, Massey donated the land for his new cultural temple with the understanding that it would be exempt from property taxes, but city councillors were wary. They knew that Massey intended to supervise the management of the space, purportedly as a means of assuring that entertainment was consistent with the Massey image and tastes, but some suspected he had ulterior motives. As manager of the music hall he or a surrogate would receive a salary, and the donation of the hall afforded an excellent opportunity for tax evasion. Perhaps because of his eccentricities and contradictory spending habits - he was famously frugal in personal spending but simultaneously capable of ostentatious displays of wealth - Massey was not popular or trusted in the city. Paul Collins describes Massey as:

>a gaunt towering figure in a silk hat and frock coat who made punctuality a fetish and philanthropy a duty. Promptly at 6 a.m, come sleet, rain or storm, he flung wide the door of his home and plucked the morning Globe from the mat. Once when a newsboy was late he stood in the elements for twenty minutes in gown and slippers to reprimand him, then sent his coachman over with a new winter outfit for the ragged lad. [...]

He lived in a high Victorian Mansion, bristling with peaks and turrets and cupolas, which was the epitome of the Gilded Age. It had twenty-seven rooms, eight bathrooms, eighteen mantel pieces and a pantry so large that it later rented out as a three-room apartment. The windows were leaded and stained, the walls alfrescoed, the ceilings gilded, the floors inlaid, and the tile mosaiced. (Collins)

Ultimately City Council did not grant the Hart Massey Hall exemption from municipal taxes,
and Massey and his family supervised management of the hall through their theatre manager, I. E. Suckling. The Massey Advisory Committee did, however, authorize the building of “a new performance hall at the corner of Shuter and Victoria,” and on June 5th, City Council proposed a somewhat disingenuous motion, led by Alderman Shaw, to honour Massey for his generosity to the city:

> With no desire to aggrandize himself, with but one noble object in view, and without asking for any privileges from the city, Mr Massey has, at a very large expense, provided a public hall which in time will bring within the reach of the humblest citizen musical and other entertainments of the highest order. [...] Mr Massey’s career as an energetic, successful business man is well and widely known, and his desire that the citizens among whom he has spent a large portion of his life shall share in the enjoyment of some part of the wealth which he has amassed, is deserving of public recognition. - We trust that the purposes for which the Massey Music hall is to be dedicated will be fully served, and this Council now desires to place the name of Hart Almerrin Massey on the honor roll of most esteemed citizens. (“The City Council.” Mail [Toronto]. 5 Jun. 1894:4)

At this point all seemed resolved between Massey and City Council, but before the resolution was passed, Alderman Gowanlock objected, holding that the business would come into competition with theatres and performance venues operating at the time. GOH manager Sheppard had additional concerns:

> At this point, Alderman O.B. Sheppard, asked that Alderman Shaw read the chief clauses in the deed dedicating the building to public uses. It was explained that the building could only be used for the purposes set forth in the deed and that no more than a total of $1,200 could be paid as directors’ salaries, if they receive any, and that if for any cause the building has to be sold the price realised shall be given to certain charitable institutions and shall not revert to the Massey family. (Minutes of the Council of the City of Toronto. 4 Jun. 1894:149)

Sheppard as manager of the GOH and the AOM by this time did not vote on the motion to thank Massey nor did he vote against it. It seems that he was willing to bide his time and see if the Hart Massey Music Hall business cut into his revenues. Alderman Shaw’s resolution carried. Alderman
Gowanlock cast a single vote against it. (149)

The building was now cleared for construction but not without further dissent. Massey’s employees and rural clients let it be known that they believed the hall to be an example of “showy self-indulgence” on Massey’s part and felt that the agricultural community that contributed to the Massey fortune should benefit from his gains, not Toronto (Kilbourn 25). For Massey and the majority of city councillors, however, the Hall was a gift to the city and its regions, to its citizens from all walks of life. They believed the music presented in its auditorium would be elevating, the talks educational and improving, and as the Mail reports:

> The Massey Music hall will no doubt be a great incentive and help to those pure recreations and sweet enjoyments which help to smooth the path of daily life, and it may be hoped that the popularization of high-class music, and the bringing of the masses within reach of the noble works of the greatest masters on a scale hitherto unattempted in Toronto, will be among the fruits of this benevolent enterprise: while the provision of such a hall for public meetings will, it maybe supposed, mark a fresh epoch in the life of this city. (“The Massey Music Hall.” Mail [Toronto]. 7 Jun. 1894:4)

The Hart Massey Music Hall opened with a production of Handel’s Messiah on June 11th, 1895. William Kilbourn has written extensively on the opening of Massey Hall in his history, *Intimate Grandeur: One Hundred Years at Massey Hall*, and those interested in learning more about its opening and history should consult this work. For the purposes of this chapter, it is necessary to understand that the opening of the venue provided the city with a concert and lecture hall that seated 3,500 and was considered to provide the best acoustics in the city, some claimed the best in the world. Designed by local architect, Sidney Badgley (Kilbourn 21), it was inspired by the Alhambra Palace in Spain, the Alhambra Theatre in London, and architect Louis Sullivan’s (1856-1924) design for the Chicago Auditorium and Opera House of 1889. The interior was described as “opulent and Moorish in atmosphere and embellishment” (22).
The opening also marked a high point for the career of Fred Torrington who conducted the initial performance and led a group of “choristers, most of them trained by Torrington himself” (12). It was reported that “the orchestra members, themselves chiefly teachers and performers in local musical theatre or vaudeville,” and the “four fine soloists, are all more than adequate to the exciting occasion and the great music” (12). This performance was afforded the highest category of patronage and was attended by Governor-General Aberdeen himself as well as the Lieutenant Governor and many local dignitaries and social leaders. Aberdeen’s response to his invitation was printed in the local press and placed stress on the “practical utility” of the facility as an educational tool. (“Music and the Drama.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 26 May 1894:12)

Ultimately, Massey Hall was built as an attempt to merge charitable and commercial interests. It joined several levels of patronage, official and otherwise and brought native and touring interests under one roof. After opening, it became the home for local groups such as the Mendelssohn Choir, the annual Toronto Music Festival and concerts performed by a variety of local choirs and musical societies. What it did not do, with full intent, was provide legitimation for local drama in Toronto.

2.5.1 *Music and the City.*

While young Canadian musicians who were serious about a professional music career, such as Nora Clench, felt compelled to further their education by sailing to Europe to train, it remained the case that by the end of the eighteen nineties a fledgling homegrown musical practice and composition had begun in Canada that presented growing opportunity to those who wished to participate in local musical performance. In addition to the sheet music of folk tunes and popular songs sold at Nordheimers (25,000 pieces of sheet music were sold in Canada between 1849 and
compositions in choral music, opera, sacred music and operetta had been written and performed by Torontonians. *Romanza*, part of an orchestral suite in E minor composed by W. O. Forsyth (1859-1937), “premiered in Leipzig by the 134th Regiment under Alfred Jahrow on 5th December 1888, and was subsequently performed by Torrington’s Orchestra with the composer conducting” (136). Eva Rose York (1858-1938), editor of the city’s *Music Journal* saw her oratorio, *David and Jonathan*, performed in 1887 (137), and the Toronto Choral Society performed the cantata *Gulnare*, or the *Crusader’s Ransom* created by Francesco D’Auria (1841-1913), “an Italian-born conductor, voice teacher, and composer” (137) in 1892. Music was part of an elementary school education in Toronto, and one could continue one’s musical education in one of the three music colleges or privately with one of the cities many music teachers. If the pupil were so included he or she could participate in one of the city’s amateur choirs, orchestras, music festivals, concerts or performances of operettas. If fortunate, he or she could perform professionally at concert halls and theatres as Clench and Mockridge had done. In another context, a Toronto citizen could work in one of the local piano and musical instrument factories and manufactures or work for a company that published sheet music or sell these instruments and sheet music at the city’s music stores. For a great many in Toronto, the appreciation and practice of music were entrenched in their day-to-day activities.

Alternatively the three professional theatres in town, funded by American interests, didn’t encourage a native Toronto drama or offer locals the scope of activity that local music did. When they weren’t dark due to cancelled bookings or financial crisis, these theatres did offer Toronto’s citizens a choice of three performances every day but Sunday, but the actors were rarely Canadian, even more rarely Torontonian, and plays written by Canadians were few and far between. If an actor
left Toronto for a career on the stage, he or she rarely returned for longer than three evenings a year. Throughout the nineties the professional theatre in Toronto was not widely supported by the manufacture of a local material production as it was the case with the music industry, i.e., no locally-produced published drama and only one professional resident company, the Cummings Stock Co., which was also managed by and made up of Americans. Furthermore there was no training for professional actors other than that offered by H(arold) N(elson) Shaw (c1865 - 1905) (See Chapter Five) late in the decade. Although some prominent businessmen such as Manning and Thompson had funded the building and maintenance of professional theatres, by the end of the decade they found themselves in league with the Theatrical Syndicate. Ultimately, there were simply more opportunities for musicians in Toronto as well as more economic support and more social legitimation as music was perceived as more respectable, particularly through its direct ties to a church-based practice. If one wanted to practice theatre in Toronto, it was most likely as an amateur and ideally, for a worthy charitable cause.

2.6 Charity and Amateur Benefits - The Marriage Dramas.

2.6.1 The “City of Churches”: Charitable Entertainments.

One of the most effective ways to participate in a dramatic performance in Toronto during the eighteen nineties, and at the same time escape the taint of decadence associated with participation in the theatre, finds its genesis in the need for funding to charitable organizations. In the late nineteenth century, municipal charitable institutions received set funding from the government on the basis of “the amount of work done,” but also from “contributions received by it from other sources” (Biggar 247). These government sponsored charitable bodies were divided into three classes: 1.) hospitals, 2.) houses of industry and refuge for the aged and indigent poor, and 3.)
orphanages and “Magdalen asylums” (247). Under the Act of 1874, each hospital received twenty cents for every patient, houses of industry received five cents for each “refuge mentioned in the schedule” (248) and orphans and asylums, one and one-half cents per day for each inmate (248). In addition to this base amount, during the eighteen-nineties:

[a] supplementary grant, not exceeding one-quarter of the amount received by the institution from all sources was to be made at the following rates: To hospitals, ten cents per day for each day’s treatment of a patient; to houses of refuge two cents, and to orphanages, etc., asylums one-half cent per day and inmate; and a maximum amount was fixed in each case beyond which no aid should be granted. [italics mine] (Biggar 248)

By the nineties, establishments eligible for government grants had increased to “eighteen hospitals, twenty-one houses of refuge and twenty-five orphanages” (248). The rate in the seventies and eighties was initially fixed at $42,000 but increased by the nineties to $198,841. Therefore, while government funding was necessary to the survival of these institutions, it profited them to seek additional revenue. One source of financing for charitable institutions was to hold fundraising entertainments. The Marriage Dramas, an amateur performance that celebrated the institution of marriage in “all countries,” held on the behalf of the Homeopathic hospital and performed at the GOH on December 16th - 18th 1892 was one such production.

Notions of charitable responsibility in the city of Toronto were linked to political theories of the “general good” and to the doctrine of the various churches in the city. Toronto, when not boasting of its reputation as a “Musical City,” prided itself on another label, “the City of Churches”, (Crawford Taylor 162) and by association its reputation as a moral community. Increasingly used as an ironic title to signify a dogmatic hypocrisy, the label “Toronto the Good” has its roots in a widely-held conviction that Toronto was a model Christian centre. To provide a sense of the health and scope of worship in Toronto, Crawford Taylor records that churches in Toronto increased from
As is evident the overwhelming majority of Torontonians were Christian Protestants with the largest
congregations being Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian. The Anglican Church was the most
powerful and influential church in Ontario and was also the most visibly supportive of charitable and
musical entertainments. It was not unusual to find the names of Anglican clergy and their families
in the newspaper lists of audience members throughout the decade (See Section 2.3.4.5). However,
with a resistance to professional theatre present in all faiths, the need to link entertainment to worthy
Judeo-Christian philanthropy was the most satisfactory method of redeeming the practice for many
Torontonians.

2.6.2 Toronto’s Homeopathic Hospital.

It was all the more expedient, then, that the production of the *Marriage Dramas* supported
more than one worthy cause; it both funded a suitable institution and promoted one of the most
central of church values - the preservation of the family through marriage. The charitable beneficiary
in this case was the Toronto Homeopathic Hospital.

The hospital’s founders were recognized and respectable social leaders in Toronto: Sir Adam
Wilson (1814-1891), one-time partner of Reform Party leader, Robert Baldwin (1804-58) a lawyer.
and judge, and first mayor of Toronto to win by popular vote in 1859/60; Judge McDougall, Mr. J. D. Nasmith, city counsellor, and a Mr. Fred Roper who is given primary credit for organizing the *Marriage Dramas* performance.

The rapid growth of the Homeopathic Hospital left it in constant need of funds. It quickly grew from a “small dispensary for the sick poor” (Middleton 639) in 1888 on the corner of Richmond and Victoria Streets, a facility that provided service for one hour a day, to a dispensary, located at Richmond and Duncan, that could accommodate eleven patients at a time. The next stop was a large house located at the corner of Shuter and Jarvis Streets. At this stage it could now provide care for thirty-two patients with a nearby house serving as a nurses’ residence. In 1890 a training school for nurses was established (639).

When the *Marriage Dramas* took place, the Homeopathic Hospital was looking to fund an expansion and board members determined that a charitable entertainment featuring the sons and daughters of Toronto’s finer citizens would bring in necessary revenue. A *Saturday Night* reporter writes: “It is a meritorious object, and one which appeals to all alike, for many a poor sufferer will be the better for the new hospital. Toronto people are noted for their liberality and goodness of heart, and I hope to chronicle a fine harvest of shekels from the Marriage Dramas as a Christmas gift to the new hospital” (“Social and Personal.” *Saturday Night* 11 Dec. 1892:4).

2.6.3 *Getting Married in Nineteenth Century Toronto.*

The papers describe the *Marriage Dramas* as a form of performance known as an “entertainment.” In this period, this term typically refers to a performance that links a variety of performance elements, e.g., dance, set speeches and recital, skits or stage business and *tableaux vivants* similar to those practiced by Queen Victoria and her children for private amusement. Based
on a written text prepared by Arlington, Massachusetts resident Charlotte H. Allen (?-?), the scenes, which juxtaposed historical and ethnic representations of marriage with portrayals of marriage found in recognized paintings, were intended as a celebration of the institution of marriage as practiced in history and as represented by the fine arts. This is subject matter that had certain relevance for the young eligible participants and the parents who would attend.

A copy of a text titled *Marriage Dramas* is available in the New York Public Library’s “History of Women” collection. It is not the performance text although some scenarios are included. Rather it contains the historical context for each scene, illustrations and some “scenes.” A handwritten letter by Allen accompanies the text in which she forwards a copy of *Marriage Dramas* and informs the recipient of a new project she is working on that it “has quite a chance to make money.” On the basis of this comment and in the absence of biographical information about Allen, it appears that she promoted and directed “educational” performances across North America. The text also contains reviews in the form of endorsements from New York, Buffalo, Boston, Philadelphia and Providence, Rhode Island papers, and appears to be a promotional tool.

*The Marriage Dramas* is a curious choice for the directors of Toronto’s Homeopathic Hospital. Curious because meaning in the text was produced through a mix of Canadian and American agencies, and curious for the time because its representations of a patriarchal marriage institution appear to be mitigated through a feminine if not feminist bias that is nonetheless prepared for an audience that would have been predominantly conservative in their values. It is less curious when one considers the Anglo-Saxon privilege that underscores the majority of Allen’s historical glosses.

One possible reading of the text as reported is that there was a form of liberal feminism at
work in these vignettes, an arcing narrative of brides who contribute as equal partners to their husbands in a mutually beneficial spiritual and social union. Ultimately, however, the *Marriage Dramas*, taken as a whole, is a celebration of romantic love. It is a narrative that shows how the bride through history seeks her true match with the hope that together they will face any obstacles that come their way. This construction in more in accord with critic Jane Radway’s argument that romantic fictions by woman authors empower women because they are able to direct and control the behaviour of their male characters in such narratives, a power they couldn’t secure from a patriarchal social and legal system.

In *Courtship, Love and Marriage in Nineteenth Century English Canada*, Peter Ward argues that nineteenth-century marriage “could only be understood in its social setting,” that “[m]arriage was as much a public as a private event, and the processes leading up to it are as much of social as of personal concern” (4). An understanding of the place of marriage in nineteenth-century Canada, he feels, results from the recognition of two conflicting themes: “One is the community’s ongoing interest in the reproduction and defence of the family as a social institution. The other is the couple’s search for privacy and intimacy in the face of public intrusiveness” (4).

However, while the institution of marriage in Canada protected and nurtured family, both church and the patriarch of families fought for control of its dependent members. Marriage was “both a sacrament and business” (19). For example, in nineteenth-century Canada, marriage controlled the sticky problems of “illegitimacy” and a woman’s property rights (33). At this time, it was less clear who controlled the property and welfare of women in their transition from daughter to bride. Fathers were viewed as the natural and rightful director of family rights and possessions; however, when a woman left her parent’s home, her husband, a father in the making, controlled the majority of her
worldly assets (31), not always to the satisfaction of the bride’s father. Still, the church saw it as a woman’s duty to “obey and serve” her husband, while, for participating couples in the late Victorian era, romantic notions of love and marriage were increasingly based on notions of mutual consent.

Even so, a married Toronto woman’s legal rights in 1892 were few in comparison to those of her father and husband, and a woman had few means of escape from this form of oppression, if she did, in time, come to view it as such. There was no civil divorce in Ontario until WW1 (37). The divorces that did occur were statutory and rare, so much so that between Confederation and the turn of the century, Parliament granted a mere seventy-one (Ward 37). According to historian Lee Holcombe, until reforms were introduced in 1884 “the law relating to personal property held that all such property that belonged to a woman at the time of marriage, and all that she acquired after marriage were her husband’s absolutely. He could use and dispose of this property in any way he chose during his lifetime without his wife’s consent” (qtd. in Ward 39).

Ward argues that marriage and church marriage laws were viewed as a means to protect family rather than a system of patriarchal oppression: “The law gave no consideration to equality within the family. Instead it lent its support to the solidarity of family life” (49). Still, a growing Suffragette movement in Canada argued that a number of women may not have felt this way. Many such women believed that fundamental civil and legal rights had been denied them, and their growing discontent resulted in a slow political reform.

Throughout the late nineteenth century, Mowat introduced legislation that was increasingly inclusive. His brother-in-law remembers that this began with election reform that increased the number of eligible voters beyond privileged city landowners. Married woman were included in these reforms:
Among the more important Government measures [...] was an Act extending the rights of married women so as to provide that every woman married after July 1, 1884, should be entitled to hold as her separate property all real and personal property belonging to her at the time of marriage, or afterwards acquired in any employment, trade or occupation carried on by her separately from the husband, or by the exercise of any literary, artistic or scientific skill. The Act also declared that contracts by married women should bind their separate property, unless the contrary intention was definitely expressed. Another Act secured to wives and children the benefit of life insurances effected by the husband or father; and the Municipal Act was amended so as to permit widows and unmarried women to vote at municipal elections, if they possessed the necessary qualification in respect of real property or income. (Biggar 363 - 64)

Still, Toronto could only seem attractive to eligible females looking for a husband in the late nineteenth century. Statistics show that young Canadians of both sexes “would not only marry but marry younger - women considerably younger - than if they lived almost anywhere else in western Europe or North America” (Ward 56). The average age of men marrying between 1891 and 1895 was twenty-five, the average age of women was twenty-two (53). Paradoxically, only ten per cent of adult women escaped marriage although spinsterhood was on the increase. And there was no significant difference in marriage statistics between town and country. Ward points out that: “[o]n average men and women in rural Ontario married at the same point in their lives as did their town and city cousins” (54).

Women living in this period may not have believed themselves to be fortunate when it came to marriage, however. In 1891 for every one hundred eligible females, there were 113.2 eligible men. “Single men of marriageable age always outnumbered single women in the province at this time” (60). Ward also feels that Canada had an advantage in gender politics. He conjectures that: “[e]ven though we still know little about the circumstances of both women and men in nineteenth-century English Canadian society, the available evidence suggests a community with gender boundaries much more sharply defined than our own, yet rather less rigid than those of most contemporary
western European nations” (65). Despite election reform, greater social freedoms for women and an increased female work force, the greatest guarantee of security for woman in the eighteen nineties was granted through marriage.

Ward observes that: “[p]opular amusements and recreations” were one recognized forum for courtship, partially because “city women in the 1880s and 1890s enjoyed unprecedented freedom to move about in public. New opportunities for work and leisure drew them out of the home and into the community, away from the supervisory gaze of their relations and neighbours” (86). Nonetheless, “[b]rides and grooms showed a strong preference for marriage partners of like religion and, among British immigrants at least, perhaps a slight one for someone of the same ethnic background” (63). It appears then, that the representation of the marriage rituals in the Marriage Dramas on stage was only part of an off-stage practice of courting and social ritual, a play of play within a play.

The larger social drama surrounding the performance of the Marriage Dramas allowed the participants, the young people and their parents, to control entry to and participation in the ritual. As sociologist Erving Goffman observes:

As a general rule we make ourselves open to social encounters. But not all encounters are welcome or suitable, and therefore, we admit or bar others according to our beliefs about what relationships are desirable. The boundaries of social engagements are particularly important in courtship, for they determine the size and content of the pool of potential mates. The circle of friendship was as much a spatial as a social reality. By examining the physical setting of courtship we can learn much about the social constraints on romantic love and the extent of feminine autonomy in the making of marriage arrangements. (65)

The young people who attended the Marriage Dramas were from Toronto’s professional and moneyed classes. Charitable causes aside, those who participated in this entertainment came together to celebrate, negotiate and, ultimately, perform their social standing.

While the performance of the Marriage Dramas succeeds as a grand courting ritual in which
young eligible marriage candidates placed themself and their talents on display, there is no Canadian marriage represented in these tableaux. The ceremonies portrayed in the Marriage Dramas can only be viewed as the validation of a Canadian marriage institution if they inferred a favourable comparison through its absence or granted it status through différance. In either case, in the absence of a national art at the time, Canada was silenced, unable to enter into such a discourse. The Marriage Dramas is yet another instance of Canadian artists and audience being sent to the College of European Culture, this time, via the United States.

2.6.4 The Grand Opera House: 1892.

The Marriage Dramas, a series of tableaux depicting “Weddings of All Nations” (World [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2), was just one of a number of community performances and benefits that appeared in Toronto’s GOH, Toronto’s most enduring first attraction theatre, throughout the decade. Located on the south side of Adelaide between Yonge and Bay, the GOH was owned until 1903 by Alexander Manning, an architect, builder, and land developer of Irish descent who had been Toronto’s twentieth mayor (1873). His terms as mayor - he served an additional term in 1885 - are remembered for his anti-temperance stance and a campaign to beautify the city.

After Charlotte Morrison left the GOH in 1878, the theatre was briefly managed by Augustus Pitou (1843-1915). Pitou was a New Yorker of French extraction who had been an actor in Edwin Booth’s (1833-93) company (Charlesworth More Candid Chronicles 277) and, after, a member of John Nickinson’s stock company. When manager of the GOH, his chief aide was a young Sheppard, who became manager in 1889 after Pitou returned to the rigours and profits of stage management and the road.

There is no description of the theatre in 1892 but reports spanning the decade suggest that
the decor favoured Italian Renaissance motifs. The press refers to frequent renovations in all theatres throughout the decade and a newspaper column written at the beginning of the 1889 season suggests that the GOH underwent renovations of some type every summer:

> Things looked spick and span around the Grand Opera House last evening, and everything is now in readiness for the opening on Monday. Manager Sheppard has given his theatre its *usual annual overhauling* [italics mine ...]. The dressing rooms have been re-carpeted and embellished, for which the visiting companies will be truly grateful; the auditorium has been made handsome and easy, for which the public will be well pleased; and above all the ventilation has been made perfect, thus doing away with that dull heavy smell so characteristic of the modern theatre. (“Everything O.K. at the Grand.” *World* [Toronto]. 31 Aug. 1889:1)

This article is of additional interest because it shows that Sheppard had quickly established himself as a presence in the Toronto community and was well on his way to earning a reputation as “the leading impresario of first attractions in Toronto” (Charlesworth *More Candid Chronicles* 278) by the 1889 theatre season.

In 1898, the GOH advertised itself as having seating for 1750. This would be a projection for maximum seating, a total which included a flexible number of seats in boxes and chairs added along walls. In practical terms, the GOH had permanent seating for approximately 1200 clients. The lobby, decorated in olive and gold, was “heavily panelled in Italian style with recumbent figures in the central frame” (“Music and Drama.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 25 Aug. 1898:12). The house was painted in “rich reds, cream, and ivory, with plentiful use of gold” and with ornate and heavy panelling on walls and ceiling (12). Allegorical images spanned the proscenium arch; “Cherubs [...] waging warfare, throwing red and white roses across an exquisitely tinted sky” (12) were intended to signify the War of the Roses. The drop curtain, painted by William Drake, was a scene of “Monte Salvatore and Lake Lugano, in the north of Italy. Women [wash] clothes in the foreground and a fishing boat is in the middle distance” (12). While it is not known if Sheppard donated his stage, or provided favourable
rates for charitable performances, those in a position to bestow charity chose the GOH for such entertainments most frequently throughout the decade.

2.6.5 The Marriage Dramas.

2.6.5.1 More Patronage.

The press coverage for this entertainment was considerably greater than that afforded most amateur performances throughout the decade. All papers featured the same pre-written press release, a rare occurrence as advance press typically varied from paper to paper, and one that suggests an uncharacteristically organized and sympathetic press coverage (See Chapter Three). Perhaps the publicity agent had connections to the local daily papers or more likely, this was part of the service provided by Allen. After the performance there was detailed coverage of each scene, more description than criticism, in local papers. Furthermore, each scene was accompanied by illustrations, a practice that is not repeated throughout the decade. In fact, amateur productions rarely received other than the most cursory of press releases.

The advance press drew attention to the patronage afforded the production:

“MARRIAGE DRAMAS TO-NIGHT/And the Grand Will be Crowded With Fashionable People.” [...] The final rehearsal of “Marriage Dramas” took place last night and the performers acquitted themselves in a manner entirely satisfactory. The first performance will be given at the Grand Opera House to-night under the patronage of Lieut. Col. Hamilton and the Queens Own Rifles. The Lieut. Governor and Mrs. Kirkpatrick have announced their intention of being present. To-morrow night Lieut. Col. Dawson and the Grenadiers will be patrons while Lieut. Col. Davidson and the Highlanders do the honors on Saturday night. The Upper Canada College Cadets will have the Saturday matinee in charge. (“Marriage Dramas To-Night.” News [Toronto]. 15 Dec. 1892:5)

In addition to those who factored in founding the Toronto Homeopathic Hospital, the committee for organizing the performance included the prominent Ridout family, a Clarkson Jones and a Mr. S. Brush, who is described as an “indefatigable worker” in “the success of the affair” (“Weddings of
All Nations.” *World* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2). If anyone was in doubt that this was a performance connected to Toronto’s finest families, the *Globe* assured readers that “about 200 young people from well-known families” (“Marriages in All Lands.” 16 Dec. 1892:8) were performing and confirms that the audience at the opening included “[m]ost of the leaders of society and many of those best known in art and literature were conspicuous among what was a very gay and fashionable throng” (“Weddings of All Nations.” *World* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2); furthermore, it was a partisan audience that assured applause and numerous ovations: “Nearly all those on the ground-floor of the theatre were in evening dress, and the greater majority had either relatives or intimate friends among the performers” (“Marriages in All Lands.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:8). In addition to the "distinguished patronage of the Lieutenant-Governor and Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Lady Gzowski and Lady Macpherson" (“Social and Personal.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 11 Dec. 1892:4), the audience seemed to include at least one parent for each participant. *Saturday Night* provided a lengthy list of patrons for each evening (“Social and Personal.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 17 Dec. 1892:4). Notably Canadian journalist John Ross Robertson (1841-1918), city editor of the Toronto *Globe* from 1864 till 1866, and founder in 1876 of the Toronto *Daily Telegram*, was in attendance. In addition to his editorial duties, he was one of the key promoters of the Lakeside Home for Little Children in 1883 which would become the Toronto Hospital for Sick Children.

The performance was sanctioned, not only by political and social leaders, but the military as well. Students from Upper Canada College appeared at the Saturday matinee and the paper provides a list of one hundred and four “lady patronesses,” many of whom had surnames that were recognizable as belonging to politicians, media figures, merchants and industrialists (4).
2.6.5.2 Opening Night: December 15 1892.

On the evening of the performance, the papers reported fair weather with a gentle westerly wind. (*World* [Toronto]. 15 Dec. 1892:1) Patrons on their way to the theatre could take advantage of a pre-theatre meal at a variety of restaurants within easy distance of the GOH, some in the theatre itself. The Grand Opera Restaurant for example specialized in oysters and advertised 22 cent dinners under the management of an F. Creed. (“Advertisment” *World* [Toronto]. Nov. 1889). The theatre also housed Jake’s Virginia Restaurant at 18 Adelaide, a twenty-four hour house restaurant that featured “Oysters in 15 styles” and claimed to be “the cleanest and cosiest first-class restaurant in the city” (*Advertisment World* [Toronto]. Apr. 1890).

In many respects, the amateurs performing the *Marriage Dramas* put the professionals involved in the Clench concert to shame. The performance began on time and proceeded with no reported controversies and only one minor technical mishap. It was introduced with a brief recitation by Lauretta A Bowes. A pupil of Shaw’s recently-formed Conservatory School of Elocution, she served as the production’s Greek Chorus. As the *Evening News* explains, in this case a Greek Chorus was “one speaker who supplies to a scene its foreground of history and comment” (“Marriage Dramas.” *News* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2). She introduced the performance in verse setting the scene in the marriage ritual’s prehistory:

The heirs of all the ages we  
Look down the slopes of history  
Till in tradition’s mist we see  
The dumb beginnings of man’s life  
In the one story of the wife.  

(“Marriages in All Lands.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:8)

We only have two examples of Bowes’ text and can only infer how she contextualised each scene after the first. The production was comprised of a total of nine scenes and *tableaux vivants* (ten on
the final evening) as follows:

1. “Marriage by Capture.”

The text in Allen’s primer for the scene titled “Marriage by Capture is as follows: “In the earliest days of the world, so severe was the struggle for existence that it was considered a necessity to slaughter nearly all the female children. This disturbed the balance of the sexes and the men were so much more numerous than the women that the only form of marriage possible was by capture. (2) Allen provides no source for this information other than the legends of “Greeks, Hindoos, Romans, Chinese, Scandianavians, Gauls and Celts” (2).

While the first two scenes show portraits of women in bondage, the audience certainly viewed these acts as distanced by history and origin from their nineteenth-century context. Still, a disturbing suggestion of eroticism, particularly in the second, can be found in the reporting of these two vignettes given their themes of slavery and rape. The press describes the first scene as set in a primeval forest by a camp fire. A “barbarian maiden” (8), joined by others with flowing fair hair and dressed in earth colours, plaits flowers into wreathes in an idyllic setting. Suddenly, two men with “long shaggy hair like the primitive Saxon race” (8) disrupt the scene, grab the women and carry them off. The *Globe* reports that “The struggle for liberty and [the] successful overcoming of their fainting victims by the men was highly realistic and won loud applause” (“Marriages in All Lands.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:8). One can only conjecture whether the applause was for the faithful rendering or the successful conquest. One clue may lie in the fact that all newspapers describe the scene in nostalgic terms. The *Empire* recognizes the costumes as the “rugged garments of ancient Britain” (“Marriage Dramas at the Grand.” *Empire* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:8) and *Saturday Night* claims the scene “recall[s] the earliest Saxon days of our forefathers” (“Social and Personal.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 17 Dec. 1892:18).
2. “Marriage by Purchase.”

Allen describes this scene titled “Marriage by Purchase” as a “step of progress” (3) and further qualifies the acts represented by countering that the “Anglo Saxon groom bought his wife from a trustee” (3). The scene was a virtual representation of painter Edwin Long’s (1829-91) *A Babylonian Marriage Market* (1875). His painting, a romanticized treatment with a classical setting, depicts an Oriental slave market in hazy yellows, muted reds, and soft browns. It seems that this tableau again chose a sentimental rendering. *Saturday Night* describes the scene: “The girls, who are types of beauty from all lands, are waiting to be sold [...p]urchasers, Babylonian nobles, Arabs, Turks and Greeks” (18) wait to buy. An auctioneer dressed in Oriental style wore a long flowing yellow garment and a Katie Peters is described as making “a very lovely picture as she stood upon the block to be purchased” (18). The papers describe little action in this scene; it was a live reproduction of a recognized painting.

The use of Long’s painting in this tableau privileges its audience on two scores. First, it allows audience members to share in the collective recognition of the work by a celebrated painter thus distancing them from those not privy to an education in the fine arts. Secondly, it allowed the audience to sympathize for the unfortunate while distancing themselves culturally from the act, an example of nineties’ Orientalism. The *Empire*’s description of the scene is a direct quote from Allen’s promotional text which indicates that the press, and perhaps the audience, had access to it: “the barbaric splendor of the age was shown in the magnificent specimens of the oriental races who stood anxiously waiting to’ buy. [...R]ich Babylonian nobles and citizen, Bedouins, Arabs and
Moors’ all assisted in the silent but magnificent tragedy” (qtd. in “Marriage Dramas at the Grand.” Empire [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:8; Allen 5).


In Allen’s text the Jewish wedding tableau comes after the Roman suggesting that Allen initially intended a chronological organization in these early scenes. In Toronto she has grouped the Jewish wedding with the Babylonian making for a thematic grouping around representations of Orientalism or the Exotic. This may be partly because the Toronto audience would include few, if any, Jews unlike some audiences in other cities Allen’s production played in, New York in particular. In Toronto the scene is described as: “one of the best of the evening,” and “a superbly rich oriental picture” (8). This Jewish wedding service was “all life and movement and coming immediately after the still scene of Babylonians had a thrilling effect with the audience” (8). The World describes the scene: “A beautiful and dramatic arrangement of Oriental costumes and scenery, symbolical ceremonies and dancing enlivened the proceedings. Vari-colored gowns and scarfs ruled; in fact, according to ancient Hebrew costumes, Joseph’s coat of many colors must have been in the pink of fashion” (“Weddings of All Nations.” World [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2).

The scene offered a faithful rendering of an arranged Jewish wedding ceremony. This was followed by a performance by an “itinerant dancing girl [Clara Brown]” (“Marriages in All Lands.” Globe [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:8) who danced to much acclaim from the audience. Then the dance torch-bearers and guests were led in a “triumphal march” to the bridegroom’s house. At the first performance the canopy-bearers became entangled with the drop curtain temporarily (“Weddings of All Nations.” World [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2).
4. “Marriage Among the Romans. (Allen 5)”

The “Roman Ceremony” was not so much the rendering of an ethnic wedding, as it was an opportunity for the young female performers to show their skill at performing fashionable Delsartean poses. In Allen’s text, she is careful to distance the Roman wedding service from the Anglo Saxon where: “the ring was placed by the bridegroom on the end of the bride’s thumb, then on her first finger, then on the second, denoting the Trinity, lastly on the fourth or marriage finger, showing that next to God her duty was with her husband” (5).

The scene began with a group of maidens circling the bride who stood atop a raised dias surrounded by attendants with torches. Her bridegroom entered and handed a key, “symbolic of her power” over him. Then they passed their hands through fire and water. (“Social and Personal.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 17 Dec. 1892:18) A dance followed in which a Miss McGillivray led nine young vestal virgins dressed in “purest white” (“Marriage Dramas at the Grand.” *Empire* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:8) through their poses.

François Delsarte (1811-71), a French acting and singing teacher, opened his first *cours d'esthétique appliqué* in 1839 and his school of movement became a popular form of activity for young privileged ladies when it was transported to North America. Canadian poet Bliss Carman, who was not alone in his contempt, felt that it was a form of artistic expression that was frequently abused by teachers and students alike. In 1899 he wrote:

But of all the expositions of bleathering [sic] inanity into which modern faddism plunges with so light a heart, the revelations of so-called Delsartism are the most absurd. Here [are] a group of grown-up men and women, [...] who ha[ve] allowed themselves to be "taken" with their arms draped in meaningless curves above their heads. Here was another knot of maidens in Greek garments, disposed in melting curves of varying imbecility. Here a figure was yearning over a tamborine in the pose of the crouching Venus. (Carman)
To be clear, Carman does not intend to discredit Delsarte, whom he believed to be a scientist and an artist, but the effete affectation of his disciples. There is no indication in the press that the participants in this scene of the *Marriage Dramas* abused Delsarte doctrine, but given the little preparation time afforded them, it is unlikely they mastered it either. In either case, the scene was well-received. The *Mail* reported that: “The effect was undoubtedly the most striking of the antique series. While it was in progress the applause was continuous, and the scarf dance, an elegant but graceful exhibition, was enthusiastically encored” (“Music and the Drama.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2).

5. “The Indian Marriage Rite.”

In Allen’s promotional text, the “The Indian Marriage Rite” is the longest section, suggesting that this scene had special significance. Much of what she describes has little to do with the scene rendered in the *Marriage Dramas* however. Instead, she writes at length of the unrequited love affair of John Smith and Pocahontas and goes on to chronicle the Indian princess’ visit to England where she was received with: “royal honors, the Queen kissed her on both cheeks, and the King would not permit her to kneel before him. But not so with master Rolfe, he gained no favor, and the king turned his back contemptuously upon him, remarking: ‘The silly loon has dared to marry royal blood, he, a subject, a simple gentleman, without my consent’” (11). She finishes her narrative by describing an accidental meeting between Smith and Pocahontas at a performance of Smith’s friend William Shakespeare’s production of *The Tempest*. According to Allen, Pocahontas dies shortly after this meeting of a broken heart.

Taking Allen’s notes into account, it is difficult to know how to interpret the Indian Marriage Ritual of Pocahontas to Rolfe presented in the *Marriage Dramas*. If the audience had the text
commentary available to them, this ceremony would be another example of a bride marrying against her will; however, there is little doubt the scene is intended as a celebration.

In Toronto, the scene had special significance because it included a performance by First Nations social pioneer, Dr Acland Oronhyatekha (Peter Martin, 1841-1907). Despite its American subject matter, reporters in Toronto chose to view the wedding as having special correspondence to Canadian culture and held it to be a “fitting example of the ceremony observed amongst the Indians of North America” (“Marriage Dramas at the Grand.” *Empire* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:8).

In the scene, a Hunchback named Raw Hunt who according to Allen served as a messenger for Pocahontas during the period she was held prisoner by American colonials, is the first to appear followed by a number of “Indian squaws”. They all erect a wigwam and sit around the fire. At this point, a type of period fashion show began. Rolfe entered leading a fashionable party. He is described as: “striking in knee breeches, silver-buckled shoes and costume of the time of James I” (“Social and Personal.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 17 Dec. 1892:18). He is followed by Pocahontas who wears “a short yellow dress, very much trimmed and embroidered with beads and decorated with feathers” (18), and a group of braves including a Chief played by *The Marriage Drama* organizer and composer Breau, who wore “a scalp jacket with scalp tufts” (18). Rolfe is also accompanied by the Colonial Governor, who is attired in the same style, but with a brown cloak trimmed with fur. After him another set of “Saxon” girls, some of whom were dressed in “buttercup” satin, large white collars, sashes and caps while others “looked most demure and fetching in plain brown and gray dresses, white kerchiefs folded on their shoulders and little caps on their heads” (18). When all are assembled and the wedding conducted, a number of Indian games were played, the pipe of peace smoked, an Elk dance danced, a “squaw” blindfolded, and “great fun is caused by
the chase of the Hunchback” (18). Oronhyaekha was included with the wedding guests.

Oronhyatekha’s presence was a rare example of entry by a First Nations individual into Toronto society during the nineties. Oronhyatekha whose name means ‘it [is a] burning sky’ was a mixed-blood Mowhawk born on the Six Nations reservation, near Brantford, Ontario. While still a student, he was asked to deliver an address to the visiting Prince of Wales (King Edward VII). The Prince was taken with the young man and invited him to study at Oxford. When his education was complete, he returned to Toronto and practised medicine. Oronhyatekha/Martin contributed to many charitable causes throughout his lifetime and among his many achievements was the founding of the Independent Order of Foresters where he held the office of Grand Ranger from 1881 until the time of his death (Smith). His appearance in this scene, no doubt, was considered an endorsement of the scene’s authenticity for audiences.

Not all were convinced, however, and some reporters expressed doubt about the historical accuracy of the costumes in particular (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2). Still, the branding of the native bride notwithstanding, the scene provided what was considered a satisfying portrait of racial equity and harmony. (This theme of accord between British settlers and natives is one that will reemerge in Merritt’s When George the III was King (See Chapter Five)). Saturday Night reported that “there was more life and action in this marriage than in any of the preceding ones” (“Social and Personal.” Saturday Night [Toronto]. 24 Dec. 1892:4).

After the scene, “[a] dance, cleverly executed by Miss Olive Walker, was received with prolonged applause, and the curtain fell on the first half of the show amid prolonged and hearty demonstrations of approval from every part of the crowded house” (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2).
An intermission with the Varsity Banjo and Guitar Club followed. They played: “a brief but clever performance comprising of the March Varsity - Characteristic Patrol, [and] ‘Pride of the South’” (2).


The second half of the evening began with a tableau of “The Russian Wedding Feast, “ a return to the representation of works by recognized painters, “a living portrayal” in this case of A Boyar Wedding Feast (1883) by Konstantin Makovskii (1839-1915). It is the most recent of the paintings featured in the Marriage Dramas, and the only one rendered by a living painter. Makovskii was a member of the Russian school of painting, the Wanderers in the early eighteen nineties, a group who were known for their renderings of what were then considered realistic treatments of folk or village life.

The choice of Makovskii’s painting is indicative of a change in tone in the second half of the performance. After intermission, the mood lightened and the remaining scenes are more satirical in their treatment of marriage, most accompanied by song, music or humour. This opulent scene featured a wedding group gathered around a table. After a toast by the father of the bride, a Mr. DuMoulin sang a toast in response. The Mail reports that “Mr DuMoulin has an uncommonly good voice, and in answer to a loud encore this gentleman sang a second time” (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2).


“The Dutch Peasant Wedding” based on the Peasant Wedding (1650) by prolific Flemish painter David Teniers the Younger (1610-1670) was next. A festival of song, music and comic
antics, the reviews found this scene, which included a clog dance, to be “the most comic” of the evening. The scene featured a piper who stands on a barrel and “plays until he fairly split his sides laughing.” (“Social and Personal.” Saturday Night [Toronto]. 24 Dec. 1892:4) What provided the humour, other than, perhaps the novelty of a wooden shoe dance or contagion of the piper’s laugh, is lost to time. The World also felt that this scene full of dance and humour, “had more human nature in them than any of the evening” (Weddings of All Nations.” World [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2).

8. “Japanese Wedding.”

The “Japanese Wedding” was particularly topical and fashionable in 1892, and perhaps, for this reason, was saved until late in the program. Parkhurst remarks that “[e]ver since the Mikado became a world wide craze a Japanese scene is very effective on the stage” (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2). Furthermore Saturday Night felt that “the scene was so realistic and attractive that it would require the pen of Sir Edwin Arnold [1832-1904], who is so enthusiastic about Japan, to describe it” (“Social and Personal.” Saturday Night [Toronto]. 24 Dec. 1892:4).

The scene began with the majesty of a middleman on a raised dias at USC. Musicians played on one side of the stage. Saturday Night describes the scene: “Two butterflies or mistresses of the ceremony,” entered waving “gauzy yellow” butterfly-like sleeves, with butterflies in their hair. They motioned the guests to their place on each side of the room while guests reclined on floor. “On the table stand two figures, which are supposed to represent the first man and woman. A stork is also represented, as no Japanese scene would be complete without one, and several other objects, all being symbols, as well as butterflies, who are types of wedded bliss” (4). When the wedding ritual was over, Miss Emma Brown led a dance in which the guests, with large butterfly fans, joined under coloured light.
Here we have Bowes’s second direct quote. It supports a thematic structure focused on romantic love:

Sweet olive-browed maid of Japan
Lift your dark eyes just over your fan
And confess soft and sweet
That you think as is meet
One man (of all men) the manifest man.

(“Marriages in All Lands.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:8)

Certainly, the tone of the tableaux had progressed from conquest and unwilling partners to one of mutual consent and shared love over the evening. The final scene would feature a couple who willfully take the ceremony into their own hands.

9. “Gretna Green” or “The Elopement: A Farcical Comedy in Pantomime.”

The final tableaux presented on the first evening of performance and in Allen’s text featured the elopement of a young couple. If clichéd in plot, it nonetheless provided a resolution to a series of tableaux that in one form or another deny the marriage couple autonomy. The young couple in this scene elope to Scotland where the law does not require their parent’s consent to marry. Allen’s text provides a detailed scenario for this scene. It reads like a silent film scene:


10. “Highland Wedding.”

On the final evening another scene was added, one that compromised any previous themes
of emancipation, a scene that was, at the same time, derived from one of the most romantic of popular authors, Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) and, like the previous scene, no doubt appealed to the many Scots in the audience. This scene ended with a “marriage of capture” if a somewhat more willing and romantic one. The performance of this Highland wedding scene for the final performance of the run, it is reported, was for benefit of Col. J. L. Davidson and his regiment who served as patrons on the night. The segment is based on the wedding of Scott’s *Young Lochnivar* and included a Highland Fling and sword dance (“Music and the Drama.” *World* [Toronto]. 17 Dec. 1892:2). The poem was a popular choice for entertainments in general and it is likely that it was recited as the drama was enacted (*Popular Entertainments* 131). This is the only original Torontonian contribution to Allen’s series of tableaux.

The scene began with the marriage of the “fair Ellen” to an unwanted bridegroom (Rex Stovel) “whose make-up was a marvel of hideousness” (“Social and Personal.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 24 Dec. 1892:4). The ceremony is stopped by the entrance of Young Lochnivar, “who, after drinking from the goblet of welcome, treads a measure with the bride, and carries her off before guests or relatives can interfere” (4).

The scene reportedly served the occasion:

Large audiences greeted the presentation of the Marriage Dramas last Thursday and Friday evenings, but the Saturday night’s gathering of the clans outnumbered both the previous ones. On all three evenings the uniforms of the officers and men of the three volunteer regiments who successfully patronized the performances, lent an air of brightness and *ton* to the very beautiful gowns and piquant faces of the fairer portion of the audience. Everyone was there. The boxes overflowed with bevies of laughing and interesting *grande dames*, [sic] or uniformed officers, and, literally, all went merry as a marriage. (4)

2.6.5.3 Critical Reception.

The reviews for the sold-out run were enthusiastic and kind for the most part. The
Mail records that it was “one of the prettiest shows of the kind that we have ever had in Toronto” (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2) and gives credit to the organizers: “As a first performance by amateurs the event was a most gratifying and marked success, and reflects the highest credit on the ladies and gentlemen, who must have given much careful training to produce such a successful ensemble” (2). Saturday Night agreed that “Miss Allen and Mr Louis Breau did wonders in successfully training such a large number of amateurs in such a very short time, and their energy and skill are much appreciated” (“Social and Personal.” Saturday Night [Toronto]. 24 Dec. 1892:4). The critic from the Mail is more candid:

‘Marriage Dramas’ [...] affords scope for much effective posing, but interest lags occasionally, owing to the unavoidable similarity between the different scenes. [...] There is, however, a great deal to be said in its favor. The costumes are all beautiful, the scenery is appropriate, and the young people acquit themselves well. After all, any slight defect is readily overlooked, because those who go are, as a rule, interested more in scrutinising the faces and movements of those they know than in finding fault. (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2)

Saturday Night’s critic (note that this was also the publication that provided the most extensive coverage of the event) was not impressed and reported that: “[t]his cannot be said to have been a brilliant week on the Toronto stage [...] the Marriage Dramas that completed the week, charming though they were, cannot but be regarded as other than [a] unique social diversion [...]” (“The Drama.” Saturday Night [Toronto]. 17 Dec. 1892:4).

In the end, the Marriage Dramas had been conceived of as a opportunity for Toronto’s young people to come together and socialize while participating in a worthy cause. In both senses it was successful: “A vast number of Toronto’s fairest women have been pressed into service in this work of charity, and their admirers made their presence known both by applause and floral tributes. The performance closed by 10:30” (“Weddings of All Nations.” World [Toronto]. 16 Dec. 1892:2).
In addition, it provided the occasion for a number of parties for participants and family alike as the following two society postings show: “A very lovely party was given by Mr. H. Irish to a large number of his young friends, among some of whom are not yet full-fledged society people. (“Social and Personal” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 11 Dec. 1892:4), and the following:

The chaperones of the Marriage Dramas gave a *soiree dansante* to the performers, at the Grace Homeopathic Hospital, Thursday evening, December 22, from eight to twelve. It is needless to chronicle that a lovely time was the result, and a fitting end put to what was a most successful and enjoyable effort on the part of Toronto’s bright young folks to aid a very deserving cause. (4)

The *Marriage Dramas* raised twelve hundred dollars for the Grace Homeopathic Hospital (“Social and Personal.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 24 Dec. 1892:4). Amateur entertainments designed to raise funds for charitable causes continued throughout the decade and Sheppard made his stage available to such enterprises throughout his tenure at the GOH.

**2.7 Music or the Drama?**

If one is to consider the reasons a national drama didn’t develop in Toronto at a time when there was a call and a movement to develop native dramas in both Britain and the United States, and when the professional theatre and drama and its practitioners were gaining greater legitimation in many European nations, Toronto’s privileging of the neighbour practices of amateur entertainment and musical performance provide an important contextual frame. The following chapters will show that producing professional theatre became increasingly difficult for Torontonians during the eighteen-nineties as American interests increased their already strong hold on booking rights and theatre ownership into circuits that controlled both legitimate and popular programming of professional theatre performance.

However, Torontonians also managed and attended the professional theatres in the city, and
it has been argued here that their attendance can be viewed as a form of theatre practice and ownership also. In this sense Toronto audiences “produced” a localized and native reception or meaning in response to a visiting representation or text. The following chapters show that Toronto’s theatre managers, theatregoers, the press and even those who abstained from the theatre altogether participated in a social practice that shaped Toronto’s relationship to the professional theatre and drama as well their situated identity.

3.1 A New Press and New Drama.

In the final moments of the third act of Sir Arthur Wing Pinero’s Problem play, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, Paula Ray Tanqueray, a woman with a “dark” past, who has recently married a wealthy and respected London widower is confronted by one of her previous companions. The reformed playboy, now a military hero, has come to seek the hand of her husband’s daughter Ellean. Until this meeting, he has been unaware of the identity of his prospective mother-in-law. After all no one in polite society would have expected her to marry so well. He pleads with Paula to keep their former relationship a secret. At first, she is not inclined to do so, but tells him she will reconsider if she can be assured that hiding their relationship will ensure the happiness of her daughter-in-law. With this small hope, the suitor exits leaving Paula alone. The second Mrs. Tanqueray then “walks unsteadily” (119) to the ottoman where her hand comes to rest on a small silver mirror. She picks it up and considers her reflection. Watching a drama that repeatedly draws a contrast between an individual’s social mask and one’s psychological or “true” essence, the audience is invited to consider the distance between Paula’s status and her experience.

When Victorian actor-managers the Kendals brought their production of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* on a tour of North America, a cast member’s recollections of this scene suggest that Madge Kendal, in the lead role, chose this action as the drama’s defining moment: “[A] lone on the stage, looking at herself in a hand mirror, her [Kendal] great art was fully revealed; for two long minutes she gazed, real tears welling into her eyes and coursing down her cheeks. No words were spoken, but the eyes transmitted to the audience the mind’s unspoken thoughts[...].” (qtd. in *Dame Madge Kendal* 267).
In Pinero’s written text, Paula Tanqueray’s gaze in the mirror is an ambiguous moment, one that opens a door to a number of choices for the actor playing Paula Tanqueray. Ultimately, when the Kendals brought their production to Toronto’s Grand Opera House (GOH) on December 17th, 1894, it was the choice and translation of Paula Tanqueray’s “unspoken thoughts” as interpreted by Mrs. Kendal that informed the critical reception of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* by Toronto’s daily press. When the city’s theatre critics came to write their reviews, most, who had read so much about the controversy surrounding this infamous new drama were bewildered. It seemed to them that Pinero’s latest play, while superior in style and execution, was merely a rehashing of the century-old theme of sin and redemption found in the nineteenth-century theatre’s many woman-with-a-past dramas.

Throughout the eighteen nineties, a period of transition in which the value of new cultural capitals was being negotiated, the relationship between the theatre and the daily press was, in many respects, a reciprocal one that was beneficial to both. Because of technological advances in typesetting and wire services as well as increased accessibility of telephones and cameras, the daily press was able to provide newspapers to a wider audience with greater efficiency. This led to increased competition as journalists tried to out scoop rival dailies and editors looked for innovative means to increase their subscriber base. A common tactic was to introduce specialty features on a wide range of topics from sports to fashion as well as weekend “magazines.” One strategy used by the daily newspaper of the late nineteenth century, keen to legitimate itself as indispensable to its readership, was the development of theatre and music sections.

These arts sections validated a newspapers’ prestige, while, in their turn, the journalists writing these columns sought to legitimate the theatre and their own cultural authority; however, this
mutually dependent relationship was compromised by the touring theatre’s business practice which was premised on a need to sell as many tickets as possible in the late nineteenth century’s weak economy. Touring producers, theatre managers and booking agents believed it necessary to select and market popular and profitable dramas for their circuits and issued advertisements and advance press columns that featured a hyperbolic rhetoric or puffery which promised sensation and spectacle. For late nineteenth-century critics, it was important that theatre be constructed as an educator with real social influence; for management, it was necessary to market theatre as a source of amusement and escape. Both were eager to legitimate theatre within the boundaries of their ideological and economic ends, and both used the new press as a medium to do so.

In 1894, Toronto could boast of seven dailies and one arts magazine. Music and drama sections, at one time associated with Toronto’s “quality” dailies such as the Globe or Empire, had become part of all but the least ambitious of these. The Globe, the News, the Mail, the Empire, the Star, the Telegram, the World and the weekly Saturday Night, all contained theatre advertisements and advance notices, and all but the Star and the Telegram included theatre criticism; however, Toronto critics and advertisers faced additional challenges not experienced by their colleagues in theatre centres such as London and New York. Journalists resident in touring destinations such as Toronto were required to promote and critique performances that lacked the cultural capital and entitlement associated with “original” creations performed in recognized theatre centres.

The hegemony of Western theatre practice that favoured legitimated centres and first-night performances became entrenched as newspapers reached larger audiences with greater immediacy at the end of the nineteenth century. In consequence by the nineties, Toronto, a stop on a network of touring combination circuits that initiated from larger and more privileged centres such as New
York, Boston, Philadelphia, London and Paris, could only be lesser in status or other if considered a producing entity at all. Furthermore, functioning within this late nineteenth-century practice, Toronto’s critics participated with the understanding that their response would be considered situated and, on some level, derivative, i.e., influenced by the practice and reception that had gone before. However, it can also be argued that this period saw the rise of a revisionist critical tradition in Toronto that was formed either despite or because journalists were denied access to “original” productions.

Certainly Toronto critic Charlesworth protested that a success in New York was not a guarantee of excellence on the road, and claimed that critics from touring centres were able to report on the changing and ephemeral quality of these performances most competently:

New York criticism or New York “wise-cracking” is important only for one reason. It is often less well-informed than the criticism of many smaller cities, but its warrant runs all over America. That is to say, an actor may give an inferior performance on an opening night in Buffalo or Montreal, and while it may affect local business, little is heard about it elsewhere. But in New York the verdict on a first performance is heralded everywhere, and if adverse it is hard to overtake it however much the performance may improve. (*More Candid Chronicles* 400)

Charlesworth, for one, felt that any performance by a touring company was open to fresh assessment although he also recognized that Toronto’s critical reviews were utterances that were both shaped and marginalized by the dominant discourse issued from the recognized meccas of theatre criticism. Another dilemma facing Charlesworth and his colleagues was that, because of the increased economic hold on theatre repertoire by booking managers in New York City, Toronto’s critics viewed very little of what is now considered important or innovative in the drama developed in Europe in the late nineteenth century.

With the exception of a single performance of *A Doll’s House* by Julia Stuart in 1895 and
an expunged version of the same play in 1896 by Minnie Maddern Fiske\(^2\), the New drama, the central innovation of the Modern theatre, did not visit Toronto in the late nineteenth century, nor did other significant developments such as Symbolism, or advances in the plastic arts such as Stanislavsky’s and Meyerhold’s work at the Moscow Arts Theatre; nonetheless, Toronto critics, Charlesworth and Parkhurst in particular, strove to be included in a broader critical discourse despite being compelled to review commercial touring productions only. In their columns, they preferred the popular standards of the nineteenth-century legitimate theatre, i.e., the historical dramas and well-made plays performed by established “stars,” to second-run or popular forms such as melodrama or vaudeville; however, when they compared Toronto’s legitimate touring productions to European models they had read about, as they did frequently, they found the former lacking. For these practical reasons, in their role as theatre critics they served both as educators and witnesses rather than as participants who might shape the evolution of a present dramatic form. Despite their best intentions, and in an attempt to legitimate their own discourse, they placed the ideal or worthy outside Canada and, in doing so, facilitated the myth that Toronto was a secondary theatre centre.

This chapter considers the extent to which Toronto theatre critics in the eighteen nineties, who wrote within the constraints of a politically and economically-skewed press, constructed themselves as cultural authorities on eighteen-nineties theatre performance and further explores a social practice attendant to the legitimate theatre in the city with the understanding that local critics reviewed few examples of what are now considered to be the key innovations of the late nineteenth-

\(^2\) Minnie Maddern Fiske [really Marie Augusta Davey], American actress, first toured Canada in 1896 starring in a production of Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*. She returned with *Hedda Gabler* (1903?) and *Ghosts* (1927). Julia Stuart (1867-1949?) brought her production to Toronto the week of October 28\(^{th}\), 1895. Stuart’s production, which toured almost a year after the Kendall’s *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* was the first production, Ibsen to play Toronto.
century theatre. It seems fitting then, that this chapter consider the social practice and critical reception of a production that was designed to mediate a course between the traditional and the new, a production that was advertised as a rendering of a radical new drama but in practice conformed in many respects to the conventions and themes of an earlier Victorian drama and theatre practice: Mr. and Mrs. Kendal’s production of Sir Arthur Wing Pinero’s *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*.

3.2 **First Nights First.**

The historiography of Western theatre performance privileges a pattern of leaps from one virtuoso event to another, most often a marker that is perceived to be an original or a “first.” Individual performances by practitioners and first-night performances in recognized centres are considered autonomous performance texts of value. The record of any single dramatic work’s history, then, rarely looks beyond an analysis of the process leading to a first-night performance. Frequently the assessment of a theatre critic who works for the popular media and who has reported on an opening performance serves as support to any claim that a performance is worthy. It is this initial evaluation, mediated through a number of hierarchical and situated determinants specific to her/is interaction with a social grouping or generalized other, that becomes part of any subsequent interaction between an audience member and theatre text in other sites. Whether an audience member views the original production or not, first nights and original productions become part of the collective theatregoers’ frame of reference when reading subsequent renderings.

The authority of the first night reaction in Europe and North America strengthened considerably in the nineteenth and twentieth century due to a web of determinants such as the development and privileging of survey and narrative schools of historiography, a persisting belief premised on Romantic ideology that the first performance text is the authoritative version because
it best reflects the playwright’s spontaneous agency and sublime state, and, most significantly for nineteenth-century Canadian theatregoers, because of the developing hegemony of critical theatre journalism, an influence that was strengthened through nationalist agendas in Britain and the US and the increased accessibility of newspapers facilitated by new technologies related to production and data gathering.

Indirectly, the positioning of the nineteenth-century drama critic developed out of Britain’s desire to supplant the dominant influence of the French and German drama and theatre on the English stage. Advocates for a national British drama such as essayist and poet Matthew Arnold and critic and playwright William Archer (1856-1924), championed the theatre critic’s importance in essays and proposals. It was the theatre critic, they argued, who would recognise and foster a domestic art and it was the theatre critic who should censure all counterfeits.

The term critic derives from the Greek *kritikos* and means to discern or judge. Censure, then, is inscribed in its practice; however, for Arnold, who had the most profound impact on the development of British arts criticism in this period, a responsible theatre critic should be a student of dramatic art able to recognize “an order of ideas which are universal, certain and permanent” (242). He argued that after due exposure to works of merit and governed by a willing act of “disinterestedness,” a true critic would be able to recognize and promote work of merit. Arnold believed that critics were artists in their own right and that their inspired criticism should identify and cultivate great works, that their vocation was to serve as shepherds to an ignorant flock, that they guide a wayward art form toward a canon of national merit (See Chapter Five).

His seminal text on criticism, *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time* published thirty-one years earlier had become the necessary guide for new critics by 1894; however, his proposed
exercise in national schooling had not developed into the erudite practice Arnold had hoped for. Because of the easy accessibility of the new press, first-night accounts by journalists of the daily and weekly periodicals came to both feign disinterestness and a cultural authority that was perceived as the first and most reliable document of record, but their competence and authority is a continuing subject for debate. Certainly, overnight deadlines and restricted mobility did not facilitate the careful study advocated by Arnold; nonetheless, for historians, these eye witness accounts are credited with providing an immediacy and authenticity that other first-hand records of performance such as memoirs and prompt books, with all their bias and omission, could not. In many historical accounts, a first-night critic’s perspective is understood to be representative of historically-situated cultural groupings with little or no direct evidence or support for this association.

Because journalists valued first-night performances primarily for pragmatic reasons, within the traditional paradigm of nineteenth-century theatre history, touring theatre productions are placed in a lesser position if they are considered at all. This prejudices any history of a theatregoing practice comprised primarily of touring-theatre productions and, by extension, weakens the prestige of local critical response. While the transportation of touring productions to new socio-cultural sites invited fresh readings, such criticism is often considered a re-view in the literal sense, not assessment without merit, but criticism once or twice removed. The paradox is that within the same theoretical arena that privileges and measures first-night reception, a generally acknowledged and contradictory myth exists among theatre historians, i.e., that every theatre performance is ephemeral and unique, that theatre is process rather than product. It is one that is not realized by many theatre journalists.

In addition to the changeable currency of privileged location, (London, New York, Stratford) the tyranny of the first-night theatre critic’s judgement evolved and strengthened throughout the late
nineteenth century; however, the impact on audiences by the seven periodicals providing theatre coverage in Toronto is difficult to measure. Certainly, because of the increasing control of touring repertoire by the Theatrical Syndicate in the nineties, Toronto’s situated critical reception afforded what little control locals had over a form that was, after all, produced elsewhere and constructed as, at the time, a form of universal social representation. It was the local press that reported the changes and advances taking place in the drama throughout Europe and the United States in the late nineteenth century. It was this local press that created an anticipation among Toronto theatregoers to see these new works, and it was this local press, often in response to the foreign press, that attempted to mediate and guide the taste of Toronto audiences.

Nonetheless, Toronto’s theatre critics wrote through a lens coloured by their own set of unstable psychological determinants as well as those that influenced their newspaper’s political affiliation and economic status. The political leadership of this decade is sandwiched between two tremendously influential, complex and expedient prime ministers, Conservative Sir John A. Macdonald and Liberal Sir Wilfred Laurier. In the five years that separated their administrations, Canada was governed by another four leaders, all Conservative, most with troubling administrations of divisive policy and scandal. The final break with Conservative orthodoxy in Canada is reflective of the desire for change and conflicted loyalties throughout the country. Editorial pages in the popular press debated the merits of old philosophies and new in all facets of Toronto social practice. The debate even influenced something as seemingly far removed from the life of Canadian politics as the criticism of touring theatre.

The two most recognized Toronto theatre critics in the nineties, Charlesworth and Parkhurst, were men separated not only by differences in aesthetic taste but by political ideology and a quarter
of a century of life experience. Their theatre criticism, written in the context of conflicting political patronage, was not only predicated on a need to win new readership, but by a concern for the role and direction of culture in the young dominion. For this reason, they and their colleagues writing for theatre columns in Toronto newspapers were eager to establish their place in an evolving international critical discourse.

3.3 “Everything Old is New Again”: A Legitimate Theatre?

3.3.1 What’s New?: Combination Tour Repertoire and Copyright.

While Toronto audiences viewed theatre productions that were relatively current to those seen in American and European cities, keywords such as new and original were unstable ones when it came to defining the late nineteenth-century drama. Robertson Davies protests, presumably in an effort to counter anti-touring-centre bias, that it is “a mistake [...] to think that Toronto was a theatrical wilderness in the early years of its history; it saw most of what was popular in London and New York within a year or two of its presentation in the larger cities” (31). This is true; however, while many of the first-run attractions, i.e. quality combination productions, came to the GOH during the nineties, little that they provided was progressive in plot or theme, nor was it uncommon for the combination companies that toured to Toronto to rework or plagiarise a text which they then advertised as original work. When it came to theatre performance in Toronto and much of North America, new was rare.

Throughout the nineteenth century, copyright law in Canada and the United States was precariously enforced if at all, and it was not an unusual practice for Americans to sidestep copyright claims by publishing and touring plagiarized texts in Canada where such texts frequently eluded prosecution altogether. To some extent, unethical practices contributed to Canada’s late introduction
to the New drama. Ibsen personally refused to visit North America, because he believed it to be “a
nation of thieves” and kept “a list of managers, actors, and actresses, very comprehensive, who had
produced plays of his without paying him royalties” (Charlesworth Candid Chronicles 300).

By 1895, copyright protection was an issue of such concern in Canada that British Pre-
Raphaelite artist, novelist, and dramatist (The Christian, 1897) Sir (Thomas Henry) Hall Caine
(1853-1931) visited Ottawa in the fall of that year to consult officials on a revised Canadian
Copyright Act, and as late as 1915 Quebec Senator Raoul Dandurand in parliamentary debate
protested that “British authors are complaining. French authors are complaining and it is not a small
matter. Thousands and thousands of plays are being stolen throughout the whole of Canada without
proper protection being given the authors, and I think we owe them such protection as will be
effective” (qtd. in O’Neill 190).

If plagiarism was rampant, it was also the case that first-run touring productions that had
some claim to original authorship were frequently predictable in form, content and execution.
Nineteenth-century playwrights in Britain and North America wrote to safe and familiar formulas
if they didn’t borrow directly from proven European successes, French or German models in
particular. Undoubtedly the lack of originality in these dramas is one of the reasons that the majority
of nineteenth-century English drama is viewed in such a derisive manner. Certainly it is telling that
Pinero remained one of the most successful British playwrights of the late Victorian period, although
he was consistently pursued by charges of plagiarism throughout his career. His plight was not
uncommon and his name can be added to a long list of successful nineteenth-century playwrights
who either faced the censure of theatre critics for stealing plots or, in extreme cases, were charged
with piracy in the courts.
However, if Pinero’s views are in any way representative of nineteenth-century writing practice, originality had an ironic connotation for many playwrights. Pinero defended his borrowing by acknowledging that although his plot lines might bear similarities to other works, they were stylistically unique. When influential London critic Clement Scott (1841-1904) accused him of stealing the plot for *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* from German playwright Paul Lindau’s (1839-1919) *Der Schatten*, Pinero protested in a letter to Archer (1856-1924), that his play was also similar in story line to an earlier play of his own, *The Weaker Sex* (1894):

> You will see here in this old play the same line of thought which directed the coincidence in *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*. Such theatrical tricks are hardly perhaps to be excused - unless the way they are used is in the manner that *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* pleads for them. My point is that these tricks are the common stock of playwrights and that the array of events which Lindau and I have marshalled together recently with some similarity I manoeuvred in much the same way nearly ten years ago. (qtd. in Wearing 151)

Pinero is suggesting that, for late Victorian playwrights, originality was identified with a reflexive signature style or voice rather than innovation of form, plot or character, not the lesson so much as the teacher. Again this privileging of a signature style may be related to a revival of the theories of the Aesthetic Movement in the nineties, most significantly by the successful posturing of Oscar Wilde who made the ironic and self-reflexive dramatist a vogue. Even so, it is difficult to identify any traits that would characterize much of Pinero’s work as novel except, perhaps, the unique extent to which he successfully borrowed from other playwrights, plots and stage business in order to produce profitable, topical and amusing hits. It wasn’t until Pinero began to write about his early experiences in the theatre in *Trelawny of the ‘Wells’* (1898) and *The Mind-the-Paint Girl* (1913) that his work took on an individual voice.
3.3.2  The French Drama, Bernhardt, Ibsen and... the English?

The dominant form of legitimate drama throughout much of the nineteenth century was the French well-made play; however, by the nineties the form had begun to lose popularity as Modern dramas, in particular Society and Problem plays, experienced long runs in major centres. Toronto’s relationship with the then influential French drama of Eugène Scribe (1791-1861), Victorien Sardou (1831-1908) and Alexandre Dumas (1824-95) and the theatre of Sarah Bernhardt (1845-1923), appears to have been a conflicted one. While these plays could be popular, they also invited disapproval because they flirted with what was considered immoral subject matter. In addition, because they were formulaic, they were rejected by some critics as trite, contrived and predictable.

The eighteen nineties was a particularly francophobic decade in Ontario’s political history, but it is difficult to determine if this animus affected the reception of French drama. The execution of Louis Riel (1844-85), the weakening of the French Lieutenant political partnership after Confederation, the debate over the Jesuit Estates Act and the Separate School Bill in Manitoba all contributed to antagonism against the French in Toronto and compounded antipathy between the two cultures. In addition, influenced in part by pro-Annexation journalists such as Edward Farrer (born Irish Catholic himself) of the Mail (1877-89) and Globe (1890-92), anti-papist sentiment in the province was high and caused many to further question the value of Canada’s federation with Quebec. However, one visit by Sarah Bernhardt in the eighteen nineties caused a boycott for reasons that, on the surface, appeared unrelated to ethnicity or repertoire.

3.3.2.1  Sarah Bernhardt and the French Drama.

When Bernhardt visited Toronto for a one-night performance of La Tosca (Sardou 1887) on October 29th, 1891, one newspaper, the World, provided a single reference to the celebrated
French actor’s production. Other than this, it neither advertised nor critiqued her performance. The *World*, an independent newspaper with protectionist political leanings, cites inflated ticket prices and Bernhardt’s lack of respect for North American audiences as the reason for its boycott:

Sarah and Her Snide Company/The maddest people in town on Friday morning will be the men who blew in $3 on Bernhardt and her third-class company the night before. Sarah is a great actress, but it is evident that the people of this country are getting tired of paying good American dollars to foreign artists who think anything is good enough for the barbarians of this continent.” (*World* [Toronto]. 29 Oct. 1891:8).

The *World*’s decision to protest the Bernhardt performance is an unusual one for the paper. In general, the coverage of Bernhardt’s performance by other Toronto papers was qualified but respectful in tone. All press stressed that the production was performed in a French that was little understood by its audience, and all stressed the prestige of the event, reporting, as did the *Globe*, a packed house of “fashionable theatre-goers and among them many faces of staid paterfamilias who cannot be drawn from their cosy chairs and firesides except by a Bernhardt” (“Music and the Drama.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 30 Oct. 1891:3).

There is a hint of disillusionment if not hostility in many of the reviews, however. The critic from the *Empire* snidely observes: "there is more of Sarah than there used to be when she visited Toronto ten years ago. [...] She would not yet do for the position of fat woman in a dime museum but there is now no danger that a sudden gust of wind may deprive the stage of its greatest emotional actress” (“Sarah in La Tosca.” *Empire* [Toronto]. 30 Oct. 1891: 8). Most frequently Bernhardt was renowned for her extraordinary slenderness.

Charlesworth, writing for *Saturday Night* at the time, is complimentary of Bernhardt’s skill. His review also foregrounds her ethnicity:“her acting is so pictorial that one understands it as well almost as if she spoke English” (Touchstone “The Drama.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 7 Nov. 1891:...
6). He also comments on Bernhardt’s fading voice feeling this has been brought on by a life of excess consistent with her “Gallic” temperament, by “the life she lives and her state of habitual excitement” and further displays a lack of patience with her eccentricities when he writes: “Bernhardt likes to be and have something out of the ordinary [...] she prefers to be odd” (6). In 1896, he would declare a preference for the naturalism of Mrs. Fiske over what he felt was the indulgence of Bernhardt’s emotional performances (“From the Foyer.” *World* [Toronto] 23 Feb. 1896:8). He believed that Sarah Bernhardt “with her golden voice and fiery soul” (Touchstone “The Drama.” 6) was unable to affect an appropriate stoicism.

Parkhurst, on the other hand, finds no fault with Bernhardt’s production other than the “repulsive subject” of the play itself. It is, for him, in the tragic scenes that Bernhardt excels, and he provides a detailed description of gesture and description in his review:

> Probably her strongest [...] effect upon the shuddering audience - is when her hand creeps forward to clutch the knife in which, despairing, she sees her salvation. Her attack upon Scarpia, the fatal blow, the frenzied reproaches and execrations she heaps upon him, as he lies helpless and dying at her feet, are an irresistible outburst of passion, too long pent up, and which must necessarily touch upon incoherency. The transition from this infuriated tigress mood to the hushed, awestruck utterances and movements of the woman as she realizes the presence of death, affords another proof of Mme. Bernhardt’s tragic powers. (“Madame Sarah.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 30 Oct. 1891:8)

In 1891, Sarah Bernhardt was forty-six years old and the French drama’s most recognized representative; yet, the resistance by the young Toronto critic Charlesworth to Bernhardt’s heightened style suggests that the French drama’s hegemony had begun to lose its fashion in Toronto as elsewhere.

3.3.2.2  Ibsen and a British National Drama.

In Britain during the late nineteenth century, a dissatisfaction with the hold of the French
drama on local theatres, and in particular with a lack of domestic subject matter invited a debate on the need for a national drama and theatre. Critics and practitioners advocated a home-grown subsidized theatre that was free of commercial pressures, one that presented original drama that had relevance for a British audience. Archer, in particular, looked to Norway and championed the psychological naturalism of Ibsen as a model for new British drama. The critic had translated many of Ibsen’s plays himself including *Hedda Gabler* in 1890, and productions of texts by Ibsen, most often given in matinee performances because of resistance by the British censor, had received limited critical success in London. In general, however, profit-minded theatre managers found Ibsen’s works to be too controversial with audiences and thus unprofitable.

American managers also provided resistance to the Scandinavian master’s plays although New York audiences were able to view productions by Elizabeth Robins (1862-1952) and others throughout the eighteen nineties. Daniel Frohman, like British theatre managers, found Ibsen’s drama to be unprofitable in North America: “The masterly quality of Ibsen’s plays in construction and character has made the Norwegian dramatist a model for advanced playwrights. But his subjects are unusually unpleasant, and as the success achieved by plays must be regarded from the point of view of the numbers who desire to see them, they are seldom a financial success” (*Memories of a Manager* 158-59).

Henry Irving, in interview with Charlesworth in 1895, felt that Ibsen remained controversial in the nineties: “We passed on to Ibsen, a moot topic in 1895. Controversy was still rife and most of Irving’s journalistic admirers in London were attacking the Norwegian in stupidly abusive terms. Irving was emphatic in the opinion that Ibsen was a marvellous master of dramatic construction, but would never be popular with the British people because of his choice of subjects” (393).
Archer never ceased to champion Ibsen’s work, however, and viewed it as a model not just for native English playwrights but, by kinship, for Canadians. In *A National Theatre: Schemes and Estimates*, written with actor-manager-playwright Harley Granville Barker, Archer calls for a national government-subsidized theatre that would tour a representative canon of British works to the provinces of Great Britain and her colonies. He proclaims that, “The acted drama ought to be, and indeed is, one of the great bonds of union between all Anglo-Saxon peoples” (xvii).

Archer and Granville Barker’s vision of a subsidized accessible theatre aside, theatre in Britain remained a commercial venture in the nineties, and if the English stage were to experience a renaissance of English playwriting, many felt that a more palatable and commercially successful model on which to base a national commercial drama might be found in the example of native son and Madge Kendal’s brother, T(homas) W(illiam) Robertson, whose cup and saucer realism in plays such as *Society* (1865) and *Caste* (1867) had assured the success of husband and wife actor-manager team Squire Bancroft (1841-1926) and Marie Wilton (1839-1921) at their newly-refurbished Prince of Wales Theatre in 1865. These domestic dramas had a decidedly English flavour to them and provided a more gentle social critique than Ibsen’s. Kendal describes her brother Tom’s plays as being founded on “real incidents and then developed […] imaginatively” (*Dame Madge Kendal* 19).

Robertson had died young, at the age of forty-two in 1871, and, by Victorian standards, he had not been prolific. It fell on others to fulfill his promise, and Robertson’s work certainly had a lasting impact on the young Pinero who had trained as an apprentice actor with the Bancroft company before turning to writing.

Born to Portuguese parents, part Jew, Pinero left a law career to enter the theatre when in his late teens. He would write fifty-nine plays over the course of his career, many of which featured a
light comic social analysis similar to that found in Robertson’s plays. At the peak of his fame in the nineties, Pinero was held by many to be the finest modern dramatist England had produced.

3.4 The First Mrs. Tanqueray and the Kendals.

3.4.1 The First Mrs. Tanqueray and the Second.

When actor-manager George Alexander’s (1858-1918) production of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* began its London run on the evening of May 27th 1891, critics quickly proclaimed this new problem play to be a work of genius. Even so, the success of Pinero’s drama was due in no small measure to the performance of the production’s lead actor. Most agreed that Stella Patrick Campbell, a haunting Pre-Raphaelite beauty, tall, brunette, painfully thin, with large dark eyes and a distinctive husky voice, had a luminosity that corresponded to her name. It would not take her long to establish herself as one of the great personalities of the Edwardian theatre with a reputation for onstage charisma and backstage temperament, a reputation that she further cultivated through extensive touring in Europe and North America. Due to the arrest and conviction of Wilde and a distaste for the radical political and philosophical views of another Irish national Shaw (1856-1950), Pinero retained his reputation as the most important British playwright of the nineties well into the twentieth century and was rivalled only by Henry Arthur Jones (1851-1929).

And *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, for all its controversy, was a commercial success. With a run of 223 performances (Wearing *London Stage* 312), no other new legitimate drama enjoyed so long a run. By comparison, Lord Alfred Tennyson’s (1809-92) *Becket* with Irving in the lead ran 117 nights (285) at the Lyceum, and the Bancroft’s production of *Diplomacy*, a popular translation of Sardou’s *Dora* by Clement Scott and B(enjamin) C(harles) Stephenson ran 174 performances (288) at the Prince of Wales. The previous season’s sensation, Wilde’s *Lady Windermere’s Fan*, enjoyed
Madge Kendal would later describe the impact made by the Alexander production:

[The year 1892] made theatrical history, for in it Sir Arthur Pinero’s, “The Second Mrs. Tanqueray” was produced at the St. James’s Theatre and was said to make a new departure in the Drama. It also made the reputation of Mrs. Patrick Campbell. Naturally, as the work of the author, it interested me profoundly and although, in the phrase of the time, Mrs. Tanqueray was a lady who had “frayed the hem of her petticoat,” [italics mine] my husband bought the play and decided to undertake another American tour and make it the piece de resistance of our programme. (Dame Madge Kendal 266)

Hoping to capitalize on Alexander’s success, Madge Kendal (née Margaret Shafto Robertson) and her husband, W. H. Kendal (really William Hunter Grimston, 1843-1917) bought the touring rights to The Second Mrs. Tanqueray from their personal friend and former business associate Pinero, and conducted a trial tour of the drama through the English Midlands in late 1893. Encouraged by their reception, they decided to bring the work to North America.

3.4.1.1 Introducing The Kendals to America: “The English Invasion.”

Mrs. Kendal constructs the myth in her memoirs that their first tour of the United States during the 1889/90 season was one fraught with risk. Her husband, she claims, had staked their entire personal fortune on the gamble that they would be successful in America. Untested in New York, unknown throughout much of the country, she characterizes them as two pioneers taking on a philistine American public. As such, the chapter titled “Touring in America,” is peppered with examples of the quaint backward ways of the Americans she encountered (Dame Madge Kendal 241-65). In truth the Kendals’ tour was a carefully calculated business arrangement with a reasonable assurance of success.

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3 Kendal may be referring to the 92-93 season in this quote. The Second Mrs. Tanqueray did not open until May 1893 although there may have been matinee performances before the opening.
Although they toured North America at their own financial risk, the Kendals arranged to pay American theatre impresario Daniel Frohman two percent of all profits in exchange for his booking their tour in his circuit of theatres (Dame Madge Kendal 242). Mrs. Kendal, most likely wary of associating her tours too closely with the unpopular Theatrical Syndicate, protests that Frohman had no other input into the organization, practice and reception of their tour; that her husband managed and financed all other aspects (Dame Madge Kendal 241). Frohman confirms that the Kendals did in fact pay all expenses (Memories of a Manager 104), but they are all splitting hairs here. The two percent they paid Frohman wasn’t a departure from combination circuit business arrangements in any monetary sense. The difference is that they paid Frohman directly rather than have Frohman collect the percentage from individual theatre managers. Later in the decade, the Theatrical Syndicate, with whom Frohman had close ties through his brother Charles (1851-1940), felt it was important that they be understood to have individual business arrangements with theatre managers rather than monopolizing theatre circuits or controlling repertoire by charging acting companies (See Chapter Four, Section 4.3.3).

Another misconception related to the Kendal tour is repeated by Charlesworth who remembers that Frohman played a direct role in the construction of the Kendals’ branding as exemplary family role models:

> When she [Kendal] first came to America, Daniel Frohman, recalling how P. T. Barnum had capitalized the chastity of Jenny Lind, spread a tale abroad that Mrs. Kendal represented all the virtues of the British matron. At that time, nearly everybody in America assumed that actresses were no better than they ought to be, and had grand times talking about it; and Frohman thought he was sounding a new note by celebrating the virtue of Mrs. Kendal. (Candid Chronicles 353-4)

There is certainly evidence of a considered promotional strategy in advance notices and advertisements (See Section 3.6 below), no doubt assisted by Frohman’s considerable experience
in advertising and his command and knowledge of regional markets are also apparent, but Charlesworth is wrong in suggesting that it was Frohman who was responsible for manufacturing and marketing the Kendals’ celebrated respectability. Rather the New York producer capitalized on an image that had been a long time in the making, one that certainly predates the Kendals’ visit to America. In fact, Mrs. Kendal misleads the readers of her memoirs when she claims that she and her husband arrived in America as unknowns. Rather, they were among the most highly celebrated of British actors at their time.

The obstacle the Kendals were required to hurdle was not anonymity but certain prejudices. When they began their American tour, they were both middle-aged, portly for romantic heroes, associated with a form of social comedy and historical drama that was considered dated by many, and... British. The bias of many American critics, who felt that British drama did not translate well to an American sensibility, was further challenged by the suspicion that the Kendals with their dated repertoire and performance style had begun to lose currency on either side of the Atlantic. To allay criticism, advance press stressed the Kendals’ many triumphs. Promotional columns highlighted the couple’s comic charm, Mrs. Kendal’s kinship to her popular and respected playwright brother, “Tom” Robertson, her inflexible claims to respectability and the Kendals’ patronage by no other icon of Victorian family values than Queen Victoria herself.

And these associations seemed to work in the initial phases of the Kendals’ first tour. In general, American reviews of the Kendals show that they enjoyed a brief honeymoon with American critics on the 1889/90 tour. When they opened with their version of Sardou’s *A Scrap of Paper* (1860) on October 7th, 1889 at the Fifth-Avenue Theatre, the initial reaction of the *New York Times* was favourable if qualified:
Mrs. Kendal is a splendid specimen of British womanhood. She does not look her years, her figure is handsome, and her motions are graceful. Her voice is as rich, full, and well modulated as a cultivated English woman’s can be. In the matter of facial expression her acting is not remarkable for variety. What is vulgarly known as a society smile generally illuminates her pleasant countenance. Her acting in this delicate comedy indicates her command of large resources [...]. The most striking feature of her acting [...] is the careful deliberateness with which she leads up to every point and the thoroughness with which she extracts from every situation every possible bit of effect. She seems to suggest nothing, but to do everything. It is quite evident that she has schooled herself during her long career to leave nothing to the imagination of the spectator. (qtd. in Pemberton 6)

However, criticism that had been cautious from the beginning became increasingly hostile with each of the Kendals’ American tours, and the introduction of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* in their second tour contributed considerably to their fading reputation.

All American critics agreed that the *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* was a failure. The decision to produce Pinero’s newest drama by the Kendals, a play so unlike any other they had performed previously, does suggest an awareness on the Kendals’ part that the subject matter and tone of the late nineteenth-century drama was undergoing a transition, but the Kendals, who had staked their reputation on performing plays that foregrounded their brand of Victorian “family values,” were ill-suited to Pinero’s drama of dark sub-text. Furthermore, at ages forty-seven and fifty-two, they were too old to be credible as the twenty-seven-year old Paula and thirty-something Aubrey Tanqueray. In the end, the Frohman/Kendal advertising strategies designed to promote the Kendals’ many accomplishments worked against this production, and it became increasingly difficult for Kendal to meld her ironic comic style and public image of propriety to the complex social outcast that was Paula Ray Tanqueray.

Moreover, Mrs. Kendal’s tendency to combine careful technique with deliberate exposition of character caused the critic for the *New York Times* to comment that:
The meaning of the play, however, is lost, or sadly blurred, if Paula is not represented as such a woman as Aubrey would be tempted to marry. The things she says and does are horrible enough, and they need no extravagant illustration from the actress to make the hopeless character of the woman understandable. Mrs. Kendal has rather increased than diminished the overemphasis she places on all Paula’s traits. She flings the meaning of almost every sentence at the heads of her audience. She lends grotesqueness to the role: indeed, in Act I. and II. she fairly burlesques it. Sentences that might make well bred folks shiver if they were uttered by Paula naturally, to show how strong a hold her past life has upon her amid refined surrounding, are spoken in a manner to cause laughter. (qtd. in Dame Madge Kendal ... 4)

This critic does go on to qualify his reaction by noting that the large audience attending the performance appeared to have “enjoyed itself immensely” (4).

If Mrs. Kendal’s relationship with the American media had grown increasingly strained, her willingness to grant frequent interviews in which she pontificated on the superiority of British theatre and morals, most particularly her own, no doubt contributed to her unfavourable press as well. Her spontaneous blunt manner was a frequent source of distress for Kendal. In her memoirs, she writes that she was “guided by certain principles from which [she and her husband] did not depart. One of these principles was to speak the truth as [she] saw it” (Dame Madge Kendal 29). Later in life she would recall, “During my professional career, I literally breathed enemies because I was truthful. I still do” (29).

The Second Mrs. Tanqueray was not performed in Toronto until the Kendals’ third tour. By 1894 the veteran British actors had come to expect a favourable reception in Canada; nonetheless, the American response, along with the British critical reaction to the original production, could not have failed to make an impression on Toronto critics even though they knew that it was not unusual for the American press to find themselves disaffected by British acting. Many critics and practitioners, among them Frohman, Kendal and Charlesworth, had observed the difficulty of translating a production from one nation to another.
Cultural barriers could mean financial ruin for a British actor/manager who mounted a tour for American consumption only to find it not to American taste. Consider the example of actor-manager, Mrs. Bernard-Beere, Britain’s original La Tosca. Bernard-Beere, (Fanny Mary Bernard-Beere née Whitehead, 1856-1915) acclaimed in the press as the “English Sarah Bernhardt” before she brought her company to New York was rejected by critics in her first week of playing; she returned to Britain humiliated, her career and reputation ruined until she was able to regain some measure of her status when Wilde promoted her for the role of Mrs. Arbuthnot in A Woman of No Importance (1895). According to Frohman, only the foolhardy or willfully trepidatious superstar risked an American tour (Memories of a Manager 153), and an American tour typically included Canada.

Canada, with no drama of its own and strong cultural links, could only feel an affinity to the British theatre and drama. According to Charlesworth, Canada had witnessed “all important English companies which came to America” (Candid Chronicles 349). This might suggest that British companies should have sought out Canadian audiences, but if the Kendals are any indication, they visited Toronto for only three of their five tours. In each case, they only played for three nights rather than the one to five week stay awarded many other American cities, some with smaller populations (Pemberton 289-90).

Charlesworth was so enamoured of British theatre that he goes so far as to argue that an “English Invasion” led by the Kendals in the later part of the century had a lasting influence on the style and content of American theatre in this period. Certainly, some of the most radiant stars of the eighteen-nineties were English, and whatever prominence Britain lacked in the written drama, they made up for in the plastic arts. Besides the Kendals, Irving and Ellen Terry, George Alexander and
Herbert Beerbohm-Tree (1853-1917) all had an impact on the American Stage; however, European luminaries Bernhardt, Tomaso Salvini (1829-1916) and Eleonora Duse (1858-1924), frequently toured North America and had considerable influence as well. Moreover with a thriving star system of their own, strengthened by the promotion of American touring circuits, Americans had begun to develop a taste for a domestic craft and practice, a taste that found much that was produced outside the United States not to their liking.

Fewer and fewer European productions performed on American stages as the decade progressed, so much so that by 1896 Charlesworth complained that a preference for, in his view, substandard popular American theatre was depriving Toronto of superior European and, in particular, British theatre:

> We on this continent, however, depend chiefly on New York as a centre of culture. Its sentiments and prejudices rule our theatre for us, and New York so frequently pronounces in favor of Barabbas that we must perforce take Barabbas too. Therefore, a paradoxical state of affairs exists. Although the dramas written for the English speaking stage within the last five or six years are the best that stage has known in more than a century; although the world over the thoughtful men of the day are looking to the drama as the most far-reaching vehicle for the expression of their thoughts, we on this continent have to be contented chiefly with what is trite and insipid and even vulgar. (Touchstone “From the Foyer.” *Sunday World* [Toronto]. 8 Mar 1896: 8)

Charlesworth believed Britain’s tradition to be greater than America’s and this explained their greater virtuosity in all aspects of production; “It is absurd to deny that on the stage at least the English art is the best; it is riper, more genial and broader in scope. Since the Kendals started the invasion, the effects of English influence on the theatres of this country have been inspiring and beneficial” (8). There was an irony to Charlesworth’s position on British drama however. This new drama that he championed when a young man in his twenties was a literature he had only read; nonetheless, he believed it to be the direction of the future and throughout his career, criticized his
colleagues for slighting works by Ibsen, Pinero, Sudermann, Jones and other new dramatists.

Whether a Toronto theatregoer felt the same loyalty to British theatre as Charlesworth or not, many in the city were also quite happy to turn out in respectable numbers for melodramas featuring the likes of Frank Mayo (1839-96) “America’s representative romantic actor” or Denman Thompson’s (1833-1911) Yankee mainstay The Old Homestead as well. In fact, as part of a combination circuit, Toronto viewed a plethora of productions about American history as well as the United State’s cultural and regional eccentricities. Many were popular enough with Toronto audiences that they became repeat visitors (See Appendix A).

There is some support for the notion that the Toronto theatregoer shared Charlesworth’s bias for British theatre. Advertisements in all Toronto papers frequently stressed English derivation and talent, the following is an example: “nothing goes in Toronto like something really English” (“Behind the Scenes.” World [Toronto]. 20 Feb. 1890: 3). News of cultural events in Britain was a common feature in theatre columns as well. Such was the case when an early report in an 1893 copy of the Toronto Mail makes reference to the London opening of the The Second Mrs. Tanqueray. A wired report from the London World, is buried in the summer pages of Parkhurst’s own paper. It seems that preeminent London theatre critic Clement Scott had missed the opening of the play of the decade and had thus failed to report on the initial performance of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray. When he eventually did attend, the Globe reported that

it set his [Scott’s] sensitive teeth on edge. [...] He is very sarcastic about this modern play. Mr Scott, as is well known, prefers the dramatic works of the late Mr Robertson, with his silly lovers maulndering over milkjugs, and wit and humour of a mute pantomimic Life Guardsman embracing a nursery maid in the square, or an impossible comic heroine making pudding in a Crimean hut. (“Mr Clement Scott on Mr. Pinero’s Play.” Mail [Toronto]. 28 Jul. 1893: 8)
This is only one of a number of accounts of the controversy surrounding *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* carried by the North American periodical press. By the time the Kendals arrived at the GOH in December 1894, Torontonians had read press accounts of Mrs. Patrick Campbell’s controversial success in London, accounts that claimed the Pinero’s drama epitomized all that was daring and innovative in *fin-de-siècle* drama. They had read that it was a fresh treatment of the woman-with-a-past tragedy, as well as being a play that introduced new realism in character delineation, plot development, and dialogue.

With an active and competitive press of their own, and with ample access to the foreign press both through subscription and in reading libraries, Torontonians were also able to follow, if they so chose, the Kendals’ tour and press coverage through the United States. Because reports and gossip from the American press were a regular feature on the entertainment pages of the Toronto papers, they were aware of the play’s ability to cause controversy in England and do so once more when it played in United States. Throughout the nineties, the literacy rate in Toronto was over 80% and newspaper subscriptions outnumbered their actual reading public three to one (Rutherford 35). There were 3.57 periodical publications per Ontario family by 1891 and lending libraries offered a range of international papers.

3.5 “All That’s Fit to Print”: The Late Nineteenth Century Popular Press.

3.5.1 *A Changing of the Guard: Theatre Criticism and the Authority of the Popular Press.*

The debate between Toronto’s theatre critics about the future and role of the drama in the nineties was not a disagreement over the need for a professional national practice. All agreed that Canada was not ready for such a step, but rather it was a generational debate about an appropriate subject matter and form, about the disturbing naturalism of Ibsen versus the reassuring predictability
of the French formula drama; about the acerbic irony of Wilde's social dramas versus the gentle humour of Robertson, and about the complex social dilemmas posed in the problem plays of Pinero and Jones versus the reassuring closure of the melodrama and history play. The debate was semantic in nature. Many agreed that the drama should affect a relationship to naturalism or realism. Most agreed that the drama should avoid didacticism and contrived plots. The problem lies in defining these unstable terms.

Moreover, the critics that had established a relationship with the modern dramas of the eighteen seventies and eighties were aging and being replaced by younger journalists. In this, they reflected a larger international pattern, a debate that took place on a number of fronts: in New York and in London, in Moscow and in Paris and, of course, in Norway and Sweden. For example, the disagreements between Toronto’s foremost critics, Charlesworth and Parkhurst, in many respects paralleled those of London critics Archer and Scott, and as was the case in Britain, the battle between Toronto’s critics to define the city’s aesthetic values would intensify and become more acrimonious as the decade progressed; however, given the fact that Toronto critics reviewed a theatre with what was perceived to be a diminished cultural legitimacy, it is difficult to determine the scale of authority the individual Toronto theatregoer granted local critics. Recent theories related to the impact of the printed media suggest that, like the theatre, the daily press was a tool in constructing individual agency and a situated cultural identity.

The effect on and relationship to society by the print media has generated much study and debate, an influential portion of it here in Canada. Notably, Harold Innis argued that the press can be an effective tool in stabilizing and conventionalizing an empire’s power; however, he felt that this power could be destabilized when new technologies allowed for new sources of competition or
entrepreneurship. He argued that in times of such growth and, in the hands of a motivated body, the press can be an effective tool in subverting an empire’s control. He was less interested in the media’s impact on nation building, although it is clear that the editorial content and much of the daily news in the late nineteenth-century Toronto press was very much focused on Canada’s relationship to either the British or the evolving American empires. The merits of Annexation, Reciprocity, Unionism or isolation were debated frequently in the pages of all of Canada’s daily press. After all, most of these papers were, to some degree, political organs of one stripe or another.

The degree to which the output of any Toronto newspaper was controlled either by the political party that sponsored it, the commercial needs and desires of its owners, or by the ideology of its editors varied. Certainly Charlesworth felt that only the Conservative party organ, the Empire “was, as far as [he knew], the first Canadian newspaper to be, in the completest sense, party-owned and party controlled [...] and it was certainly the last” (Candid Chronicles 147). Many papers throughout the nineties, even those that claimed to be independent, expressed strong political bias, and relied on political patronage in some measure to balance their books. For the most part, it was a press that favoured a conservative orthodoxy whether the paper professed claims to independence or not.

For media guru Marshall McLuhan, it is the varied and democratic participation between the daily press’ many texts or articles and its readers that results in an elusive authority. In Understanding Media, McLuhan describes the nineteenth century press as a “mosaic” in form, i.e., “the mode of the corporate or collective image and [it] commands deep participation. This communication is communal rather than private, inclusive rather than exclusive” (211). He further proposes that the “press is a group confessional form that provides communal participation. It can ‘color’ events by
using them or by not using them at all. But it is the daily communal exposure of multiple items in juxtaposition that gives the press its complex dimension of human interest” (204). Key to an understanding of the role played by the printed press media, is McLuhan’s argument that the daily newspaper is a form of entertainment, one that advertisers, in effect, pay its audience to experience, and this press contains “corporate images of society in action” (204). He asks:

Why do we prefer novels and movies about familiar scenes and characters? Because for rational beings to see or re-cognize their experience in a new material form is an unbought grace of life. Experience translated into a new medium literally bestows a delightful playback of earlier awareness. The press repeats the excitement we have in using our wits, and by using our wits we can translate the outer world into the fabric of our own beings. The excitement of translation explains why people quite naturally wish to use their senses all the time. Those external extensions of sense and faculty that we call media we use as constantly as we do our eyes and ears, and from the same motives. (211)

McLuhan is arguing here that the press, like the theatre, provides for a discursive production of meaning similar to Mead’s theories of Symbolic Interaction and it is the relationship across sections that informs the reading of any given article.

Cultural historian Paul Rutherford explores the limits of the nineteenth-century press as a cultural authority in *A Victorian Authority: the daily press in late nineteenth-century Canada* and also describes a complex reciprocity between the press and society, one that plays both a “central role in legitimizing the patterns of authority” (227) predominant in Canadian society as well as serving as a socializing influence. He argues that: “[t]he popular newspaper, consequently, was far and away the most effective agent of a sense of community, a civic consciousness in the big city. It told people about civic leaders and government, how the local sports heroes had fared, what the market was like, and where to go to find amusement” (136). Of the newspaper as an agency that both reinforced and interacted with sites of corporate and social power, he maintains that:
In truth, the press was never just the independent champion of its readers, a fact that proved a source of some misgivings to high-minded journalists. Its autonomy was tainted by 'the powers that be': financial and social pressures ensured newspapers would often side with the big battalions. And yet the press was a lot more than simply a mouthpiece of the Establishment. The press did indeed act as a fourth estate, standing midway between the people and their leaders, offering service and criticism to a collection of different constituencies. (190)

Like McLuhan, Rutherford identifies a complex web of relationships among cultural hegemony, economic forces and the idiosyncratic and creative energy that influences the production and reading of any periodical collective work as well as its role in creating and reinforcing a Canadian national mythology. In this sense, both Rutherford and McLuhan construct a dualistic newspaper reader, one who is both a generalized national object projected by the producers of the paper’s content and as an actor constructing meaning from a written text.

Rutherford further provides a useful gloss on the possible range of media affect:

The so-called power of the press remains at once the most confusing and intriguing aspect of the study of journalism [...] sociology offers the historian some guides. First the media cannot alter, either dramatically or quickly, an individual’s decided views about well-known issues. Indeed, the media seems most effective when they endeavour to reinforce existing opinions. Second, over time, the media do have a wide variety of social, as distinct from personal, effects: agenda setting (ordering the priority of issues or values in the public domain), mobilization (calling people to arms), stereotyping (fixing images of particular ideas, events, or occupations), conferring of status (the creation of heroes and villains), manipulation of mood (emphasizing some collective emotion, such as optimism or resentment), and socialization (the education of people in the ‘proper’ ways of thinking and behaving). Much depends on the actual situation, since the media rarely act without the assistance of other institutions. The influence of print, in particular, is mediated by forces outside the communications process. Besides, cause and effect become fuzzy terms when applied to social phenomena: it almost always requires a long list of actors and events to explain why things happen and how. Third, whatever the place or time, the mass media are a leading agency of ‘legitimation.’ They manufacture images of reality that justify certain values and patterns of authority. The popular newspaper, in short, can exercise a good deal of ideological power. (7-8)

Toronto’s theatre columns during the nineties can be understood to practice influence in all these
modes, although the “manipulation of mood,” synonymous with the terms such as “amuse” or “entertain” posits a somewhat one-sided pattern of reception, however, similar in type to hypodermic reception theories and doesn’t account for the multiplicity of readings that occur with any reading of a text. Predominantly eighteen-nineties theatre critics sought to establish cultural authority as agents of legitimation.

If then, the “medium is the message” and if the daily press as a relatively young and evolving form of media in the late nineteenth century interacted with the older and more circumscribed (in terms of reception) medium i.e., the theatre, the new press was able to modify and expand reception of the earlier form. The nineteenth-century theatre, predominantly held to be a form of mimesis, and theatre critics as a discursive group in the daily press, were now in a position to prescribe constructions of authenticity and truth to wider and wider audiences. In this sense, “viewing” and the production of meaning were no longer merely the prerogative of small disparate in-situ audiences. The late nineteenth-century press was able to project a new theatre audience, one that might not attend a reviewed production or the theatre at all. Theatre columns and reviews did not, of course, replace the visceral and ephemeral experience of actual theatre attendance, but they allowed for a variant on the construction of the shared-theatre experience and attempted to direct and consolidate reception.

Furthermore the daily press by creating this wider arena and quick response to theatre events was able to define, reinforce, and possibly create, normative forms and prescriptives for the direction of the nineteenth-century drama and theatre, and it is in this sense, more than any other, that the theatre critic constructed him/herself as a cultural authority. The direction of the New drama, the Society drama, the historical romance, the Problem play, “cup-and-saucer realism,” and other genres of the legitimate theatre were elevated at the expense of popular genres and forms. Critics were able
to distill and debate the value of stock stage types, moral values and aesthetic taste and the nineteenth-century press was responsible to no small degree for defining, if not homogenizing and ultimately dismissing or elevating such stereotypes as the Irish wastrel, the corrupt landlord, the dandy, and the woman-with-a-past.

Any influence the press might have had, moreover, was dependent on how actively engaged the reader was with a text or column, whether s/he read in concurrence with or in opposition to any point of view expressed by an author. The influence of a theatre critic is at its most potent when s/he is read and read with discrimination; however, many Toronto theatregoers bought and read newspapers that shared a common political philosophy to their own. In such cases, any dialectic between a critic and her/his reading public was most likely mediated through a sympathetic socio-cultural perspective as well. This argues that any authority that could be afforded the theatre critic came in some sense through a reinforcement of cultural solidarity and was more likely to be valued when it echoed the playgoers’ own critical assessment of a performance. As difficult as it is to measure the impact of the critical press on theatregoers, it is even more difficult to evaluate the impact of the new presses’ evolving practices in advertising and promotional columns as they responded to an increasingly accessible daily press.

3.5.2 “Hot Off the Press”: Technological Advances.

The expanding newspaper coverage available to Toronto audiences and theatre critics was facilitated by new technologies developed throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. In the eighteen nineties, new typesetting and typecasting machines, as well as the improvement and organization of wire services, contributed to improved production costs and accessibility of information. Ottmar Mergenthaler (1854-1899), a New Yorker, invented a machine to cast type in
solid lines with Babbit metal in 1884, and Whitelaw Reid (1837-1912) of the *New York Tribune* perfected this machine, the linotype, in 1886, thus, according to historian Edgar Middleton, Reid “revolutionized the newspaper business” (*Municipality of Toronto* 431). Middleton boasts that while “one good printer could set about 500 em an hour, the linotype could set 7000.

In the early nineties linotypes were being placed in the offices of Toronto dailies” (431). These machines were expensive however and startup costs for those wishing to publish a daily newspaper were high. Paper, on the other hand, a commodity that Canada produced in abundance, was cheaper than ever. At E.B. Eddy, newsprint cost $3.70 per 100 lbs in 1890, $2.90 in 1894 and $2.10 in 1899 (Rutherford 68) and “there was the Goss, Cox, and Hoe printing systems [sic] which worked from rolls of paper to produce stacks of folded newspapers in seconds” (68).

Even with the increase in start-up costs, Toronto had no shortage of entrepreneurs willing to try their hand at the newspaper business, so many that Crawford Taylor maintains that:

> [o]f the public press of Ontario, it has been said that it gives the public far more than it receives, and that it is capable of serving a community many times the size of that in which it disseminates the news. That this opinion is not unfounded, comparisons with the journalism of Great Britain and the United States abundantly prove. In both these lands, business centres of the same strength as to population and wealth as those of Ontario can boast no such productions as our city dailies, whether they be “mornings’ or “evenings.” (Crawford Taylor 160)

To offset increased competition, Toronto editors used a variety of tactics to encourage readers and increase circulation: “By the 1890s subscriptions and sales generated only about one-third, advertising two-thirds of general revenues produced by the newspaper itself. [...] A large circulation was a lot more important than a large subscription revenue” (Rutherford 97). While individual newspapers made some effort to remain true to their political constituency and skew a sympathetic construction of culture that mapped out a conservative or progressive function for theatre in Toronto
society, advance notices, advertisements and critical columns did cater to a cross section of its local audience as much as was possible in order to entice new customers. All newspapers carried theatre advertisements, although, only the populist independent papers, the *News* and *World*, carried the sensationalist advertisements of dime museums with any consistency, and all papers carried advance notices at one time or another throughout the decade.

3.6 “Looking at the Stars” : Newspaper Publicity and Puffery.


The promotion of any touring combination performing in the nineties was a three part process: 1.) advertisements that were generated either by the touring company and/or a local theatre manager; 2.) advance columns, typically puffed promotional columns with publicity generated by the company’s advance agents and compiled or written by local reporters; and 3.) the combination of posters, paper bills, postcards and other advertising paraphernalia distributed by a company’s management. As booking agencies became more centralized and gained greater control over touring circuits and as advertising costs accelerated in the late nineteenth century, a systematic approach to advertising was becoming increasingly necessary. While the ability to print new and larger fonts, affordable graphics and even photographs expanded the possibilities for persuasion in the print media, newspaper advertising in the early nineties remained a haphazard and contradictory practice. Promotional strategies in quality papers were premised on notions of decorum and “soft sell,” while the tabloid penny papers relied on more explicit tactics. Neither applied a scientific organization.

With a conviction that there was a need to improve the efficacy of the practice and with his utilitarian bias firmly in place, nineteenth-century publicity guru Nathanial Fowler Jr. published weekly columns in the daily press on “The Art of Advertising,” and his advice ran in the pages of the
Toronto Globe throughout the summer and fall of 1893. He later collected his observations into a 1016 page opus entitled: *Fowler’s Publicity: An Encyclopaedia of Advertising and Printing and all that pertains to the Public-Seeing Side of Business* where he provided instruction on advertising for a wide range of businesses including that of the professional theatre.

Fowler felt that theatrical advertising in the nineties was antiquated and ineffective: “Comparatively few managers have introduced modern methods of publicity, and the bulk of the advertising is still confined to the old style of advertisement in the newspapers, and to the illustrated poster” (835). In Toronto, these “old style” newspaper advertisements provided an economic but static hierarchy of the following: theatre name, featured actors if they were celebrities, if not they might be omitted; play title, ticket prices and time. Theatre address and, a relatively new addition, a telephone number were sometimes included.

Capital gain is inscribed in Fowler Jr.’s philosophy and is another example of one position in the conflict between the business aims of the nineteenth-century theatre and the aesthetic goals of its artists and critics. Fowler Jr. advises his readership against any pretension when promoting theatre: “The theatrical performance is nothing more or less than a commodity. The stage is a part of trade, and the men and women in it offer their goods for sale” (*Fowler’s Publicity* 835). The difficulty, as Fowler Jr. saw it, was in knowing whether to privilege the playtext or the performers when advertising because “both the play and the actors are commodities” and the theatre manager, in this case the advertiser, or “the seller of it [is] of no special importance.” He conjectures that “[w]hether the play should be advertised more than the actor, or the actor more than the play, depends entirely upon which is better”(835-6). Fowler Jr. does not provide the criteria for determining merit for either.

Advance press and advertising costs for theatre companies and managers in newspapers could
be considerable in the late nineteenth century. In his memoir *Fifty Years in the Theatrical Management*, American producer M(ichael) B(ennett) Leavitt (1843 - ?) claims to have spent between $8,000 to $20,000 US (333) on advertising a single show in the eighteen eighties. Leavitt, who got his start touring Maritime Canada, produced popular entertainments, variety, vaudeville and musical comedy. A legitimate drama with a recognized cast most likely spent less than Leavitt as it could rely in some measure on the combination of word-of-mouth publicity, local advertisements financed by local theatre managers, a subscription agency’s promotion (in the Kendals’ case from Nordheimers), and advance press to publicize their arrival. Nonetheless, Leavitt claims that print advertising (e.g. posters, circulars and photo cards), was an “overwhelming expense” (333) that contributed to escalating seat prices throughout the later part of the nineteenth century.

The cost of weekly newspaper advertisements was part of the resident theatre manager’s costs. A(lbert) M(arshman) Palmer (1838-1905) of New York’s Palmer’s Theatre argued that “so much money can be used for advertising, and no more. The schedule of advertising, amount of space in each paper etc., are determined and so remain with little or no change” (qtd. in *Fowler’s Publicity* 123). He went on to protest that “[a]ll things considered the manager is the most liberal advertiser. He cannot choose his time, he must be constant; whether he makes money or loses money, he pays a certain percentage of the assumed profits of his business to the Press” (123).

To mitigate advertising losses, Fowler Jr. offered the following tips to theatre managers; a) always provide the name and address of the theatre in advertisements because “transients” staying at local hotels will frequently pick the nearest based on this information; b) include start and finish times; c) feature photographs of actors and actresses in costume; and d) avoid placing the theatre’s names in a prominent position in advertisements (836). On this last point, he explains that the theatre “is not for
sale”, rather “the play and the player are ‘the thing.’” The theatre is merely a “serving receptacle for the audience, who come to see the play and the actor, caring nothing about the theatre, beyond its reputation, and its facilities for properly presenting an entertainment” (836). Here, Fowler Jr. seems insensitive to local theatre management’s desire to sell their own legitimacy and respectability through branding.

In a small city such as Toronto, where the quality of performance offerings was inconsistent because of circuit control, a theatre manager’s ability to attract a particular segment of society through an individual theatre’s association with quality work was central to its drawing power. Legitimate performance in the eighteen nineties provided by the GOH, the Princess Theatre and Massey Hall signified quality, and theatre names were, contrary to Fowler’s advice, given places of prominence in local advertisements.

New York theatre manager Palmer was more sensitive to the impact of reputation and status in the theatre business and recognized that the theatre was presented with unique promotional opportunities through word-of-mouth advertising. “There is a degree of publicity about the theatre that is not enjoyed by any other business. If a man buys a coat it is an individual matter; if he sees a play he shares it with many others, and it is a natural part of his entertainment to communicate to others what he has seen” (123); moreover, he argues, “The best plays are written by men who are already known, and may come from the capitals abroad with the stamp of success” (123). This free publicity was boosted by the fact that these well-known works are frequently “acted by actors of great celebrity, etc” (123). Fame and quality, then, sold tickets, and all such word-of-mouth publicity was fed and mediated by the input from a growing tabloid media including a relatively new development, the fan magazine. For this reason, Palmer adds a further caution; “There are other sources through which
theatrical news reaches the public” and he could hope “that such news, which the public is anxious to read, be confined to facts” (123). Unlike contemporary P.T. Barnum, it seems that Palmer didn’t hold the view that all publicity was good publicity.

As the press grew in size and scope, the ethical responsibilities of advertisers became a growing source of concern. In his 1893 series of newspaper articles featured in the Toronto *Globe*, Fowler Jr. calls on the need for an authoritative and reputable practice in the field of advertising. He suggests that, while there may be a number of effective methods available and mediums in which to sell a commodity, the daily newspaper remained the most reputable: “The legitimate advertisement in the legitimate newspaper is worth more than any other kind of advertising” (Fowler Jr. “The Art of ...” 4).

Overall for Fowler Jr., a theatre performance was a product and means of profit; consequently, he was less concerned with any theatre production’s artistic merit in itself. Fowler Jr. does, however, recognize the economic return on quality. For this reason, he advises against using pictures in advertisements with captions such as “Stand back, villain!!” (837), because “[t]hese only furnish proof that “there is not a strong line in the play” (837).

3.6.1.1 Toronto Theatre Advertisements and the Kendals.

There is enough change in advertising style and layout throughout the nineties in Toronto’s papers to suggest that theatre attendance patterns were somewhat fluid and that there was some competition for the theatregoers’ dollar. Many of these innovations relate to the increased spectacle of the popular theatre which perhaps required advertising to publicize a stable of frequently unknown talents and works of questionable merit. In some instances, perhaps depending on the drawing power of the attractions, advertisements grew in size throughout the decade and increasingly included depictions of pivotal scenes from a given production. To further tempt audiences,
performances, primarily opera, melodrama and variety, promised increasingly spectacular settings. Scenes featuring water play or exotic animals were popular throughout the decade although train scenes and horse races were crowd pleasers as well. Large casts also served as a drawing card. Kiralfy’s production of The Water Queen, for example, advertised itself as a “Grand Fairy Spectacle/Resplendant [sic] with/ Gorgeous Costumes, Glittering Armor” and “Fascinating Ballets.” It featured a “Grand Transformation/ Novel Specialities/ Magnificent Scenery” and “100 - PERSONS IN THE GRAND PRODUCTION” (Advertisement World [Toronto].15 Feb. 1890:6). A production of the Twelve Temptations, a “Grand Spectacular Triumph/ Rewritten and revised by Chas. H. Yale” featured a mere seventy onstage personalities and billed itself as having “THE GRANDEST MIS EN SCENE [sic] EVER CONSTRUCTED/ PRODUCED AT AN ACTUAL CASH OUTLAY OF $35,000” (Advertisement. World [Toronto]. 27 Feb. 1890 27:4).

Legitimate theatre advertisements tended to be less extravagant or, depending on one’s perspective, more tasteful in style with few, if any, graphics and smaller fonts. Presumably, references to the lead actor’s reputation or a recognized theatre where the production had played previously were the only promotion necessary to those in the know. In their advertisements, the Kendals would practice this constraint but would add one further sign of privilege in their 1889 advertising campaign, the Royal Coat of Arms (Advertisement. Mail [Toronto]. 20 Dec 1889:8).

Title connoted respectability in a profession that was still considered immoral by some and the Coat of Arms, an unambiguous marker of prestige at the highest level, reminded readers of the Kendals’ association with the Monarchy. By the 1894 tour, however, the Royal Coat of Arms had been removed from their advertising. It isn’t known whether the Kendals had removed the insignia because it proved ineffective, or whether they weren’t authorized to use it. Of course, its removal might merely
have come down to a matter of cost; however, Frohman suggests that box office success was “a matter of geography, not of merit. The value of American successes in this country spreads to all parts of the United States, and an English endorsement is a matter of artistic vanity, not a commercial need” (Memories of a Manager 194). Ultimately, the reasons for removing the coat of arms don’t really matter; the Kendal name was synonymous with royalty - theatre royalty. For this reason, in their daily advertisements for the 1889 tour, the name Kendal is considerably larger than any other in the ad.

On the 18th of December 1894, advertisements show the Kendals’ name to be larger than the play title, but smaller than the theatre title in the Empire and News, and Globe. The Mail shows the theatre and actor’s name at equal height and the play title slightly larger; the Telegram shows the play title to be larger than the Kendals’ name but smaller than the Opera House and the Star shows all three at equal size. There is no set format for any of these ads which indicates policy was partially determined by each paper’s advertising department. Again, however, one shouldn’t read too much into the organization of these advertisements. As Fowler Jr.’s work implies, the effects of newspaper advertising had only begun to undergo any applied study in the eighteen nineties. Advertising in the daily columns might have been a local exercise that the Kendals or Frohman had no say in whatsoever, but given the addition of the Royal Coat of Arms in earlier ads, this seems unlikely.

3.6.2 Advance Press and Puffery.

It was the responsibility of the advance agent to promote a circuit combination production to the local press. Advance agents, who worked for booking agents, and were assigned to individual productions travelled ahead of the production and prepared for the arrival of the performers. Generating publicity for the performance was central to an advance agent’s duties. With the aid of a good advance agent and a willing newspaper columnist, a combination and its lead performers could
count an effective campaign of puffed publicity in the theatre columns.

The advance agent was not always viewed in a favourable light by the local press. An article in the *Sunday World* written at the 1890/91 season’s end is titled “The Editor Gets a Rest / From the Importunate Advance Agent”:

The king bee of the theatrical profession is the advance agent who has spent the entire season in posting bills in one night stands, advertising some very queer star or comedy attraction. The gentleman is generally loud in conversation and dress and has a fondness for bad cigars which almost amounts to a mania. He invariably chews the end of the cigar and never takes it out of his mouth even when he is talking to you. Although he transcribes his autograph with much difficulty, the advance agent has the highest opinion of his own literary abilities. He will tell long and wonderful yarns of his power to get more notices in the newspapers than any other advance agent in the business and will lay special stress on the fact that he writes them all himself. (*Sunday World* [Toronto]. 7 Jun. 1891:8)

The *New York Dramatic Mirror* counters this portrait by maintaining that a studied humility was the key to a successful advance agent:

There are advance agents and advance agents. [...] The advance agent who knows how to propagate his show without offense; who is tactful with rural newspaper men, deferring to their undoubtedly superior knowledge of all things, and especially the drama; who can talk in good English when conversation is needed, and who knows where entertainment ends and ennui begins; who does not ask or demand, yet so conducts himself that he receives; and who is never superior to his surroundings and neither below nor above his business - this sort of man stands out like a jewel in the Ethiop’s ear. And managers know it. ("The Advance Agent." *New York Dramatic Mirror*. 29 Apr. 1893:8)

A common selling point for advance agents was to suggest a special affiliation between a situated audience and a touring production. It was not uncommon for promotional articles to inform audiences that a production or performer was a favourite with local audiences; furthermore, Toronto critics often began their reviews by summarizing the merits of previous productions of the same play and, if applicable, the response by Toronto audiences to date. C(hristopher) S(t George) Clark (?-?) remembers such tactics “to be a popular way of flattering any town or city with the idea that its tastes
were fastidious. I have heard Ottawa people say the same thing, St. Catharines, Hamilton and Montreal as well” (187). Promotional gimmick or not, this strategy allowed audiences to engage with the work as situated locals who recognized their place within a Western European culture.

Puffs gleaned from these agents and edited by local reporters were an accepted practice in most promotional columns. As so many terms in this period of transition, puff and puffery were unstable in meaning. Narrowly defined, a puff was understood to be a form of advertisement that passed as news coverage. As the decade progressed, however, the practice came to signify the use of hyperbole or false advertising. Fowler Jr. further divides the puff as follows: a) “puff that is all puff;” b) “puff that is partly puff and partly information or news;” or c) “the long reading article apparently a part of the regular news or miscellany, with the puffing part prominent or supposed to be disguised. (Fowler’s Publicity 454) He further maintained that “[p]uffs are both legitimate and illegitimate forms of advertising[...]. No class of advertising is more abused, more indiscriminately used, and more damaging than the puff” (455).

The rhetorical style and strategies of puffery were part of the majority of advance columns. Notices with titles such as “Amusements,” “On the Stage,” “In the Playhouses,” or most commonly “Music and Drama” and “The Amusement World,” all parroted the rhetorical style of objective and legitimate news coverage. In fact, it is difficult from this distance in time to separate the personal observation and subjective response of local journalists from that of the prepared information supplied by advance agents.

3.6.2.1 The Kendals’ Advance Press.

By the time The Second Mrs. Tanqueray arrived in Toronto, Mrs. Kendal had experienced a significant amount of personal and professional criticism at the hands of the American
press; in particular, stories that her marriage was an unhappy one, her husband henpecked and thus guilty of that greatest of gender crimes in the Victorian era, unmanly. In total, the negative press all seemed to point to a fundamental and delicious hypocrisy underscoring the couple’s public image. It became increasingly important that the Kendals’ advance columns counter this negative publicity.

It seems odd, and for that matter unlikely, when Mrs. Kendal claims her company did not have a publicity agent (Dame Madge Kendal 239). The press shows them granting frequent interviews. It may be that the Kendals served as their own publicity agents. Whomever the source, the Kendals could not have conducted a North American tour without some form of advance press, particularly as Madge Kendal claims, disingenuously or not, to have been unknown in parts of the country; furthermore, the similarity in content between advance notices in ideologically opposed Toronto papers further argues that promotional material was provided to the local press. Charlesworth believed this to have generated from Frohman himself (Candid Chronicles 353-4). Certainly the Kendals would have been ill-advised to rely on word-of-mouth publicity which was, in their case, a two-edged sword. On one side, they could count on their celebrity and reputation as role models to sell tickets but could not help but be aware that their relationship was under constant scrutiny in the gossip columns and fan magazines.

As it was, all Toronto advance press for the Second Mrs. Tanqueray promoted the Kendals on the basis of their celebrity, the quality of production and the merits of their dramatic repertoire. While all of Toronto’s daily newspapers provided advertisements for theatrical productions, only the Mail, Globe, Empire, World, News and Saturday Night provided advance press and reviews with any consistency. With the exception of the World and the News, these are all publications that catered to an upper middle-class or professional readership, a cultivated audience with sufficient time and money to attend the first-run theatre regularly. One characteristic entry of Kendal advance press from the
Toronto Mail reads:

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal long since established themselves as favourites to Toronto, and the announcement of their engagement at the Grand Opera house next Monday evening is one that will be cordially received by their hosts of admirers in this city. [...] Wednesday night will be devoted to Pinero’s famous play, “The Second Mrs. Tanqueray.” Its performance by the Kendals, especially, has made much comment, because Mrs. Kendal who had always played only virtuous and domestic and irreproachable characters and whose private life was considered a model for all women of the stage to emulate, now appears, on the stage only of course, in the character of “a woman with a past.” There can be no doubt of the strength and interest of the play, and there is no doubt of the ability of its chief performers in the presentation. (“Mr. and Mrs. Kendal.” Mail [Toronto]. 15 Dec. 1894:8)

Advance columns for all Toronto papers stress similar aspects of the production, i.e., the controversy of the play, Mrs. Kendal’s uncharacteristic role choice and the merits of the play as a piece of literature. The World further proclaims it will be “a work of dramatic construction [that] has few equals in theatrical literature” (8).

3.7 The Kendals Arrive in Toronto.

3.7.1 The Front Page.

The Kendals brought The Second Mrs. Tanqueray to Toronto’s GOH just six days after the sudden and unexpected death of Sir John Sparrow Thompson (1844-94). Canada’s fourth prime minister had experienced a heart attack when visiting Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle. A Halifax native, lawyer, and judge, Thompson had been possessed of an astute legal mind. As a Conservative MP, he had initiated a variety of legal reforms related to copyright law, tariff legislation and criminal law reform. In addition, he had played a key role in the outcome of two of the most contentious matters of the day, the Riel Rebellion and the Manitoba school question. Canadians had had every hope that he would restore political stability after the death of Macdonald. Thompson, who replaced John Abbott (1821-93), had been a controversial choice for prime minister because of his Roman Catholic faith,
but his scrupulous honesty, keen intellect and accomplished speaking skills caused few to question his suitability for or commitment to the job. Thompson was only forty-nine years of age when he died. He was succeeded by Conservative colleague, MacKenzie Bowell (1823-1917).

In 1894, Lord and Lady Aberdeen, close friends and admirers of Thompson, resided in Government House and Warrington Kennedy (1894-95) had replaced the popular “People’s Bob” Fleming (1854-1925) at City Hall. Warrington, was a successful businessman who co-owned Samson, Kennedy and Co., a wholesale business located on the south-west corner of Scott and Colborne streets. He would serve as mayor for two years. Faced with charges of civic corruption and the failure of his business in 1895, he left public life and was replaced in 1896 by Fleming once more.

Democrat Grover Cleveland (1893-1897) was serving his second term (1885–1889 and 1893–1897) as President of the United States when the Kendals visited Toronto in 1894. While he and Canada had clashed over the extent of fishing rights off the coast of Newfoundland and the boundary between Alaska and British Columbia, much of his second term was preoccupied with alleviating the economic depression facing his country throughout the eighteen nineties. In his desire to revive and stabilize the North American economy, he and the Canadian government were allies. As a former Mayor of Buffalo (1881) and Governor of New York (1883-84) as well as being the only president to serve two non-consecutive terms, by 1894 he was a familiar presence to Torontonians.

The sudden and unexpected death of Thompson temporarily pushed the Boodle Inquiry, a municipal scandal that as the name suggests concerned city officials taking bribes to award contracts to the Edison light company on behalf of the new Street Railway Company, off the front pages of the Toronto papers. On the specialty pages of Toronto papers, a topical feature related to The Second Mrs. Tanqueray ran in the Mail Weekly, on December 17th. A discussion of Mrs. Patrick Campbell’s latest
appearance in C. Haddon Chamber’s (1860-1921) *John-a-Dreams* is reported to be drawing “very crowded houses,” and counters the conjecture of London critics who have dismissed her as little more than “a ‘one part actress’” (“The Flaneur.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 15 Dec. 1894: 3). The author of this wire service article goes on to suggest that while London critics acknowledge her staying power, they feel that Kate Cloud, the protagonist of Chambers play is no advance in “social purity” and labels her role as the “third Mrs. Tanqueray.” The article describes, “for lady readers,” (3) the costumes that Mrs. Patrick Campbell wore in the production in some detail. In the same month, the premier of South Africa’s Cape Colony, Cecil Rhodes (1853-1902) outfits six hundred men at his own expense and rides into South Africa’s Transvaal in order to overthrow the Boer government. He is unsuccessful.

3.7.2 *The First Day: December 17th, 1894.*

As Toronto awaited the Kendal performances, subscribers who wished to beat the crowds were advised to pay for their seats at Nordheimer’s music store, where they would be given a card with a number indicating their order of purchase. Once booked, they were then asked to present their card in the order of purchase to the GOH box office on December 14th. At 10:00 a.m. on the day of performance, non-subscriber sales began. This meant that a sizeable crowd would gather outside the box office on the morning of the performance even though ticket prices were high (as much as two dollars, double the regular price for legitimate first-run theatre performance).

The scale of the Kendals’ profit, if any, when touring is unclear. Many European actors, e.g. Mrs. Patrick Campbell and Bernhardt toured America because they claimed they could recoup losses made in Europe. Mrs. Patrick Campbell reports having been able to pay back £7,000 after her first twenty-two week tour of North American in 1902 and, thereby, remove the threat of bankruptcy (173). Madge Kendal remembers that her husband “sent £10,000 to Messrs. Barclay Brown & Co to cover
the expenses of the [first] tour - enough to pay company salaries for six months with the certain knowledge that if [they failed, they] shall have to begin all over again” (Dame Madge Kendal 241). The Kendals returned to North America a total of five times which suggests that their tours were able to meet expenses and salary at the very least; however, according to Frohman, the performers, who were in a position to charge increased prices, anywhere from two dollars a seat to three dollars in Bernhardt’s case, rarely made a substantial gain. He maintains that, “[o]nly Sir Henry Irving, at increased prices, exceeded [his] receipts” (Memories of a Manager 105).

The Kendals and company arrived by train after a one-week stay in Pittsburg’s Alvin Theatre (Pemberton 289), and checked into the Queen’s Hotel, one of the two “swagger” hotels in town on the morning of the opening, while the rest of the company rented rooms close to the theatre on what one company member calls the “‘Eu-ro-pean’ plan” (Gray 77); i.e., they rented rooms but ate in nearby restaurants.

After checking into their accommodation, the rest of the day was spent in preparation for the first evening’s performance. Madge Kendal maintained that frequent rehearsal was needed in order to adapt to new venues and for this reason alone, touring was tiring. (Dramatic Opinions 92) William Kendal supervised set-up at the theatre along with the company stage manager Herbert Cathcart. If rehearsal wasn’t necessary and it usually was, Madge Kendal did not visit the theatre on the day of a performance. Rather she prepared with meditation and solitude. On December 18th, after a two year wait and much international media coverage, The Second Mrs. Tanqueray had finally arrived in Toronto.

3.7.3 Opening Night: December 18th, 1894.

The Second Mrs. Tanqueray opened on a Tuesday. The weather was “fine and cool” with a low
of 33° and a high of 38° fahrenheit (Globe [Toronto]. 18 Dec. 1894:1). Some audience members arrived in coaches at the front doors of the theatre for the 8:00 performance; others took trains into Union Station and caught taxis from there. Still others walked to the theatre which was close to the train station and the city’s hotels. The Second Mrs. Tanqueray was well-attended in every sense. The Globe affirms that “[t]here was a brilliant and representative audience at the GOH” (“Great Ysaye.” Globe [Toronto]. 19 Dec. 1894:8). The Mail reports that there were “few unoccupied seats” (“Grand Opera House.” Mail [Toronto]. 19 Dec. 1894: 2), and the Globe announces that: “[t]he audience was such a one as always greets the Kendals who bring about the best that Toronto has to offer” (“Great Ysaye.” Globe [Toronto]. 19 Dec. 1894:8).

The Toronto programme distributed to patrons in the GOH presented the following cast:

- Aubrey Tanqueray Mr. Kendal
- “Paula” Mrs. Kendal
- Sir George Orreyed, Bart. Mr. G.P Huntley
- Captain Hugh Ardale Mr. Norman Forbes
- Cayley Drummle Mr. J. F. Graham
- Frank Misquiteh, Q.C., M.P. Mr. F. M. Paget
- Gordon Jayne, M.D. Mr. George Gray
- Morse Mr. G. W. Hardy
- Martin Mr. P. F. Ames
- Lady Orreyed Miss. Nellie Campbell
- Mrs. Cortelyon Miss. Florence Cowell
- Ellean Miss. Marion Lea

Figure 11: Cast List of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray. (McAlpine Scrapbook)

This cast, as is true of many at the time, was a mixture of recognized celebrities, company favourites and unknowns. Norman Forbes (1858-1936), who played Paula’s ex-lover Hugh Ardale, was the brother of the celebrated Victorian actor, and acting partner of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Johnston Forbes-Robertson (1853-1937). He accompanied the Kendals on this tour in order to recoup
financial losses from a failed season as an actor-manager at London’s Globe Theatre in 1890. \textit{(Dramatic Peerage 87)}.

This tour was not the actress playing Tanqueray’s daughter Ellean, Marion Lea’s (1863?-?), first performance in a new controversial work. It was she, who in partnership with Elizabeth Robins, was instrumental in convincing Edmund Gosse (1849-1928) and Archer to translate and mount Ibsen’s \textit{Hedda Gabler} (1890) at London’s Vaudeville Theatre in 1891. The production received a mixed but primarily critical reception. Shortly afterward, Lea married playwright, Langdon Mitchell (1862-1935) and returned to America feeling that her London career had no potential for growth. Her association with the New drama was not publicized by the Toronto press and, as it turned out, her performance in \textit{The Second Mrs. Tanqueray} was dismissed by critics. Lea was thirty-one at the time she played the eighteen-year-old Ellean. The remainder of the company were long time members of the Kendal company.

When the performance had ended and audience members had flooded out onto the street to board their vehicles or catch taxis, the excitement of anticipation had been replaced by a sense of disappointment and bewilderment. Many were left wondering what all the fuss had been about. In fact, \textit{Saturday Night} critic Joseph T. Clark found so little of controversy in the production, that he protested:

\begin{quote}
It is somewhat difficult to understand the wherefore of the bitter discussions that have arisen over the staging of A. W. Pinero’s great play, The Second Mrs. Tanqueray. Compared with Camille or with any one of a dozen French comedies that have passed unchallenged through Toronto and all the American cities, this production is moral in motive and treatment, harmless in matter and altogether commendable. (‘The Drama.’ \textit{Saturday Night} [Toronto]. 22 Dec. 1894:6.)
\end{quote}

3.8 \textit{The Second Mrs. Tanqueray} Re-viewed.

What was the nature of the controversy associated with \textit{The Second Mrs. Tanqueray}? If social dramas about fallen women were common on the Victorian stage, why was Pinero’s perceived to be
risky in some novel sense? And why did the Kendals’ production of the same playtext fail to generate a similar controversy in Toronto? Finally, why did Clark and Toronto audiences feel they had been misled? Parkhurst’s description of the plot of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* provides some insight:

Mr Tanqueray, who has been married to a cold, unresponsive pattern of virtue, finds himself, at his wife’s death, left with a daughter, and lonelier than ever. He marries accordingly a woman of doubtful reputation, trusting that she will add colour and comfort to his life. The play shows the gradual disintegration of this idle dream. “The Second Mrs. Tanqueray” cannot support the ennui of respectability, and the final straw is the discovery that her step-daughter is to marry an old lover of hers. She solves the problem for herself at last by committing suicide. (“The Kendals Tonight.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 17 Dec. 1894: 5)

For Parkhurst, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* was another in a line of predictable if distasteful social dramas about fallen women. *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* explored a theme that had become so prevalent in Victorian drama that Wilde satirizes it in *The Importance of Being Earnest* when Jack Worthing proclaims to Miss. Prism, a woman he believes to be his unwed mother: “Unmarried! [...] who has the right to cast a stone against one who has suffered? Cannot repentance wipe out an act of folly? Why should there be one law for men, and another for women?” (174 -75) On the surface then, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* is a play about a moral double standard in Victorian society, a theme that as Wilde’s quote suggests in his celebrated meta-drama, points to a fundamental hypocrisy underlying many nineteenth-century social dramas.

Because plays about fallen women were common in the Victorian theatre, nineteenth-century audiences had learned to sympathize with the protagonist if she followed a recognized and comforting pattern of redemption and decline. In short, the expectation of a woman of ill repute in most Victorian melodramas such as *East Lynne* or well-made plays such as *Camille* was that the protagonist would discover the error of her ways, repent and conveniently die at the end of the play in order that she not cause embarrassment to her more worthy friends and relatives. By the eighteen nineties, audiences
immediately recognized the stereotypes associated with aberrant women such as the woman-with-a-
past, the femme fatale, and her equally threatening relatives - the new woman and the bluestocking. 
These were all categories of female stereotype who, in the right formulaic configuration, could evoke 
a charitable impulse that assured the theatregoer of possessing all the appropriate Christian instincts. 
In this sense, the deviant women in Victorian drama served as vehicle for sympathy, rather than 
empathy, while perhaps also providing cautionary warnings to women who might consider stepping 
outside the dictates of their patriarchal order. They could be pitied, but they were not to be appreciated 
in any sense, and they most certainly should not confront or question the social law that led to their 
downfall.

Furthermore, an audience’s reading of the *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* in 1894 required an 
understanding of, if not sympathy for the strictures of Britain’s tightly-stratified caste system. While 
Toronto audiences were able to translate the nature of Aubrey’s social sacrifice and Paula’s moral 
dilemma, the censure of social mobility in London was a phenomenon many Torontonians were 
ideologically opposed to. So much so, that many Canadians had emigrated from Britain with the intent 
of escaping such class restrictions. The majority believed, rightly or wrongly, that they were 
participants in a meritocracy of sorts, that Toronto’s wealthy, unlike Aubrey Tanqueray and his friends, 
had earned their place in society through hard labour and initiative, and that a degree of upward 
mobility could and should be earned.

3.8.1 “Toronto’s social evil.”

This didn’t mean that members of Toronto society didn’t conduct their own encoding of errant 
female behaviour. The largest section of C.S. Clark’s *Toronto the Good*, for example, is directed at 
what he terms Toronto’s “social evil” (87). Here Clark argues that prostitution is so prevalent a 
problem in Toronto that it should be legalized. In fact, he “contend[s] that some system of licensing
or inspecting should prevail in every city in America” (87). Of Toronto, in a passage that reads more like advertisement than censure, he observes:

“[o]f the houses of the first-class in Toronto those that once had a national reputation as such, are now no more, but their successors have sprung up in different parts of the city. 248 Front street west, 104 Richmond street west, and one on Albert street, […]. In houses of this class the furniture is elegant and tasteful, and the proprietress is usually a middle-aged woman of good personal appearance, the inmates being generally young women in the prime of life or between twenty and thirty. ‘My young ladies,’ I once heard a proprietress call her girls. These girls are carefully chosen for their beauty and charms, and are frequently persons of education and refinement. […] some of them […] are women of respectable origin, and are sometimes the wives and daughters of men of good social position. Some have been led astray, some adopt this to avoid poverty, and some have entered from motives of extravagance and vanity, while the great majority have entered from motives of pure licentiousness and at the same time gratify a taste for an easy life. (88-89)

In fact, Clark protests; “The whole city is an immense house of ill-repute, the roof of which is the blue canopy of heaven during the summer months” (106). He does not address kept companions such as Paula nor their possibility of entering into a reputable marriage, but whatever measure of social mobility was available, few in Toronto could expect to marry into Aubrey’s entitled stratosphere. And so, if one reads Pinero’s play as a critique of the hypocrisy and inflexibility of Britain’s class system, in this sense, such themes translated poorly on the other side of the Atlantic. Nevertheless, North American audiences had seen many dramas about the inflexibility of the British class and social system - Robertson’s *Caste* is one - and had become adept at interpreting texts that contained social critiques that translated poorly to their own. It may be that some took more pleasure in censuring Victorian society because they were not directly implicated.

Moreover, it seems unlikely that many of the targets of these dramas, Britain’s privileged classes, took these themes to heart either. Part of the entertainment value of such works was to recognize, sympathize with the unfortunate and go home to comfortable lives of privilege. Pinero’s
drama was not intended as a form of *agit prop* in any sense, and it seems unlikely, then, that his trite moralizing peppered with witty epigrams, lush costumes and elaborate scenery was the source of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*’s infamy.

3.8.2 “In the Playing” : Art or Heart.

In the final analysis the controversy associated with *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* lay “in the playing,” a controversy that was facilitated, none the less, by the drama’s dialectic construction. The dualism and paradox in the narrative if brought out in performance could result in a moral ambiguity, an ambiguity that Mrs. Patrick Campbell played to her advantage and one that Madge Kendal would not. Pinero’s play is constructed around a series of binaries: the surface beauty of Paula is countered by her paranoid psychological fragility; society’s claim to Christian tolerance is contradicted by its unwillingness to accept repentant sinners; the charismatic characters in the play are morally flexible while the upright are dull and unappealing. In the London production, Mrs. Patrick Campbell used these paradoxes to reveal a woman who was complex and divided psychologically, a woman who was in many aspects as attractive, as flawed and as vulnerable as the culture she attempts to be part of, a woman who seemed authentic in a disturbing sense, and most disturbing of all, a woman whose suicide could be read as an act of rebellion rather than penitence. On the other hand, Mrs. Kendal, in her version of the play, used the play’s dialectic structure to dictate a cautionary moral tale, rendered in Victorian black and white. The contrast in these two interpretations derived as much from the personalities of the two women as it was a sign of evolving fashions and values in nineteenth-century schools of plastic art as well as evolving notions of psychological realism.

Mrs. Patrick Campbell, nicknamed “Mrs. Pat,” was a twenty-seven year old wife and mother when she played Paula. She was also middle-class, unusual in an actress at the time. On many levels,
class, taste, education, family, she shared much in common with the women who were part of the legitimate theatre audience. She was one of them and for this reason, she was able to elicit an empathy for the woman-with-a-past that was new and discomforting. She had had little stage experience when she took on the role that would shape her career. Separated early in marriage from her soldier husband, she turned to the professional stage to support her two children. From the start, she was a natural with a charismatic vulnerability, an ethereal intensity and an outsider sensibility that led her to act against the Pinero’s text. She remembers in her memoirs that; “I wanted to plead for Paula, I wanted her to be forgiven and remembered […]. I tried from the beginning to lift Paula a little off the earth, to make her not merely a neurotic type; to give her a conscience, a soul” (70).

If Mrs. Kendal chose the mirror scene and the revelation of Paula’s base nature as the play’s defining moment, Mrs. Patrick Campbell choose to “play” for Paula’s redemption. In Act III of Pinero’s text, the stage directions indicate that Paula sits to play the piano in solitude, a private moment of reflection. When her husband and a close family friend enter “Paula abruptly ceases playing” (55). As a talented musical prodigy who had won a scholarship to London’s Guildhall School of Music, Mrs. Patrick Campbell played the piano with considerable finesse. When she played in the third act of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, the moment was of such impact in the London production, that Shaw, a life-long fan, then a critic for the Saturday Review, teased her that the play was “all about a poor lady who committed suicide because they wouldn’t let her finish playing her piece at the piano” (qtd. in Patrick Campbell 68).

A clue to Mrs. Patrick Campbell’s appeal can be found in his review of Pinero’s New Woman drama, The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith, also starring Mrs. Patrick Campbell, when he writes that:

the unreality of the chief female character, who is fully as artificial as Mrs Tanqueray herself, has the lucky effect of setting Mrs Patrick Campbell free to do as she pleases
in it, the result being an irresistible projection of that lady’s personal genius, a
projection which sweeps the play aside and imperiously becomes the play itself. Mrs
Patrick Campbell, in fact, pulls her author through by playing him clean off the
stage. [...] (Shaw 61)

Mrs. Patrick Campbell, then, was able to project beyond the predictable moral tropes of Pinero’s text.
In fact, Charlesworth claims that Mrs. Patrick Campbell never really played anyone other than herself,
that she “relied too much on personality and too little on technical perfection and serious creation”
(More Candid Chronicles 391). No one dared make similar claims for the craft of Madge Kendal who
developed and practiced a careful and considered method.

Madge Kendal was an accomplished veteran of the stage when she played the twenty-eight-year-old Paula Tanqueray. Plain in dress and fashionably plump, she had appeared a matron before she
was one. A member of a large theatrical family that could trace its lineage back to performances
alongside David Garrick (1717-79), Kendal was a career performer who began a life on the stage as
a young child. For many years, her father, William Robertson and mother, neé Margherita Elisabetta
Marinus, managed the Lincolnshire Circuit and performed with Kendal’s eighteen siblings until poor
fortune resulted in a last ditch effort to restore their reputation in London’s Marylebone Theatre. It was
in London that the young Margaret Robertson won acclaim acting with Shakespearean actor Samuel
Phelps (1804-78) in his production of Macbeth.

After marriage to William Hunter Grimston in 1869, Madge who worked alongside her
husband under the stage names Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, made a reputation for herself performing in
romantic comedies and historical dramas at the Haymarket Theatre, London. They capitalized on their
success by mounting and managing seasons first at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Birmingham and
throughout the eighteen eighties at the St. James’s Theatre, London. The Kendals became so popular
that Frohman would claim, that “[w]hile they were in partnership with John Hare (1844-21), the St.
James Theatre, their dramatic home, became the resort of the modern drama” (*Memories of a Manager* 104) and further maintains that “[t]hey represented the modern drama, histrionically, as Sir Henry Irving and Ellen Terry represented the classical” (*Daniel Frohman Presents* 255).

Any role that Madge Kendal took on was supported by a studied and comprehensive system that comprised both a philosophy of acting devoted to careful life study and the clear delineation, if not exposition, of what she held to be the thesis of the written text, a technique garnered through a long apprenticeship and a desire to evolve a truly English school of acting, one that stood in opposition to what she saw as the overly demonstrative methods found in France:

> We English, speaking generally, have by nature no gesticulation. [...] Our excitement is taken inwardly; inwardly we feel as much as the French do, perhaps more, [...] Therefore, I consider the gesticulation on the French stage, which is supposed to be so wonderful and so charming, is merely the result of a difference in national temperament. With us it is more art than nature; with them it is more nature than art. (*Dramatic Opinions* 42)

Any impression that Kendal was constrained on stage, however, is contradicted by her biographer Pemberton’s observation that; “[e]ven the severest of critics now acknowledge[s] that in strong emotional characters Mrs. Kendal had no living rival” (154). While it does not necessarily follow that a demonstrative and declamatory school of performance is linked to recognition in emotive roles, contemporary reviews indicate that Mrs. Kendal’s playing was considerably heightened. Writing in the nineteen thirties, Kendal recalls of the late nineteenth century that “[t]here was this difference, however, between the realistic acting of that day and this, viz. that every word spoken in the theatre could be heard in every part of the house. The acting in those days travelled from the brain to the heart and from the heart to the brain” (*Dame Madge Kendal* 46).

Kendal realized early on that capitalizing on gender expectations was her meal ticket, “If I had a distinction, I should say that a woman brings more sympathy into a play, and a man more
intelligence” *(Dramatic Opinions)* 130). For this reason, she chose plays that foregrounded a feminine resilience that none the less deferred to male authority. Madge Kendal’s ability to rise above her dramatic material, however, may well have been because, as one critic observes: “‘a certain undercurrent of irony […] is apparent in all Mrs. Kendal’s acting’” (qtd. in Pemberton 98), an irony that may have unfortunately underscored Paula’s pleas for redemption and acceptance.

It is too easy now, after Stanislavsky’s System has been so widely recognized and practiced, to imagine Mrs. Kendal as representative Victorian actor, one that privileged the melodramatic and declarative over naturalism and psychological realism, but, in fact, it should be remembered that Madge Kendal, like her brother Robertson, was interested in negotiating a new realism for the stage. Perhaps she can be seen now as erring on the side of sentiment, triteness or excess, but the Kendals had, as actors of their generation, been considered realistic and authentic.

An anecdote in Kendal’s memoirs provides insight into her approach to playing roles. On her first tour to America, she remembers that “the theatrical world was greatly interested in the question whether the actor does or should feel the emotion he is representing or merely pretend to feel it. In France this is known as the Diderot Paradox” *(Dame Madge Kendal)* 220). Diderot’s performance theory is complex and flawed, but he essentially argues that an actor should never lose control of her/is craft to emotion or spontaneity in playing a role, that the actor’s agency and creative faculty should never be secondary, that actors not “lose themselves” in their roles. Interest in this debate had been granted further currency by Archer’s exploration of the division in his *Masks or Faces*?

Kendal tells how, in a meeting with fellow actors in New York, she asks some of the greats of her generation to declare their views on revealing emotion on stage. Anxious to protect the
mystery of his craft, Edwin Booth abstains; a plastic Tomaso Salvini argues that it depends on “the mood of the moment” (220) whether the actor cries or not; Joseph Jefferson “burked the question” claiming that an actor cannot judge his performance but rather should place it in the hands of his audience and critic (221) and Modjeska, famed for her emotive acting, sides with “real tears.” According to Kendal, the responsibility of interpretation is placed with the actor. Advocating a measured approach, Kendal argues that acting is a mixture of craft and emotion:

> [...]here is one word in the English and American languages spelt in the same way, however, ‘Heart’.

> If we lay undue stress on the latter portion of the word we become too cold. If we emphasize the earlier part we become too impulsive, but, in every instance, whether in the classical or modern plays, we give due regard to ‘heart’ and ‘art’ and treat them with sincerity we must carry the world with us. (221-22)

This careful calculation, then, is the key difference in Kendal’s and Mrs. Patrick Campbell’s techniques. Today there remains a distrust of emotional indulgence in some acting theory, but for the most part we now value a blend of impulse and informed intent. Kendal believed it her duty to offer the same performance each evening as “acting is the representation of a human being under the influence of a series of emotions at a given time in the life of the character he is representing. It seemed then, [...] that the emotion and the incidents being constant the actor’s performance must likewise be a constant one and not change in one iota” (222).

After years of study and practice, Mrs. Kendal believed she had developed an effective system. As a guide, she advocated careful life study:

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4 Edwin Booth (1833-93) American tragedian, member of an acting family dynasty, son of Junius Brutus Booth senior, brother to John Wilkes Booth.


6 Helena Modjeska (really Modrzejewska) (1840 - 1909) Polish classical actress.
The true actor [...] consciously or unconsciously, carries his art along with him. If I go out to a reception I am at work—often unknown to myself. I see that a certain woman is interested in a certain man; is given either joy or grief through him. I watch her expression, I follow the play of nerve and muscle in her face, and thus I learn how the human face reveals the workings of the human soul; and I endeavour to follow what I have learned thus by observation. (qtd. in Pemberton 39)

As this quote shows, she indicated or delineated rather than revealed a character’s emotion on stage.

Her most explicit explanation of her acting philosophy is perhaps as follows:

Acting is like photography. [...] When I am acting, I must make the people feel that they see it from my point of view. If they discuss during the time I am acting whether I am right or wrong, I certainly have not got hold of them. They may discuss it afterwards, and say, “He was right,” or “She was wrong,” - this, that, and the other; but during the time I am acting, it must be, as it were, a photograph thrown upon each individual mind of the audience, and I, or whoever is acting, must have the power to impress each mind so forcibly that for the time at least it must see only the situation as it is so focussed.” (Dame Madge Kendal 57 - 8)

It is always difficult to write about something as ephemeral as acting technique, particularly examples which are no longer before us. Terms related to the craft are among the most unstable in theatre’s discursive field. Notions of “truth,” “realism,” and “naturalism” on the stage vary from generation to generation and from speaker to speaker. Still, it seems that Mrs. Kendal and Mrs, Patrick Campbell were not only physically and psychologically very different women, but that their representations of Paula were premised not only on conflicting notions of nineties’ craft but constructions of social justice.

Mrs. Patrick Campbell was an amateur when she began; certainly she was not a trained actor. Based on her description of her approach in playing Paula Tanqueray and on comments made by Shaw and others, her technique was largely intuitive. Because she was so reliant on the professional actors surrounding her, she listened more actively and her renowned spontaneity, or playing “in the moment,” was a source of frequent tension between her and her leading man George Alexander.
There is even the suggestion that she worked through some Stanislavsky-like objectives, although there is certainly no evidence of a system as structured and comprehensive as the Russian actor-director’s or even Kendal’s. Mrs. Patrick Campbell, with her unstudied manner, her spontaneity and her complexity offered London a charismatic, if psychologically damaged woman who could not be set aside as a caricature or stereotype and, in this sense, she and all that she threatened was more immediate. She posited a world in which right and wrong were not easily divided. She played with an authenticity that resonated in fin de siècle Britain.

This was not the case with Mrs. Kendal who judged Paula and offered her up as a “photograph” of “real life.” Kendal may have based her interpretation of Paula on the given circumstances found in the text, but ultimately, Paula failed to surprise when in the capable hands of Mrs. Kendal. Her approach, cultivated over a lifetime on the Victorian stage, was studied, her character revelation expository, planned and imposed. She played with great clarity and she had decided early on that Paula Tanqueray was a woman who had “frayed the hem of her petticoat” (Dame Madge Kendal 266) and could not be redeemed on this side of life. It was this Mrs. Tanqueray and her tragedy that Toronto critics were called upon to assess on the 18th of December, 1894. Ultimately, the dilemma for Toronto critics lay in determining which Mrs. Tanqueray, Mrs. Kendal’s or Mrs. Pat’s, to re-view.

3.8.3 Toronto “Wise cracking”: The Critics.

The critical coverage of the theatre in Toronto during the nineties is typically characterized as a dialectic between the two most enduring critics of the period, the Mail’s Parkhurst and the World’s Charlesworth. This is because we have more of the provenance for these critics’ columns. For example, we know much about Charlesworth’s career from the four volumes of autobiography
and memoirs he wrote, and it is Charlesworth who identifies Parkhurst as the only Toronto journalist working exclusively as a music and drama critic during the late nineteenth century. In fact, with the exception of Joseph T. Clark who edited and wrote for the weekly review *Saturday Night*, we do not know the names of the other critics who covered theatre in this decade, nor is it possible to determine the number of journalists writing about theatre for each of the Toronto periodicals during the eighteen nineties. It seems reasonable to assume that there were at least seven journalists critiquing theatre in this decade, one for each daily paper. The *Globe, World* and *News* contained extensive and consistent theatre coverage with weekend features, and they may have had more than one reporter assigned to theatre sections.

For this reason, it is difficult to attribute a consistent and particular policy of theatre coverage to any paper other than those Charlesworth and Parkhurst worked for. It is also difficult to associate a consistent editorial policy related to the theatre by individual newspapers, although in the most reductive sense, quality papers favoured coverage of the legitimate theatre and the independent papers favoured popular performance. Some penny papers such as the *Star* tended to dismiss theatre altogether. Consistent with this pattern, the Kendals received more attention in the quality press with the exception of the populist *World* where Charlesworth had established a tradition of extensive quality coverage.

3.8.3.1 The “Quality” Press: The *Globe, Mail*, and *Empire*.

“Quality” newspapers were sponsored by, and therefore most closely aligned with, the ideology and cultural values of either of Canada’s two political parties. These were also, with the exception of the *World*, the newspapers with the most consistent relationship with the theatre. The oldest of Toronto’s daily newspapers was the influential Liberal party organ founded by George
Brown (1818-80). During the eighteen nineties, the Globe’s editor was the widely respected John Stephen Willison (1856-1927). Rutherford maintains that the Globe’s ties to the Liberal party were weakening throughout the eighteen nineties and that Willison “had tried to turn the Globe into a more impartial, and complete, record of politics, through still very Liberal in its views” (Rutherford 223). The Globe was neither pro-Annexation, nor Unionist. It fostered, for the most part, an independently-minded readership. Brown had been a member of the “Canada First” movement, and Willison was of a similarly nationalist, if considerably more centrist, persuasion. Nonetheless, it was unusual for an edition of the Globe to be published without some mention of the Liberal party’s foremost celebrities, federal party leader Laurier and provincial premier Mowat.

Willison does not provide a particular policy toward theatre coverage in his memoirs Reminiscences: Political and Personal, but coverage is consistent during the theatre season and even continues throughout the summer months unlike other dailies. Despite the Conservative hegemony in place throughout the nineties in Toronto, the daily circulation numbers for the Globe in 1894 were Toronto’s largest. When the Kendals arrived, it was reportedly a weekly total of 131,400, just under a quarter of the population (17 Dec. 1894:4).

The rhetorical tone of the music and drama columns in the Globe is expository, closer to reportage than criticism. These may be the work of a journalist/s who served in other capacities as reporter/s at the same time. Young city reporters sometimes covered theatre as part of their apprenticeship. Willison, himself, remembers being sent to cover performance in his days as a cub reporter at the London Advertiser, in his case, a lecture at the YMCA and an “American temperance orator” (Willison 57). It does appear, however, that one voice is reporting theatre in the fall of 1894 when the Second Mrs. Tanqueray comes to Toronto. Both advance press and critical coverage is
economical and descriptive; however, the reporter covering *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* seems aware of the controversy associated with the play and displays a measured tolerance of the subject matter. The review provides the information that a discerning Torontonian might require in order to decide whether a theatre performance was worthy of the reader’s time, money and attention, and the critique is reported with an appropriate degree of disinterestedness.

The *Globe*’s review of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* not only caters to the status of the audience attending the performance but invites their critical discernment: “Most of those present were probably curious to see if it was as questionable as some of the critics have declared it to be [...]. The controversy is not one that can be settled according to any rules of reason or logic. *Each auditor will have to form his own judgement. Whether it is wholesome or pernicious in its influence will be decided by different people upon varying standards* [italics mine].” (“Great Ysaye” *Globe* [Toronto]. 19 Dec. 1894:8). This critic then goes on to praise the actors; Mrs. Kendal, in particular, s/he finds to be faultless and while s/he invites independent judgment from her/is reading public, s/he goes on to argue that the play, while objectionable in terms of subject matter, has moral authority:

> The statement of the critics that she [Paula] *dies unrepentant could not have been made by anyone who understood the course of the character* [italics mine]. This reference to international critics reinforces the argument that Mrs. Campbell’s representation of Paula Tanqueray resisted the conventional patterns of sin and redemption found in Victorian drama; furthermore, this is the first example of a Toronto critic framing his review with a reference to the London production]. The question of how far the life phases dealt with may wisely be made the subject of the dramatist, aside, the play carries a lesson - several lessons, which are not always palatable to society but which no one will say are unnecessary. It impresses them with exquisite skill and tremendous force (8).

The play’s lessons are not expanded on. It is assumed the discriminate readership of the *Globe* will not need to have such finer points elucidated.

Both of the Conservative “quality” newspapers, the *Mail* and the *Empire* also deferred to an
informed public, although their alliance to a British heritage and way of life allowed for a closer identification with the production and its playwright. In 1894, the Mail with a sizable advertised weekly subscription of approximately 111,000 (1 Dec. 1894:4) was an independent paper with a history of inconsistent editorial policy. The paper had begun life as the Conservative party organ in 1876, but its talented and fractious editor Edward Farrer broke with the party in 1887. Sir John A. Macdonald, eager to have a party paper to counter the influence of the Globe sponsored the Empire in 1888, but many loyal Conservatives continued to buy the Mail. With two papers to rally to, the Conservative readership was split and in 1895, the bankrupt Empire merged with the Mail to become the Mail and Empire and returned to the Conservative party’s fold. Farrer, went on to work briefly as joint editor of the Globe in 1890 and by 1892 had left Toronto.

The Mail’s owner, paper tycoon John Riordan who bought the paper in 1877 before its break with the Conservative party, had been influenced by the layout and style of American newspapers. For this reason, “the Mail building, which still occupie[d] the corner of Bay and King streets, Toronto, was constructed as a replica of the old New York Tribune building facing City Hall Square” (Candid Chronicles 75).

If the political and editorial policy of these papers was inconsistent, the theatre coverage in the Mail was the most stable of any daily journal principally because of the presence of Parkhurst, a British immigrant from Dulwich, who arrived in Canada in 1869. After a brief apprenticeship with the Mail, he became a political correspondent, perhaps because of his shorthand skills, and, later, editor for the Globe. In 1876, he returned to the Mail where he remained as music and drama critic until 1898. A student of the violin, Parkhurst’s first love was music, and while his coverage of the drama is extensive, in general, he favours comedy and musical entertainment to drama.
It is sometimes difficult to determine whether Parkhurst actually saw a given production on the particular night he claimed the review for or if indeed he saw it at all. At times he reviewed two and three openings on the same evening. In order to do this, he had either to have jumped from theatre to theatre, more than possible given their close proximity, or it may be that he had scouts or reporters inform him of deviations on previous performances. It is also possible that he practiced a combination of the three. Because of the significance of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, because this was its first visit to Toronto, because of his admiration for the Kendals, and primarily because of the extensive critique provided by him, there is every reason to believe he viewed the production in its entirety.

Throughout his career his readers would have held his tastes to be conservative. His reference in Morgan’s *Canadian Men and Women of the Time* compiled in 1912 claims that he had “taken strong ground in his writings for the press against the problem play and the school of Ibsen and Maeterlinck” (882). On first reading it is odd then that the *Mail* contradicts the *Globe* by suggesting that *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* is “of its kind the most powerful example of dramatic construction that has been put upon the stage in many years” (“Grand Opera House.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 19 Dec. 1894: 2). Odd until one considers that, when it came to the Kendals, Parkhurst was torn between his pro-British conservative leanings and his anti-Problem play/New drama stance. Given Mrs. Kendal’s interpretation of the role and Pinero’s drama, it was easy for him to endorse the former.

His review of the production begins in signature style by citing the attendance of a “large and fashionable audience.” Having thus defined and pandered to his reader, he quickly defers to Mrs.

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7 Maurice Maeterlinck (1862-1949) Another innovator whose Symbolist dramas did not appear in Toronto until the next century.
Kendal’s reading of the text by quoting an interview where she argues that “[t]he play teaches the strongest moral lesson of any play ever written.” (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 19 Dec. 1894: 2). There is no doubt to its nature as Kendal sees it and Parkhurst reiterates:

The moral lesson is that retributive justice at last overtakes and punishes sin every time, and that repentance, however sincere, will not help us to ward off that punishment. It is in the very moment of repentance that punishment does overtake us, for then we are prepared to feel it most keenly. The terrible lesson is that a woman, handed about from man to man as she has been, can never regain her own self-respect. (“Music and the Drama.” Mail [Toronto]. 19 Dec. 1894:2)

Parkhurst goes on to reassure his audience that they should not consider themselves sensation seekers but were appropriately “drawn by a desire to enjoy the acting of a couple of the most able dramatic artists of the day, and to a certain extent no doubt by curiosity with regard to a much talked of play” (2). Parkhurst hastens to add that, in fact, the play contains a “certain artistry” but “it will strike many people as a morbid and unwholesome presentment of a phase of life, common enough and true enough, vividly and cleverly pourtrayed [sic], yet dealing throughout with an unpleasant subject in a manner which pervades four long acts with a no means refined atmosphere” (2). In reporting his distaste for the subject matter of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, he remains true to his anti-modern bias while redeeming the work of the British practitioners involved. He chooses to see Pinero’s story as a “common” and “true” representation of “unpleasant” events, but provides no recognition of a novel approach by either playwright or performers. He is the only reporter to see the events in the play as “true” or authentic and for a reporter who has spent much of his life reviewing dramas that featured plots and characters like those found in The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, the Kendals’ production could be viewed as possessing a constructed dramatic realism, i.e., it was “true” or authentic to the genres that had previously featured fallen women.

As its name suggests, the Empire was another paper with strong ties to Britain. At its
inception, Taylor Crawford boasted that:

[i]t must be a matter of congratulation to all loyal Canadians that a paper has been established which will, to a large extent, counteract the injurious influence of those who, for ulterior objects, have for some time been engaged in representing the United States as offering advantages superior to those enjoyed in Canada, and extolling everything on the other side of the lines, the effect of which is to depreciate Canadian interests and her attractions.

To those in Europe into whose hands the Empire may fall, the information it will disseminate must prove invaluable, because it will be reliable, and it is to be hoped that its wide circulation, which is assured, will tend to promote the best class of emigration to the Dominion, and that Toronto will have to be told to have their great attractions appreciated. (Crawford Taylor 261)

One of these attractions seems to have been the theatre as the paper quickly poached Charlesworth, who worked for Saturday Night at the time, to be their drama critic. Charlesworth’s direct supervisor was city editor, Finlay Mackenzie who, Charlesworth claims, knew nothing about the drama, but nonetheless scrutinized Charlesworth’s columns for impropriety. Charlesworth remembers “[h]is fear of decency was an obsession” (Candid Chronicles 154). The young theatre critic did not stay with the Empire for long in 1894, but returned in 1898 when the paper joined with the Mail. Parkhurst, in turn, went to write for the Globe at this time.

While Charlesworth claims that the paper employed him with the hope of providing a consistent critical perspective, the Empire’s theatre coverage is not as extensive as the Mail’s in 1894. The review of the The Second Mrs. Tanqueray is little more than plot description. It seems unlikely that this is the work of Charlesworth, who as a strong advocate of new dramas could be expected to report on this production at length. He worked for both the World and the Empire in this year, and we know that he saw the production because he refers to the Toronto production in his memoirs (343). It is more likely that the review for the World is his (See Subsection 3.8.3.2).

The privileging of the legitimate theatre as an elite practice is the aim of all three quality
Toronto papers at this time even if there is disagreement about the worth of a given production. In this sense, all practice a theatre rhetoric that distances the literary and affluent from the unschooled and poor, although it is also likely that the Kendals’ advertising campaign hoped to draw from this demographic as well. In doing so, the critics writing for these papers complimented their reader’s intelligence and skills of discernment while carefully constructing and guiding their reading of the performance text. Ultimately, they all recognized *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* as a worthy example of the prestige British drama even if they disagreed on the merits of the Kendals’ production.

3.8.3.2 The Independent Press: The *World, Evening Star, News* and *Telegram*.

In 1894, Toronto supported four “independent” newspapers: the *World, Star, News* and *Telegram*. For the most part, the independent press catered to the working public who had little dispensable income for the legitimate theatre. Two, the *Telegram* and the *Evening Star*, carried little to no coverage of the theatre. It is an indication of their celebrity that the Kendals’ visit was mentioned in advance notices. The *News* initiated in 1881 by maverick publisher E(dmund) E(arnest) Sheppard (1855-1924) contains minimal theatre criticism and advance press in 1894, but the amount of coverage varied throughout the decade and was extensive at times. Sheppard had begun his career editing the weekly arts magazine *Saturday Night*. Taylor Crawford recalls that under the “editorship of Sheppard [the News] was an aggressive radical publication advocating many changes” (Crawford Taylor 171). Frequently sensationalist in tone, by 1892 it had become an independent paper with Conservative leanings. It was managed by Thomas A. Gregg whom Charlesworth describes Gregg as “a cultured man and prince of good fellows,[...]who because of the shrewdness that lay back of his genial presence was known as the Fat Mephistopheles” (*Candid Chronicles* 126).

The *News* did critique *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* and found it to have little relevance for
its readers: “The play is not palatable. It is built on a foundation that is at times repulsive, while the phase of life presented is morbid and unreal-as ordinary life runs. [italic mine...] Mrs. Kendal was full of great power, her best work probably being in the heavy emotional scenes. Mr. Kendal as usual gave a masterly interpretation of the part assigned to him” (“Second Mrs. Tanqueray.” News [Toronto]. 19 Dec. 1894:3). The implication in this review is that this play, and perhaps by association the legitimate first-run theatre, had little relevance for its readers. This tended to be the attitude of the Toronto penny press in general with one key exception.

Perhaps no other paper contributed more to the theatrical life of Toronto than the World. Like the Mail, the World with its eye-catching headlines, plentiful illustrations and advertisements, looked to America for its form and inspiration. Historian Middleton records that “[t]his paper was founded during a bye-election in West Toronto in the year 1879, with Messrs. W. F. Maclean, Archibald Blue, and Albert Horton as its proprietors” (Crawford Taylor 170). William, or Billy MacLean, the paper’s publisher and editor, was a Torontonian with a BA from the University of Toronto, and who is described by Rutherford as a “forceful exponent of democracy, Canadian chauvinism and the anti-monopoly cry” (54). Charlesworth, personal bias aside, suggests that it had a “reputation for pungency and intelligence to build on, whereas the News had for years been a sort of journalistic mountebank” (More Candid Chronicles 160).

He remembers that the World’s extensive coverage of theatre was the result of its farsighted editor, Walter J Wilkinson, news editor for World until 1897: “[...] although I do not think he ever went voluntarily to a concert, and only occasionally to the theatre, he more than any Canadian editor was responsible for building up the news importance of musical and dramatic events” (Candid Chronicles 137). He hired Charlesworth, the most enduring Toronto theatre critic of the eighteen
nineties, when the young critic was only twenty-two years of age.

Born in Hamilton, the son of a travelling shoe salesman, Charlesworth was raised in the small Ontario town of Port Hope. He describes himself as “ill equipped in the matter of education” (60), and claims that it was his mother who encouraged his desire to write while nurturing his aesthetic standards: “When she discovered my aspirations she was very ambitious for me that I excel as a writer and never deviate from standards of taste” (61). He claims that this led to an interest in all forms of writing. “All of a sudden as it were, I found myself possessed of a desire to acquire familiarity with all literatures and all arts, and in time to become one of the great company of letters” (65). His first love was nature poetry, made fashionable by Canadian poets such as Bliss Carmen and the American Transcendentalists in his youth: “[I]t was natural that my first impulse when I started to write should take the form of nature poetry” (68).

It was the desire to publish his poetry that caused him to approach the editor of Toronto’s arts magazine: “I had been sending verse and prose sketches anonymously to the young weekly newspaper, the Toronto Saturday Night, then conducted by Mr. E. E. Sheppard. I sometimes signed my initials and sometimes the pen name “Touchstone,” which I chose because the jester’s saying, “Call me not fool till Heaven hath sent me fortune” (70-71). Sheppard took an interest in the young writer and “[t]hus for good or ill, in the second week of March 1891, being some months less than nineteen, I became a newspaper man” (71). Familiar as he was with the work of Matthew Arnold, he no doubt was aware that the pseudonym held connotations that signified excellence in the arts as well, and was able to associate himself with this critical authority at a very young age.

He worked for the World in 1892, joined the Empire in September 1893 through to the autumn 1894, and shortly after returned to the World for “three to four years.” He remembers the
paper as always being on the brink of financial ruin with “supplies of paper for more than a few issues and sometimes barely enough for one” (129). Even when he turned to political reporting with the News in 1896, he never completely deserted his first career as a theatre critic and claimed that: “Of course I have always by deliberate intent entertained a position as a chronicler of musical, dramatic, and artistic events, partly because criticism in these fields to be effective must also be good reporting” (More Candid Chronicles 159). Theatre historian Denis Salter describes him as “a bon vivant and inexhaustible raconteur [...] the kind of ‘picturesque’ public persona that he himself had so earnestly admired in other Great Men in his time” (Salter 139). Salter observes that in addition to Arnold, the critic was shaped by a hegemony of British aesthetic principles, in particular by the neo-Romantic theories of the Aesthetes, Walter Pater (1839-94) and Wilde. He feels that the theatre:

[...] mattered to Charlesworth, not so for its ethical value, practical worth, or intellectual substance - though these things mattered too - but rather because it could create sensuous, idealizing experiences, could liberate both the body and the spirit from inhibitions, and could function as a civilized defence against mass society’s proclivity towards ugliness, banality, and meretriciousness. (Salter 139)

Charlesworth claims to have not been a political animal although his wife Kate Ryan was the sister of a Liberal politician. He viewed himself, however, as a proud nationalist if one understood the term Canadian to inscribe a British sensibility:

In my case the process of Canadianization began many decades before I was born. So far as anyone of British blood may claim to be a died-in-the-weave Canadian, that am I; and it is not without pride that I speak of forebears who played their part not only in the beginnings of British settlement in Lower and Upper Canada but in the West itself- for one of my grandfathers was born on the site of what is now Winnipeg before the Battle of Waterloo was fought. (Candid Chronicles 1)

Certainly, his views on the role of the critic all derived from Britain. Like Archer, he believed in a national theatre that originated from a grand British/European tradition. Like Arnold, he believed that Canada must learn from this tradition before practising a native drama. It was this conviction
that caused Charlesworth to take on the role of guide and teacher advocated in *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time*. He claims that “[t]hough I have been engaged in criticism for over thirty years, I have never desired to be known as a critic *per se* - much less as a censor - merely as an interpreter and analyst of artistic effort, even in its humblest manifestations” (316).

Seeing himself as a martyr to his craft, he remembers, that it cost him both in terms of earnings and respect: “Many times in years gone by friends expostulated with me at the folly of a man who had developed considerable aptitude for the routine of newspaper direction wasting his time on interests to which the majority of men and women, are, however they may disguise it, indifferent. Bad business truly, in a county in the making like Canada” (123). Self-professed humility aside, his influence on Toronto theatre was considerable even as early as 1894. Today his criticism seems elitist and patronizing in tone, his rhetoric posturing and pretentious, but the flourishes found in his prose are consistent with the principles and style of those writing during the aesthetic movement revival in the nineties. In this, along with his taste for new dramatic genres and performance fashions, he would have been included among a new generation of writers and critics in 1894.

His review of the *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* contains the irony that is a characteristic of Charlesworth’s work; an irony that he felt was “meaningless to many estimable people” (195); and, at all times, Charlesworth positions himself as a voice of authority. He begins his review with reference to the controversy surrounding the famous play: “A drama on which many thousand lines have been written, and which has won applause to an inestimable extent, and many a damnatory verdict as well, was at last produced in Toronto last night” (“Pinero’s Enthralling Tragedy.” *World* [Toronto]. 19 Dec. 1894:4).
Given the criticism provided by other critics who saw little of controversy in the play, Charlesworth, also bewildered by the remove between the coverage he had read and the performance he had just viewed, elects to elucidate The Second Mrs. Tanqueray’s importance for his confused audience, constructing it as a worthy example of the controversial form he had studied and championed so long, as a masterful and complex tragedy:

Pinero’s play, “The Second Mrs. Tanqueray,” as presented by Mr. and Mrs. Kendal proved to be a tragedy so simple and heart-rending, and yet so complex and inevitable, that those present saw it and realized it with a sensation of puzzled awe. It is awesome, just as human life, when fully realized, is awesome. It is a tragedy eminently modern - a tale of three people immeshed in a web of conflicting conditions, modern habits, modern conventions, and beneath it all, immemorial instincts. (“Pinero’s Enthralling Tragedy.” World [Toronto]. 19 Dec. 1894:4)

Charlesworth indicates that Mrs. Kendal has revealed Paula Tanqueray with skill and realism, although here perhaps some use of irony is at play:

Mrs. Kendal is strongly realistic, with a few coarse touches, she gives a sensation of culminating tragedy through it all. She is full of changing moods and grows older before one’s eyes, while there is an equally significant change in her voice as the play proceeds. In short, the impersonation combines all Mrs. Kendal’s marvellous technique with a great deal more subtlety and power than she was known to possess. (4)

He then provides one of the most detailed of descriptions of Kendal’s performance found in Toronto papers when he writes of Paula’s distress at discovering that her husband’s daughter intends to marry a former lover, the pivotal mirror:

And poor Paula! She who once was pure. The girl’s love and respect is gone. The husband’s respect she has not, his love she fears to lose, when her prettiness is gone. Her mirror tells her that the shadows are creeping on her. Habit had burned her thoughts and her words with a terrible brand; the leopard cannot change his spots. To her the only solution is suicide, and she accepts the inevitable. (4)

This passage describes, not only the heightened histrionic effect of Mrs. Kendal’s performance, but confirms that this production in no way challenged conventional expectations of the fallen woman.
Charlesworth adds that “[t]his is the tragic tale, told with the grace and power of Pinero, with not one offence against good taste” (4).

Charlesworth would change his mind about the realism and merit of Kendal’s performance at least twice. When Mrs. Patrick Campbell brought her tour to Toronto in 1902, he wrote:

The chief theatrical event of the season took place at the Princess Theatre last night in the appearance of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, the originator of the title role in “The Second Mrs. Tanqueray” [...] it was quite clear last night that Torontonians had not seen the play in its real colors heretofore, for something so entirely different from other representations of the part that they seem wholly inadequate. (“Mrs. Campbell in Pinero Play.” Mail and Empire [Toronto]. 13 Dec. 1902: 7 )

In his memoirs he remembers Kendal’s performance as misguided: “[I]n *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, which she first played in America she erred in trying to make Paula ‘common’, for she had a theory that a really ‘nice’ woman could not have a ‘past’” (353).

Charlesworth’s dilemma when reviewing *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* was two-fold. The young critic hoped to establish a unique reputation in Toronto media both for himself and his paper, but he was rarely able to review what he considered to be important work. Confronted with what was publicized to be an important example of the new Problem play, and finding the production lacking, he reviewed the Kendals’ production as if it were the nuanced complex production he had read so much about. A close reading of his review informed by his comments later in life indicates that he, like so many in the audience on December 17th, 1894, found the production to be conventional and one-dimensional.

With few truly controversial new works able to sustain profit on a touring circuit, Charlesworth, in weekly columns titled “From the Foyer,” continued to promote the cause of a high art and new works that rarely played Toronto. True to Arnold’s vision, with the hopes that the nineties might be an “epoch of concentration” for Britain and he a contributor, he played his role in
fostering a great Anglo-Saxon drama. In attempting to place Toronto criticism, and himself, in a position of privilege in the Western critical discourse, he frequently, and certainly unintentionally, placed Toronto professional performance on the margins. Clark at Saturday Night offered another perspective.

Saturday Night, a weekly newsprint arts magazine was founded in 1887 by E. E. Sheppard who wrote under the psuedonym “Don.” Charlesworth describes Sheppard as a city character with a “habit of dress” as “half-Spanish and half American - resembling one of actor Bret Harte’s immaculate gamblers (Candid Chronicles 73). By 1894, the weekly was edited by Clark “a man about whom there is nothing small but his stature” (127). Like the daily newspapers, Saturday Night fought for the subscriber’s dollars: “It had started in 1887 as the liveliest of local publications, but had suffered somewhat from the fact that the daily press soon began to incorporate certain special departments, which it had originated, in their week-end issues. Mr Sheppard’s own ability and individuality had been vital factors in its popularity, but he had gradually alienated his public” (More Candid Chronicles 181).

In 1894, and under new management, its offices were located in the heart of the theatre district:

The weekly occupied three narrow floors and a basement in the Grand Opera House building, which as the only first-class theatre in Toronto at that time was an excellent location in which to house a publication of the kind. Every playgoer had the name of Saturday Night before his eyes; and on publication day sheets were pasted on the windows to tease him into buying. The editorial rooms upstairs were the nearest approach to a literary Bohemia that Canada afforded at that time. A dark and narrow hall way led to them, and they had at one time been the quarters of a defunct Press Club at which Henry Irving and other celebrities had been entertained. On the wall was a sketch of the great actor, which had been made from life on one of these occasions. (84)

Yet because of its publishing schedule, theatre coverage by Saturday Night lacked the
immediacy provided by the daily press, and didn’t effectively compensate by providing close analysis of the productions that came to Toronto each week. The weekly section on “The Drama” featured in Saturday Night did periodically attempt to encapsulate and comment on Toronto’s response to new developments in the theatre and drama, but these were most frequently positioned by the writer’s flippant tone, one that was constructed as witty, world-weary and blasé. In an effort to place himself in a position of authority, he diminished, if not trivialized, the importance of these developments and for that matter, most of what played on Toronto stages. His reviews, as was the case with The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, are frequently astute, however, and given the lack of “important” work to play Toronto, his approach was somewhat justified. Nonetheless little is praised or valued in the theatre columns of Saturday Night and the cumulative negative criticism featured in its pages throughout the nineties diminishes theatre in general and Toronto theatre in particular.

In the case of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, Saturday Night, like the quality press of which it could be considered a close relative, catered to a select readership. Clark thought the play to be lacking in controversy, somewhat contrived, but none the less an interesting character study poorly rendered: “In reading of this play in the English press I had gathered the ideal that Ardale was a deep-dyed scoundrel, but it seems clear that the idea sought to be conveyed is that he is just an ordinary man of his class and has been no better nor worse than the usual army officer who marries a sweet young heiress after sundry escapades in love and promotions in war” (“The Drama.” Saturday Night [Toronto]. 28 Dec. 1894:6). He adds that the play is implausible in places, such as Aubrey’s anger when he discovers the truth about Paula and Ardale, “His fury with her is quite illogical, knowing what he does know,” he reasons. He goes on to point to what he felt to be a crucial piece of miscasting:
A man’s penitence is accepted, but a woman’s never. This is the story. The piece would be stronger if Ellean were somewhat more radiant and presentable. [...] It is a French idea that only uninteresting women are virtuous, and it is not an idea that should be encouraged. Those who attended the play in quest of amusement and not in search of a study in human nature, were no doubt disappointed. (“The Drama.”. *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 28 Dec. 1894:6)

As was the case in the reviews from the daily press, Clark suggests that the play lacked credibility, that it had little authenticity or relevance for modern Toronto theatregoers. He is the only critic writing at the time to directly suggest that the problem might lie in the production’s casting and interpretation of the central roles, however. Toronto critics would find the same play troubling and sensational seven years later when a cast led by Mrs. Tanqueray’s creator Mrs. Patrick Campbell brought her production to the Princess Theatre.

3.9 After: Old Dramas and New Mrs. Tanquerays.

After their performances in Toronto, on December 20th the Kendals left for a series of one-night performances in Rochester’s Lyceum Theatre, Syracuse’s Weiting Opera House on the 21st and in Utica’s Opera House before enjoying the stability of five weeks in New York City’s Abbey’s Theatre (Pemberton 290). Sometime in June 1895, they ceased touring in North America and returned to their home at 145 Harley Street, their five teen-aged children and their British stage career. The Kendals returned to America one final time in 1899 with a production of Messrs. Ernest Hendrie and Metcalfe Wood’s *The Elder Miss Blossom*. (Dame Madge Kendal 271) W. H. Kendal died in 1917 leaving behind a devoted and diminished Madge. Her memoirs, written in 1933, are a rambling narrative that describes her travels and triumphs, advice to new actors, and diatribes against ungrateful children and a profession that has passed her by. Today she is best remembered for her kindness to “Elephant Man” David Merrick.

The visit of Julia Stuart (1867-1949?) in Ibsen’s New drama, *A Doll’s House*, played for one
night in Toronto in 1895 at the newly refurbished and renamed AOM, the Princess Theatre. It caused barely a ripple in the press. In a short review, Charlesworth at the *World* reports Julia Stuart to be “a charming little lady” in a work of “exquisite naturalness,” the production a “[m]arvellous Social Drama” (“‘Trilby’ and Herr Ibsen.” *World* [Toronto]. 29 Oct. 1895:8). Parkhurst characteristically held it to be a well-acted drama that “inculcates a lesson of trite morality” (“Music and the Drama” 29 Oct. 1895:4). *Saturday Night* provided a typically mocking critique:

Possibly my ideas of what is immoral and what is not are sadly unorthodox, but I cannot help regarding A Doll’s House as one of the most grossly immoral plays that had visited Toronto for some time. [...] Imagine a woman who after eight years of wedded happiness deserts her husband and children because she discovers that he, though he has loved her with all the affection he is capable of, is at heart a selfish brute. [...] If every woman who discovers she has married a selfish husband were to do the like, what a vast Quaker meeting this world would then become—all the women on one side and all the men on the other! (“The Drama.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 2 Nov. 1895:5)

Nor did the *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* receive much attention when it returned to Toronto throughout the nineties in versions starring Olga Nethersole, Eugenie Blair (1868-1922) and Sadie Martinot (1862-1923). This all changed in 1902. Mrs. Patrick Campbell, facing financial ruin after an unsuccessful attempt at theatre management, brought her version of the play to Toronto as part of a North American tour that included dramas by Sudermann and Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832-1910). These were New dramas in every sense.

Charlesworth was finally able to review quality examples of the type of play he had championed for so long, and he quickly fell under the spell of Mrs. Patrick Campbell: “Mrs. Campbell’s Paula is so pathetic, so weak, so wayward, so suggestive of the lines Dante Gabriel Rossetti applies to his little sinner Jennie:/Poor handful of bright spring water/Flung in the whirlpool’s shrieking face. that the play becomes simple and logical, a woeful tragedy that literally
casts a spell over one’s senses. (Touchstone “The Drama and Music.” 24)

Parkhurst countered with characteristic contempt: “Mrs. Campbell, [...] has presented a succession of suffering sisters, differentiated only in matter of environment and special circumstances.[...] One begins to wonder whether it would not be profitable for her to embody some type of cheerful, wholesome, pure and loveable woman. (“Music and the Drama.” Globe [Toronto].14 Feb. 1903:11). Saturday Night suggests that while the critics were engaged by Mrs. Patrick Campbell’s performances, her repertoire was for an elite audience only: “Campbellitis has been epidemic in town this week. It is not a disease that attacks the multitude. Like appendicitis, it is high-toned and high-priced. (“The Drama.” 22 Feb. 1902:6)

The controversy caused by The Second Mrs. Tanqueray in London, it turned out, wasn’t really about new and unimaginable improprieties in Pinero’s text, rather it derived from a fresh approach to the plastic arts by a charismatic, inexperienced young mother of two. Mrs. Patrick Campbell’s performance responded to evolving notions of authenticity and truth taking place during the eighteen nineties. Her interpretation of Paula, at once fluid and complex, tallied with a desire by many to view a drama that was less morally rigid, that corresponded to the increasing sense in Modern Europe that life was complex and frequently unjust. In Toronto, more optimistic but wiser after the Boer War, when both of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray’s had been critiqued and re-viewed, it came down to three simple questions for most. How credible was Pinero’s text? What relevance did it have for Torontonians; and why could they learn from these people and this play?

And so for a week in 1902, a debate over the direction and soul of a new drama ignited in Toronto, long after the Theatrical Syndicate had become entrenched and was able to dictate the selection and direction of North American drama, twenty-three years after Ibsen wrote A Doll’s
House, long after theatre managers and the Syndicate had determined that New drama and its sister forms were unprofitable and a decade after the London opening of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray. The debate may have laid the foundation for the tradition of polarized critical polemic and pro-nationalist vs pro-European values that can be a characteristic of Toronto’s theatre criticism today, but the 1902 critical debate on the values of the New drama in Toronto was an echo of a battle for the direction of new dramas that was past in much of the western world.

New works based on the principles of the New drama continued to evolve in Europe and in New York, but these were not, with very few exceptions, part of the touring circuit repertoire. The performance presented by touring combinations remained the only examples of professional theatre Toronto had. It wasn’t until the economic hold of the Theatrical Syndicate was broken by competition, war and movies, that the door opened for innovation on North America’s touring circuits, but by then, an amateur tradition that began with groups such as Toronto’s Hart House Players had laid the path in Canada for works by innovators such as Gwen Pharis Ringwood (1910-1984) and Herman Voaden (1903-1991). Both sought their inspiration from traditions that evolved outside the touring professional theatre, in Voaden’s case from the Expressionist principles of fine artists and in Pharis Ringwood’s case from links to community drama and folk art traditions.

During the eighteen nineties, the theatre critics of Toronto’s new press, in an effort to establish a situated cultural authority, believed themselves to have few viable options: they could acclaim and endorse the touring theatre that played in Toronto, but this meant that their perspective had little value, particularly as the theatre they were called on to review was dismissed by so many of the important voices in their discursive field. If they did this, and to some extent, Parkhurst did, they situated themselves as contrarian and perhaps irrelevant. Even so, Parkhurst by supporting
conservative values and dramatic forms, remained in sympathy with many of his similarly conservative readers and established a limited authority this way.

Other Toronto critics had the option, as Clark did, to place themselves above or outside the discourse, but this frequently led to the impression that theatre in itself was not worthy of careful study or high seriousness. A Toronto critic might, as the Liberal *Globe* reporter did, defer to the discernment and authority of their readers while carefully framing and directing the reception. On the surface, this approach seemed to create a two-way consensus between equals, but as the critic framed and led the discourse s/he was always in a position of privilege. In addition, this approach to criticism relied on the reader being aware of more admirable productions taking place outside the city and such productions frequently framed the assessment of Toronto performances. Finally, Toronto critics could, as Charlesworth did, enter into the debate on the direction of the drama while having few worthy first-hand examples to use for support. Again, Charlesworth placed the exemplary outside the nation and contributed to a notion that Toronto viewed little of value even if they did have worthy critics and a role in the discourse.

4.1 Nineteenth Century Scrapbooks: Collecting Amusement.

In his memoirs New York producer and entrepreneur Daniel Frohman writes that:

> [u]nlike the other arts, the fame of the actor is but a breath, a memory. The written word, which records his work, cannot reproduce the charm, the imagination or the eloquence that inspired his achievements. They have been not only ‘the abstract and brief chronicles of their time,’ but are and always will be potent factors in the art, the graces and forces of civilization. ([*Memories of a Manager*](#) 136)

It is likely that it was in an attempt to capture the elusive presence of a valued performer that many nineteenth-century theatregoers kept scrapbooks and collections of programmes, and it is to these enthusiasts that the nineteenth-century theatre historian can be grateful. Much of the primary evidence about theatre performance used in this history for example derives from scrapbooks and collections such as Agnes Baskerville Sherry’s, whose *fonds* are housed in the National Archives in Ottawa, or the collection of programmes spanning the years 1855-1926 donated by a Mrs. McAlpine to the Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library, or the numerous loose programmes donated to Ontario libraries and archives. All provide valuable insight into repertoire, theatre management and marketing practices.

Yet for all the helpful data about nineteenth-century Toronto theatre practice provided in these collections, little is known about the collectors. In the case of Baskerville Sherry, there is evidence that she travelled widely between the years 1892 to 1921. Very little marginalia is included in her scrapbooks, simply programmes from Britain, America and Canada, the last primarily from theatres in Ottawa, Toronto and Kingston. The Toronto Metropolitan Library has no biographical information on Mrs. McAlpine at all. Her scrapbooks, if they are her scrapbooks, primarily contain programmes from productions in the Toronto area, theatres that include the Grand Opera House.
(GOH), Massey Hall (MH), the Princess Theatre (PT), the Regent Theatre, the Royal Alexandra Theatre, the Royal Lyceum, the Royal Opera House and performances at the University of Toronto, although there are also a smaller number of New York and Montreal programmes. The keeper of the McAlpine scrapbooks has clipped cast lists from programmes and pasted these into a hardcover copy of the *Review of Historical Publications Relating to Canada, Volumes XVII and XIX*. The programmes are accompanied by fan magazine photos of actors and some newspaper clippings related to the theatre. There is one titled “Catholics on the Stage” that argues that Shakespeare was a Roman Catholic (18). It would appear that the McAlpine collector, presumably Roman Catholic also, still felt the need to reconcile her, or his, spiritual faith to the habit of theatre attendance as late as the eighteen nineties.

As this chapter will show, it was during the eighteen nineties, perhaps more than any other decade, that the practice of materializing theatre performance and craft as commodity gained currency, and the accumulating of theatre programmes in this decade served as one form of cultural capital for collectors, the ephemeral made substantial. In chronicling their evenings in these collections, presumably these collectors felt that the selection of entertainment these programmes signify elevated them socially, that their choice had cultural value, even if they had little monetary worth at the time. Individually, each programme replaced a cherished memory, a prestigious cultural gathering, a brush with celebrity or simply an evening released from the tedium of daily routine. As a whole, these collections cite a life that prized the nineteenth-century theatre and its players.

Moreover, these programmes provide a parallel narrative. As the eighteen nineties progress, these collections show that the seasons in the professional theatres increasingly favoured a repertoire of commercially-tried vehicles, i.e., road productions selected for their ability to show a profit;
moreover, in Toronto’s legitimate theatres, the PT and the GOH, producers’ credits more and more show the influence and control of the booking agency known as the Theatrical Syndicate. The Syndicate, a group made up of American booking agents, advance men, theatre managers and producers, formed a partnership in 1896 with the single-minded intention of controlling “all the important theatres” (qtd. in Bernheim 47) in North America. They let legitimate theatre managers across North America know that they would guarantee a season of quality talent if theatre managers, in return, agreed to furnish space in their theatres to them exclusively. With this arrangement the Syndicate hoped to eliminate the chaos created by the competing interests of scattered tour circuit managers and create one cohesive profitable network of legitimate theatre venues. By the late nineties, the Syndicate’s hold on first-run theatre became so pervasive that if talent was on the Syndicate’s or, as it was often referred to, the “Trust’s” roster it became de facto “legitimate.” If they were not on the Syndicate’s books, they were exiled to “opposition” status and ran the very real risk of not working altogether.

Minnie Maddern Fiske, one of the most celebrated stars of the American circuit-combination system, became an opposition performer. She resisted the Syndicate because she was wary of the control that the profit-driven agency might wield under their new booking arrangement, of their ability to potentially arbitrate just which artists were worthy and which weren’t. Ultimately, she wanted to deny them the authority to oversee the direction and quality of the drama in general. By extension, Fiske’s husband, Harrison Grey Fiske (1861-1942), who edited the arts weekly the New York Dramatic Mirror, began a campaign against the booking agency in his paper. He would ultimately be unsuccessful in stopping the Syndicate’s hold on the legitimate theatre but was enduringly effective in constructing the Syndicate as an overreaching and philistine monopoly.
The truth about the Syndicate’s practice, if business dealings in Toronto are any indication, was more complex than Fiske’s characterization and came closer to supporting Syndicate founder Marcus Klaw’s (1858-1936) claim that their hold, at least in its early stages, was a varied and mutual arrangement between individual theatre managers. According to Klaw, managers entered into arrangements with the Syndicate that served their situated conditions (Bernheim 56). In return, they were provided with a service that addressed a very real need to an industry in time of crisis, one that was fighting the uncertainty of economic depression and a poorly conceived institutional organizational structure, i.e., the circuit-combination system that saw practitioners travelling great distances between bookings or missing performance dates and paycheques altogether.

Toronto’s relationship with the Syndicate in the years between 1896 and 1898 is difficult to trace. According to Alfred Bernheim, the GOH and the PT became part of the Syndicate sometime between 1896 and 1898 (Bernheim 51). When exactly isn’t clear, but the uncertainty may lie in the nature of the personal relationship and business association between Syndicate founders and Toronto managers Sheppard and C. J. Whitney, who together controlled most of the legitimate entertainment in Toronto. Sheppard and Erlanger were good friends and had done business prior to the formation of the Syndicate. Erlanger would attend and serve as an honorary pall bearer at Sheppard’s funeral (“O.B. Sheppard Burial....” Star [Toronto]. 2 May 1928:2). The pressure to join the Syndicate may have been more subtle given this relationship.

Moreover, the Syndicate did not directly control popular-price houses throughout the nineties. Until 1898 the Toronto Opera House (TOH) was leased and operated by New Yorker H(enry) R. Jacobs, who oversaw a circuit of melodrama houses which spanned the northern United States and Canada. By the end of the nineties, influenced by the Syndicate’s example, the popular theatre had
also organized and fragmented into three genres, i.e., variety, vaudeville and melodrama production. Most theatres in Toronto, including popular houses, were then under the control of one of three booking trusts i.e., the Theatrical Syndicate, Vaudeville Managers’ Association, or the Stair and Havlin Circuit. Again these arrangements were not hard and fast. E(dward) D. Stair (1859 - 1951) of the Stair and Havlin Circuit which formed in 1900, like Whitney worked with both Sheppard at the PT where he managed the Cummings Stock Co. and with Small at the TOH; moreover, Stair had managed Whitney’s theatres in Detroit earlier in the decade (“Detroit” New York Daily Mirror. 29 Oct. 1892:10).

Given the clandestine nature of business relationships conducted between theatre managers throughout the nineties (See Section 4.3.3.2), it is difficult to determine the explicit nature of business arrangements between individual theatre and circuit managers in Toronto or elsewhere in North America for that matter. Certainly the relationship between the Detroit circuit managers, the Theatrical Syndicate and Toronto theatre managers was complex and malleable and became more so in the next century when popular house manager Small bought the GOH in an attempt to control all touring entertainment in the city. Ironically while Sheppard and Small battled for control of the legitimate theatre in the next century, it was increasingly the case as time progressed that the money in entertainment was to be made from popular genres such as variety and vaudeville and, ultimately, the motion picture.

This appetite for popular genres in the nineties arose partly in response to a growing industrial class with increased leisure time and capital. It was also shaped by the practice of theatre and circuit managers who placed capital gain before art or craft, and who felt that performances that pleased rather than perplexed were more likely to profit. This mind set was facilitated by the fact that
circuit and Syndicate managers felt that great stars of the legitimate theatre were difficult to manage and costly to produce. While the Syndicate assured financial success to the actors and theatre managers it conducted business with, many more were excluded and resentful. Between 1900 and 1928, touring companies reduced from 392 to 86 under Syndicate and like booking circuits (Bernheim 75).

Late nineteenth-century North American theatre business practice, then, was shaped by economic recession and a conflict between, on the one hand, organized booking trusts with expanding control and, on the other, the individual theatre managers, rival circuit managers and acting companies who resisted them. Nevertheless, this chapter will show that theatre managers in Toronto initially worked to accommodate all management models. They were, after all, reliant on combination productions to fill their seasons and preoccupied with their own local battles for the theatregoer’s business. By 1898 the city’s two legitimate theatres, the PT and the GOH worked with the Syndicate. Of the three established theatres in the city, only performances in the TOH played outside the control of the Syndicate.

This chapter will consider the following two “periods” of management practice in Toronto during the eighteen nineties:

a) **From Stock to Circuit: 1889 - 1895**: These seasons are characterized by a transition from a stock system of organization to a circuit-combination model where individual practitioner-managed productions toured through a network of theatre centres on circuit “wheels” typically managed by theatre managers or booking agents. Throughout these years, GOH manager Sheppard and business associate Whitney controlled all legitimate theatre in Toronto. In 1895 TOH treasurer Small was given, or manoeuvred, his first great break and became local manager of the faltering popular-price
theatre. His first initiative was to rebrand it as a family house that offered “quality” for less.

b) **Lock, Stock and Barrel, the Syndicate Takes Control: 1896 - 1900:** This second period is characterized by the evolving entrenchment of the Theatrical Syndicate, not only as managers of first-run theatres, but also as arbiters of business practice in all North American legitimate professional theatres. It was a period of uncertainty and adjustment throughout the theatre community. Theatre managers who found themselves on the wrong side of the Syndicate engaged in a number of strategies to encourage business and survival. In Toronto, this meant the introduction of vaudeville repertoires and stock companies; however, ironically in the latter category only the Syndicate-run Cummings Stock Co. endured. By the end of the decade, the city’s two legitimate houses were supplied by the Syndicate, the city had three permanent vaudeville houses, and Small had begun to look at means of acquiring theatres outside the city.

In recognizing these periods, this chapter also considers the evolving roles of three levels of management as they relate to a Toronto practice:

1) **Circuit management:** Booking agents and circuit managers who controlled a collection of talent and/or chain of theatres from a centralized location, usually New York City. This category includes the Theatrical Syndicate;

2) **Resident theatre management:** Theatre managers who were responsible for the maintenance and profit of one theatre in one location; and

3) **Combination production management:** The touring company’s management who managed aspects of individual combination productions’ business on the road, e.g., the actor-manager, the stage manager, the business manager or company manager.

Finally, the chapter will consider the management practice of an eighteen-nineties actor-
manager. In doing so, it will study the visits and reception of Irish Dialect actor-manager Dan McCarthy, and will document the practice attendant to the popular theatre in relation to the production of his most enduring hit *True Irish Hearts*. Four touring combinations brought the melodrama to Toronto’s TOH on November, 1889, May 1891, October 1891, May 1893, and April 1894, but McCarthy performed in the October 1891 and 1893 performances only.

McCarthy was neither the most recognized nor the most successful of Irish Dialect actors. Either Dion Boucicault (really Dionysius Lardner Boursiquot, 1820-1890) or Joseph Murphy (1833?-1916) could easily claim that title depending on the criteria. Rather McCarthy is considered here because his activity as an actor-manager during the nineties demonstrates the practice of an American “ethnic” actor-manager who was reported to have been particularly popular with Toronto audiences over the decade. (See Section 4.4). He is also selected because he is an example of an actor, like the majority of those participating in the popular theatre, who, while popular in his lifetime, saw no lasting fame. Like popular-house manager Small, and like so many working in professional touring theatre, McCarthy’s management policies, consistent with the latter half of the eighteen nineties, were predicated on the need to draw a paying audience and in resistance to an increasingly centralized business structure. From performances in variety to a combination-act practitioner-run system to a period of circuit-wheels to the eventual domination of the Syndicate and formation of popular-theatre booking trusts, McCarthy and his company adapted and survived.

After a turn as a minstrel in variety theatres and a career as a popular singer, he went on to produce and star in Irish Romantic melodramas in the nineties, productions that featured sensational plots and set business related to Irish cultural tradition, e.g. folk songs, jigs and reels. Born in Hartford, Connecticut, McCarthy was not an Irish national nor were many in his audiences. Rather
he reached out to a *faux* diaspora of “True Irish Hearts,” in his theatre, an audience that identified with America’s social underclass and the oppression experienced by Irish immigrants. This chapter will show that, until his untimely death at thirty-nine, McCarthy, in order to appeal to as broad an audience as possible, endured by bringing productions to Toronto that valorized the “other” in order to assert working-class privilege.

### 4.2 Popular Theatre: Audience and Genre.


David Mayer’s broad definition of the popular theatre serves as a useful starting point for this section. For Mayer, popular forms are:

> [...] in the widest sense, [...] something ‘of the people,’ for our purposes in drama that is principally concerned with the widest reach of audience available at a given moment or place. [...] Often it happens that for these groupings the adjective ‘lower’ is significantly appropriate: lower per capita income, lower level of education and literacy, lower interest in or knowledge of aesthetic criteria.” (qtd. in Schechter 7)

While many of these associations hold true for the popular theatre of the eighteen nineties, the divide between the legitimate theatre and popular came down to ticket price. If a performance played at what were termed “popular prices” then it immediately became designated as Popular Theatre. Furthermore, legitimate and popular houses shared most of the same genres: for example, both Murphy and McCarthy played in Irish Romantic dramas, Murphy in legitimate houses for a dollar a seat or more, McCarthy in popular houses for prices that topped at fifty cents. This was true of tragedians such as Robert Mantell and John Griffith, and for variety acts and opera as well; furthermore, legitimate and popular houses both featured melodrama, vaudeville and farce. After 1896, the difference between the popular houses and legitimate would become even finer. Legitimate productions and actors booked with the Syndicate were considered legitimate; all other performance
was considered either popular or opposition acts.

Certainly, the popular theatre performed in Toronto in the eighteen nineties was not “of the people” in any grass roots sense. It merely connoted the low price touring vehicles performed in the city’s melodrama theatre, the TOH; however, these performances, like much of popular theatre, were characteristic insofar as they were, as Joel Schechter suggests, “publicly supported, highly visual and physical, portable, orally transmitted, readily understood, not flattering to wealth or tyranny; and for these reasons, as well as for low or no admission cost, [...] widely appreciated” (4). Furthermore, as will become evident in the discussion of McCarthy’s work that follows, it was a theatre with a text that could be “little more than a scenario or framework for improvisation, comic business, and spectacular effects” (4). In all cases popular performance catered to a working public.

Even the notion of a working class was an unstable one in Toronto. Peter Ward feels that such “terms as ‘working class’ and ‘middle class’ [cannot be] used with much precision when discussing social structure and cultural patterns” (Ward 7) in Canada. Michael Gross argues in *The Workingman in the Nineteenth Century* that class can further be argued from two perspectives: the materialist victim of economic and political determinants or on a subjective basis, i.e. the self-determined construction of one’s place in society. In the former category, Gross refines the definition further by suggesting that “[w]orking people had their place defined both by lack of economic power and by subjective judgements about their proper place, judgements based on such intangibles as education, ‘breeding’, cultural sophistication” (2) but goes on to stress that “the phrase ‘the working class’ did not have wide currency in Canada” (2).

Gross feels that one of the reasons a distinct class system similar to other nations such as Britain did not develop was due to the demographic makeup of settlers who found their way to
Canada:

Immigration produced an unbalanced society. Canada received large proportions of the very lowest classes and the gentry class, but relatively few from the middle classes of British society. Those who could afford to emigrate, those of middle classes, tended to immigrate to the United States, where their capital and their skills would win them greater rewards. (4)

The economic cost of political separation from Great Britain had been high for Canada and while the new nation was resource-rich, it remained cash poor as it headed into the nineties. Because Toronto was one of a very few North American cities to experience growth in the industrial sector during the decade, low wage workers came to the city looking for rare employment opportunities as factory workers and clerks (Aiken).

Constructions of class aside, those working in industrial occupations in Canada did not represent a large demographic. Ward reports that “[g]enerally speaking, late nineteenth-century Canadian workshops were small, averaging five employees per establishment into the 1890s” (7), and that Ontario was overwhelmingly rural and agrarian in this period with “no more than 20 per cent of the labour force [...] employed in secondary manufacturing, and these activities were heavily concentrated in Montreal and Toronto where only one Canadian in ten lived in 1901” (7).

Numbers were sufficient, however, that by the end of the nineteenth century, many concessions had been made to working men and women in Toronto: unions were established, shorter work hours were legislated and restrictions on child labour were imposed. While poverty and harsh living and working conditions remained in the inner city, particularly in neighbourhoods such as Cabbagetown and the slums below City Hall, many working in managerial positions in factories and clerical positions in offices and shops sought amusement in their new-found leisure hours. With a business day that might begin at eight or nine in the morning and end as late as seven in the evening,
working Torontonians did not have the time, surplus funds or the energy to watch the three or four hour dramas available to Toronto’s affluent but were able to accommodate the popular price theatre’s shorter and more affordable melodrama and variety offerings.

4.2.2 Popular Theatre Genres and Entertainments.

The two most enduring and successful forms of popular theatre in Toronto during the eighteen nineties were variety and the melodrama.

4.2.2.1 Vaudeville and Variety.

Variety performances were part of all professional theatre’s repertoire throughout the nineties in Toronto, but houses that provided purely vaudeville performances were established late in the city when unionized activity assured their reliability and financial security. Gerard Lenton-Young, in his chapter on “Variety Theatre” in Early Stages: Theatre in Ontario - 1800-1914, and editor Robert Lewis, in From Traveling Show to Vaudeville: Theatrical Spectacle in America, 1830 - 1910, believe that North American variety began with versatile itinerant performers:

John Durang, one of the stars of the early circus, was a dancer, actor, clown, singer, tightrope walker, puppeteer, scene painter, and equestrian performer. He recalled that during a tour of Lower Canada with John Bill Ricketts in 1797, besides participating in stunts of all kinds on horseback: ‘I dancet [sic] on the stage, I was the Harlequin in the pantomimes, occasionally I sung a comic song, I tumbled on the slack rope and performed on the slack wire. I introduced mechanical exhibitions in machinery and transparencies. I produced exhibitions of fireworks. In short, I was performer, machinist, painter, designer, music compiler, the bill maker, and treasurer”’ (Lewis 6).

These “gypsies” persevered and eventually found their way to variety bills in professional theatres and town halls and later to variety’s more structured and popular relative vaudeville. Lewis suggests that:

[b]y the 1890's vaudeville was perceived to be the variety show best adapted to the modern city. [...] With the machinelike efficiency, an assortment of brief, fast-paced
acts passed in rapid succession—acrobats and animal acts, ballerinas and boxers, clowns and comedians. It was an eclectic mix, a miscellany—magic tricks and technological innovations, one-act playlets and slapstick comedy, operatic arias and high-wire acrobats. (315-6)

And the conventions and set business of variety and vaudeville spilled over into the loosely woven plots of their sister forms, the popular melodramas and romantic comedies of popular-priced houses. For example, McCarthy’s Irish Romantic or Picturesque comic-melodramas included the dances, sight gags, animal acts and popular music found in variety bills of the nineties. Lewis feels that:

[t]he backbone of vaudeville was low comedy; ‘exaggerated costumes and facial make-ups predominated.’ It was comedy stripped down to instant identification of stock types and quick-fire repartee. As well as the traditional blackface, “Irish” and “Dutch” (German) acts, it depicted recent arrivals to the city. Stage ethnicity was, Robert Snyder argues, ‘synthetic,’ a fiction based partly on reality and partly on theatrical stereotypes, and it was easily recognized by the audience. (317)

Charlesworth, writing in 1928, will have to be considered the resident Torontonian authority on vaudeville for this period, as it was poorly reported in the local press and memoirs. He remarks that: “[t]he two obvious things to note concerning variety shows or vaudeville are that their vogue has markedly increased with the growth of population and prosperity in Canada and the United States, and that they have absorbed much of the talent which formerly gravitated towards the drama” (More Candid Chronicles 326).

Charlesworth discredits Lewis’ argument for an American folk tradition and places vaudeville’s roots with the artists of France’s cafés chantants and the British music halls, in particular with Yvette Guilbert (1869-1944) whose popularity “in America led to an influx of performers [from] Paris” (329) and Albert Chevalier (1861-1923) who was considered by “London observers” to have “a great influence for good in the London Music Halls in showing the way to real characterization in popular songs. He paved the way for Sir Harry Lauder, whose careful
characterizations of many types of Scottish character as a background for his songs, are a direct application of the Chevalier method to a different locale” (330).

Charlesworth further attributes the popularity of vaudeville toward the end of the century to its recognition of family values and professed gentility:

It was plain from the popularity of these performers that the time was ripe for family vaudeville, and in the closing years of the nineteenth century theatres devoted to this form of entertainment sprang up as though by magic everywhere. The movement was largely due to very far-seeing managers and booking agents, Messrs Keith [(1846-1914)] and Proctor (1851-1949) [Proctor was a business partner of H. R. Jacobs before he went into business with Montrealer, John B(olingbroke) Sparrow (1854-?)], under whose inspiration rowdy places, with variety acts thrown in to stimulate drinking, became clean and well-managed theatres, and cities where varieties had been confined to ill-smelling “Eden-Musées” suddenly found innocuous and stimulating permanent entertainment at moderate prices, in the days before motion pictures were heard of. (Candid Chronicles 331)

While profitable for theatre managers, Clinton-Elliot claims that “[v]audeville is one of the most expensive forms of theatrical entertainment ever offered to the general public. The players of seven separate acts, each, so to speak, a star, and the musicians, stage hands, electricians, and management personnel necessary for the presentation of such acts, are an aggregate commanding an astounding weekly expense” (46). It was the repetition of performances throughout the day and evening that accounted for vaudeville’s large profits.

Vaudeville performances had been a mainstay of dime museums throughout the nineties in Toronto, but Saturday Night credits Manager F. W. Stair of the Academy of Music as being the first manager to be far-seeing enough to introduce a full-time vaudeville house to Toronto mid-decade. His efforts were short-lived and unsuccessful:

Manager Stair, who has made himself popular in Toronto, seemed likely to put a new life into the house, and his scheme for making it an out-and-out vaudeville theatre promised well last fall, yet Toronto being somewhat out of the line of travel of vaudeville companies and the town not seizing upon the idea as it might have been
expected to do [italics mine], no doubt caused this scheme to be abandoned after due experiment. ("Stage and Platform." Saturday Night [Toronto]. 4 May: 1895:6)

Had Stair persevered he would have found his theatre to be one of a number performing vaudeville in Toronto at the end of the century e.g., the Auditorium, the Bijou, the Empire and Shea’s Vaudeville Theatre. In particular, the Bijou which featured vaudeville and moving pictures advertised that it provided “CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCES” (Advertisement. Globe [Toronto] 16 Sept. 1897:18) although it really only ran two shows daily afternoon and evening (Advertisement Star [Toronto]. 4 Jan. 1897:3). The Auditorium Music Hall at 26 Queen West also featured two shows daily at 2:30 and 8:15. (Advertisement Globe [Toronto] 1 Mar. 1897:18). Shea’s Yonge Street Vaudeville theatre which offered simultaneous continuous shows opened in September 1899.

Vaudeville was organized at the beginning of the next century by performers’ unions and booking agents when: “[i]n 1900 the Vaudeville Managers’ Association was formed and the United Booking Office set up. B.F Keith and E.F. Albee (1857-1930) soon gained control over their associates, Mike Shea, F. F. Proctor, Sylvester Poli (1859-1937), and the rest.” (Clinton-Elliot 147). Variety house manager Mike Shea, who was born in St. Catharines in 1859, became a key figure in the Managers Association. (See Chapter Five)

4.2.2.2 Melodrama.

Of the melodrama, with its history in music, gesture and illicit performance on the London stage combined with the high romanticism of Germany’s Sturm und Drang, Michael Booth boasts that it:

[…] contains every possible ingredient of popular appeal: strong emotion, both pathetic and potentially tragic, low comedy, romantic colouring, remarkable events in an exciting and suspenseful plot, physical sensations, sharply delineated stock characters, domestic sentiment, domestic settings, and domestic life, love, joy, suffering, morality, the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice. (151-2)
Lewis credits Thomas Hamblin (1800-53), the English-born manager of the Bowery Theatre with introducing melodrama to America (155), where it quickly became a staple of touring and combination show repertoires. By the end of the century, however, the melodrama was more ridiculed than respected. American critic George Jean Nathan, writing in *The Popular Theatre* claims of the form that its predictable plots typically “exhibit[ed] the news that a man’s better nature plus a church-organ will inevitably triumph over his impulse to short-change the cash register” (9).

In contrast, Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatist Owen Davis (1874-1956) writes with pride of his career as a turn-of-the-century writer of over a hundred melodramas under five pseudonyms. He likens the plays he wrote to “B” movies and protests that:

> [t]he good, or perhaps it might be safer to say the well made, sensational melodrama was, for ten years or more, by far the most sure fire product in which show business has ever dealt. They never made enormous money but they could always be counted on for a very substantial profit on the small amount of money they cost us to produce. They had to be put together by someone who knew how but, as a matter of fact, good writing had but very little to do with it as they had to be fashioned, as the old silent pictures were, for the eye rather than for the ear, and the tailor who cut them out had to know a lot about the theatre. (28)

He felt that besides himself, “[o]nly a handful of men ever really mastered this trick” (28).

Owen is not unaware of the manipulative properties of the melodrama and, when he writes his memoirs in 1950, he remembers his plays as cherished but obsolete art forms; nonetheless, he remains protective of their mechanical innocence:

> As a matter of fact, I don’t allow any of the old melodramas to be played any more; the audiences of today couldn’t enjoy them, the actors of today couldn’t play them, and the stage directors of today would have no idea at all of how to put them on. Then, too, bloodthirsty as they are, I don’t want to see the plays themselves murdered. And, granting that I wrote them with perhaps a little more sense of humor, and a little clearer realization of their exaggerated sentimentality and their artificially calculated thrills than my brother playwrights who wrote this type of play, the fact remains that I did not write them as a joke. (40)
During the eighteen nineties, the place to see popular melodrama in Toronto was the TOH.

4.3 “There’s No Business Like Show Business”: Toronto Professional Theatre Management in the Eighteen Nineties.

4.3.1 “Everything the Traffic Will Allow”: Theatre Management in the Nineties.

It is, primarily, the journalism of the *New York Dramatic Mirror*’s Harrison Grey Fiske that leaves us with the portrait of the Syndicate as a ruthless and predatory collection of business managers who operated counter to the aims and welfare of high art. His characterization of the booking agency can be supported with evidence of quick profits, formulaic performance and suspect business practice; however, Fiske’s construction is also disingenuous. In his weekly diatribes against the booking agency, he conveniently sets aside theatre management’s practical administrative function. In its various forms, theatre administrators were and are entrusted with the one task, at the very least, of assuring that the venues and practitioners in their care provide performances for the public. In the eighteen nineties this meant assuring enough profit to maintain the theatre and pay of employees. As is frequently the case in businesses, the product, in this case performance, was produced according to a range of capitalist marketing principles: some managers and practitioners believed that a quality product assured lasting financial return; others were more concerned with quick turnover and offered a disposable product designed to provide a facile pleasure. While there is continuing debate over the quality of the Theatrical Syndicate’s product, it remains the case that they formed in order to assure their clients a quality product and a safe financial return. Ultimately, they read the market poorly, perhaps because they were not practitioners themselves, and failed to invest in the new trends, e.g., the realism and naturalism that would replace much of the historical and bourgeois drama considered elite art in the late nineteenth century.

Like many of North America’s resident managers, the men who ran Toronto’s theatres were
pragmatic survivors, who watched and adapted to one infrastructure trend after another. The notion that they engaged in a sharply divided rivalry between high art and low, legitimate and popular, is contradicted by reports in the press of collaboration among all levels of theatre business management. While rivals, perhaps even bitter rivals in the case of resident managers Sheppard and Small, all conducted business with each other at one time or another to assure the theatres stayed open and employees were paid. This cooperation became necessary by the competition of more than four hundred production companies competing for theatre space across a range of ill-conceived touring circuits that formed after the collapse of the stock system earlier in the century.

4.3.2 1889-1895: “Travelling Through the Country is so Thrilling. (Berlin)”: From a Stock Company Model to Circuit-Combinations.

In 1889, Toronto maintained three professional theatres: the AOM managed by Greene, the TOH managed by C. A. Shaw and the GOH managed by Sheppard. In many senses, it was Sheppard who, as the most enduring and respected manager in Toronto, set the pattern for others.

4.3.2.1. Oliver Barton Sheppard - Resident Manager: Grand Opera House, Academy of Music, Princess Theatre.

Born on March 15 1848, Sheppard spent his childhood near North Gwillimbury. He left the family farm early to work as a teacher and later moved to Toronto to train as a doctor at the Medical School on Gerrard Street. Early in his training, he met Toronto land developer, politician and GOH owner Alexander Manning who employed Sheppard in a series of manual labour and office jobs (“O. B. Sheppard Passes.” Mail and Empire [Toronto].1 May 1928:5). The entrepreneur found that Sheppard had a head for business and eventually offered him the position of treasurer at the GOH in the mid-eighties. There he worked under Morrison and for Augustus Pitou after
Morrison’s departure. Sheppard had a gift for making lasting and valuable friendships and maintained his association with Pitou throughout the eighteen nineties. It was this influential New York-based actor-manager who introduced Sheppard to the contacts that would assure his command over Toronto’s legitimate theatre throughout his career as manager.

Sheppard became manager of the GOH in 1886. Writing at the time of Sheppard’s death, Charlesworth remembers the manager’s reputation in the city to be: “[at] the height of his career in the eighties and nineties typical of conditions which have long since ceased to exist in America. In those days the local manager was supreme in his own city. He booked attractions according to his own judgement and his success depended on friendly relations with the general public” (Charlesworth “Music and Drama.” 6). These were “friendly relations” that were carefully cultivated according to Charlesworth. He reports that Sheppard arrived at the theatre each evening in order to be in place to greet his audience in the lobby and was particularly solicitous to children, so much so that he was nicknamed “Daddy” Sheppard (“Life of Service...” Globe [Toronto]. 30 Apr. 1928:13).

Sheppard’s influence went beyond the theatrical arena however. In addition to his role as theatre manager, he served as city councillor for Ward 3 for thirteen years. There he was known as the “Poet laureate of the city council’ because of the limericks he wrote to relieve tensions in debate (13); nonetheless, he was remembered as a fierce debater. The Rev. MacLean reminded those in attendance at Sheppard’s funeral, that he:

[a]s a member of the city council [...] took a prominent part in matters that proved to be for the benefit of Toronto. He was a member at the time when Toronto began its great sweep forward which led to its great large population. Many things which have been realized for the city and which are now being enjoyed are due to the efforts of our friend. (“O.B. Sheppard Burial...” Star [Toronto]. 2 May 1928:2)

In addition to his duties as city councillor, he served as controller in 1900-1901, facilitated the
building of Toronto’s Old City Hall, and served as General Inspector of Fisheries for the Ontario
government (2).

He was a father of four, and as was the case with his business colleague Whitney, theatre
management was a family business. Sheppard’s son from a former marriage, Hubert, worked as
treasurer in the GOH and managed his father’s road productions Dr. Bill and Rip Van Winkle
(“Canada.” New York Dramatic Mirror. 29 Aug. 1891:10; 29 Oct. 1892:12) and one of his
daughters, Olive is recorded to have sometimes filled in as a child performer. She performed in the
Kendals’ production A White Lie and Wilson Barrett’s (1846-1904) production of The Silver King

The little leisure time available to Sheppard was spent at the race track as was that of
business rival Small. Sheppard was an active member of several race clubs and president of the
Standard Breed Association of Canada. Unlike Small, at the time of his death, Sheppard was
remembered fondly and with respect through the North American theatrical institution. (More
Candid Chronicles 278).

4.3.2.2 The Toronto Opera House Management, 1886-1894.

Because the AOM was a new and unknown presence in 1889, Sheppard’s only
consistent competition was to be found at the TOH. Toronto’s most enduring popular price
melodrama house was relatively new itself at the turn of the decade, having been constructed in
1886 by Detroit theatre manager C. A. Shaw, who was also the lessee (37). The theatre, owned by
a Thomas Pells (City of Toronto Assessment Rolls 1890:37) was the converted Grand Central Roller
Skating Rink. The New York Dramatic Mirror reports it to have been:

enlarged, improved and entirely transformed. When completed it will be one of the
coziest little opera houses in America. All the latest improvements in theatrical
architecture are being utilized in the construction of the house. The seating capacity is 1,800. The balcony and the gallery only occupy the width of the house. The arrangement of the seating accommodation will be a novelty in Toronto. There are only two private boxes. All the seats have an unobstructed view of the stage. (“Canada.” *New York Dramatic Mirror*. 28 Aug. 1886:8)

Shortly after opening, Shaw went into business with “popular price” melodrama circuit manager Jacobs. Three years later, Shaw returned to Detroit to manage the Miner’s Theatre for a competing circuit, and Jacobs became joint lessee of the TOH with Montrealer Sparrow. For this reason, the theatre frequently went by the name “Jacobs and Sparrows.” In the early nineties, the theatre changed resident manager three times, from Shaw to a J. A. Toole to J. B. Morris (really Byron H. Cohen), and owner once to a Samuel Perrin (City of Toronto Assessment Rolls, 1895: 268). Morris was the most enduring manager of this period, a personal choice of circuit manager Jacobs.

4.3.2.3 Circuit-Combination Management.

Throughout North America self-sustaining touring productions of one performance text had all but replaced the stock system of production, i.e., a number of plays performed in repertory that typically featured one recognized performer (Bernheim 31). Unable to accommodate the long distances and sheer number of possible venues, these combinations soon began to rely on circuit managers to book their seasons. These circumstances led to a three-way administrative hierarchy with circuit managers and/or booking agents controlling the talent and repertoire sent to theatres, theatre managers administrating individual venues and road management who coordinated the business dealings of touring companies usually as an agent of the circuit manager. Individual combinations also maintained a variable number of categories and types of managers, a business manager, a stage manager (whom we now refer to as a stage director) and a company manager.
(today’s stage manager). In some cases, particularly actor-manager led companies such as Mr. Kendal’s and, at times in McCarthy’s career, the roles of business and stage manager were conflated ones.

In the early stages of the transition from stock to combination company, it remained possible for individual theatre owners to book each combination production to visit their theatres and arrange their seasons accordingly. Certainly this was the case in Toronto. At the end of the season, usually in mid-June, theatre managers, such as Sheppard, visited New York and booked their seasons (34). Sheppard continued this practice until late in the decade and booked other Canadian theatres for Detroit circuit manager Whitney after 1893 also. Initially this system appeared to serve the theatre manager well:

The manager of the local theatre had, compared with today [1923], a large amount of scope to arrange his season in accordance with his own judgement of the amusement taste of his community. He did not have to accept what a central booking office chose to send him and when it chose to send it, but he could to a large extent, select the plays and players he wanted; and he could apply his own ingenuity to the scheduling of different types of productions in whatever rotation he felt would best stimulate the appetite of his clientele for theatrical amusement. (31)

And this practice could provide lucrative business to theatre managers. As a quote from the *New York Dramatic Mirror* suggests:

The man who owns or leases the show place, usually called the “Opera House”, has the best of the bargain altogether. With the expenses so small that he doesn’t need to keep books, he shares the attractions that have all the expenses. And after the attraction has played there and lost, he counts his gains, chuckles and exclaims “Next!” and the next trots in as blithely and merrily as though it never gave a second thought to the railway fares into the next town. (qtd. in Bernheim 35)

As the decade progressed Bernheim shows that coordinating these bookings became increasingly difficult and theatres, including all three Toronto houses, reported dark nights when combinations failed to arrive in time for performance or had been lured to another more profitable location.
To assure that theatre managers were no longer compromised in this fashion, a number of individual theatre owners and lessees merged and formed circuits throughout the United States and Canada. Bernheim defines a circuit as: “a group of theatres so related to each other geographically that they form a logical route for a touring theatrical company. A circuit may consist of as few as three or four theatres or it may, like an elastic band, be stretched before it reaches the breaking point” (36). With its many economic advantages for theatre managers, the circuit system none the less removed a large degree of the choice and autonomy available to local theatre managers.

Bernheim feels that the combination system developed because combination companies brought “new faces and figures, fresh scenery and costumes—diffusing the glamour of a New York run and a New York cast, for New York, by the time that the combination system first raised its head, had assumed undisputed sway as arbiter elegantiarum” (32). Despite the obvious risks to the actor-managers if their productions failed, “the combination system took hold so rapidly, and it so largely displaced the stock-star system, that we must conclude that there was a financial inducement that urged the propagation of the new order” (29).

Bernheim, one of the few competent resources on theatre business management in the eighteen nineties, was commissioned by Actors’ Equity to write on the state of the industry in 1932. His text argues from the premise that theatre is and has always been a business, and he sees the organization of circuits as being similar to another form of marketing coercion:

This [the circuit system] is the same incentive that underlies the principle of chain store merchandizing in any field. The large-scale buyer has an advantage over the small-scale. In the case of the theatre, there was not at stake so much the question of price, which was fairly well standardized and established by custom, as that of getting the merchandise, i.e., the attraction, at all. An attraction could readily ignore a single theatre in planning its itinerary, but it could not so lightly pass over a group, even though each one in the group itself might be of slight significance. (36)
He further maintains that there was a dangerous lack of cohesion between the theatre’s two competing management structures, circuit and resident management, under the combination-circuit system: “The two are complementary and yet competitive. They stand in somewhat the same relationship to each other as the producer of raw material and the manufacturer of a finished article who uses this raw material (32-3).

By 1890, theatre repertoire in Toronto had increasingly come under the management of two circuit managers, Whitney who eventually managed all first-run production in Toronto and Jacobs who provided talent to the TOH.


It is possible that the one man to have the most influence over the production of Toronto’s theatre in the eighteen-nineties was a Detroit theatre manager. If so, his business practices are also the most elusive of any of the managers considered in this history. Unlike many theatre managers and circuit managers, and unlike his sons Fred and Bert, Whitney kept a low profile. His name rarely appears in the trade paper the New York Dramatic Mirror other than to cite him as theatre manager of his Detroit theatres and other circuit houses. Still, at one time or another, Whitney leased the AOM, the PT and the GOH in Toronto alone as well as a network of theatres between Montreal and Chicago. He would later go into business with Small at the London Grand Opera House and was associated with Small’s business associate E. D. Stair as early as 1892 (“Detroit.” New York Dramatic Mirror. 29 Oct. 1892:10). It is not known with any certainty when Small and Whitney began their business relationship although it may have been in 1901 when Small invested in the London theatre (“London Grand Opera House Lease.” EWM Flock Papers). Tracing
Whitney’s control of Toronto’s theatres is further complicated by the fact that his son Bert took over management of many of his father’s theatres in 1898 (Whitney).

In Detroit Whitney controlled two theatres outright throughout the eighteen nineties, although at certain times he would also manage or have an interest in other Detroit theatres, the Detroit Opera House and the Whitney Grand Opera House which was located in the city’s first skyscraper, an ambitious structure of eight stories. Like Toronto’s GOH, the Detroit Opera House was a legitimate house that had begun as a stock company theatre. It burned down in 1897 and reopened as the New Detroit Opera House, a touring house with “1st class attractions” (Whitney) under the management of Bert C. Whitney. The Whitney Grand, managed by Whitney himself, was a “10-20-30 house” that featured “family entertainment” (Whitney). This means that Whitney had considerable influence over both legitimate and popular entertainment in Detroit, influence that he expanded through his circuit of theatres located across the northern United States and southern Ontario.

According to fellow circuit manager and producer M. B. Leavitt, Whitney was born a farmer’s son in Avon, Michigan. His first job was as a fisherman, but by 1855 he was in the music business and selling melodeons. He also published music, a sideline he maintained throughout his career. Along with his Detroit theatres, he developed a circuit that ran from Toledo to Buffalo in the United States and included Canadian theatres in Ottawa, London, Kingston, Woodstock, Hamilton, one that in 1890 included Toronto (Leavitt 95). From Detroit, he hired resident managers for his circuit theatres as well as a regional manager who booked talent and made the pilgrimage to New York on his behalf. Initially this was C. H. Garwood (“A Bird in His Profession.” *World* [Toronto]. 25 Apr. 1890:2) who was replaced by Sheppard in 1893.

It is difficult to determine whether Sheppard lent Whitney prestige or vice versa. Shortly after
Whitney leased the GOH for an initial five years, the *New York Dramatic Mirror* reported that it was expected that the theatre would become “the best, or one of the two or three best, houses in the Whitney circuit of thirteen high-class theatres” (“Canada.” 18 Feb. 1893:13). This would suggest that Whitney’s circuit did not have the reputation that Sheppard had garnered for his theatre, but the article goes on to report that the arrangement has economic benefits for Sheppard as well: “Mr Sheppard is confident that the position of the GOH will be maintained and improved under the new régime, as, owing to Mr. Whitney’s control of so many theatres, he can book attractions that it is extremely difficult for the best opera house to do on its own hand” (“Canada.” 18 Feb. 1893:13).

On a 1900 census, Whitney lists his occupation as “capitalist” and this may well indicate how he viewed his primary role, i.e., as a financier and facilitator. If so, his business associations appear to have been collaborative and fluid in nature as this excerpt from Detroit theatre news in the *New York Daily Mirror* demonstrates. This quote also provides insight into the secretive and competitive nature of nineties theatre management and relations between Toronto’s two circuit managers, Whitney and Jacobs:

The report that C. A. Shaw [former founder and manager of the Toronto Opera House] had sold out his lease of the [Detroit] Lyceum which had three years yet to run, was a little premature. The facts in the case were that the owners of the house [...] would not allow Mr Shaw to dispose of his lease, but gave him the alternative of throwing it up if he desired, for the reason that they had opened negotiations with H. R. Jacobs, who has for some time desired to place the house on his circuit. Mr. Shaw declined to relinquish his lease, and conferred with Whitney as to the desirability of working together in the future instead of antagonizing each other as they have in the past. Mr. Whitney was agreeable to the suggestion, so that hereafter the houses will be managed in a way as to have their interests identical. The arrangements made between Mr. Whitney and Mr. Shaw are private ones, some stating that the business is to be divided between the houses, other that Whitney is backing Shaw, while others have it that Whitney is sole proprietor of both houses and has engaged Shaw for his manager. Whatever way this will turn out, however, the result will be the same. It will allow attractions to be billed here in better arrangement than ever before, and will prevent two very strong plays running against each other.
It now can be arranged so that the best attractions will have no opposition in other lines, which certainly must result in better business for all concerned. ( "Detroit." *New York Daily Mirror.* 3 Jun. 1893:5)

It is through his connection with the Lyceum, that Whitney’s links to Small first emerge. Stair managed the Lyceum for Whitney soon after the association with Shaw began. After the manager of the Lyceum theatre died, Stair “assumed interests in the theatre,” and quickly went on to “secure the controlling interest in houses in Toledo, Cleveland, and northern lake cities” which he later merged with John H. Havlin’s chain of theatres” (Leavitt 569). The Stair and Havlin circuit of popular price theatres oversaw two hundred theatres after 1900. The TOH under the management of Small was part of this circuit.

In Toronto, throughout much of the nineties because of the instability caused by the combination system Whitney was able to take over the lease of the AOM in 1890, the GOH in 1893 and the PT in 1896 (See Appendix C). His links to popular theatre in Toronto were realized through his connections to Stair who managed the Cummings Stock Co. later, resident at Whitney’s PT (See Appendix C). It would seem that Whitney, like his business associate Sheppard, managed his business with relatively little acrimony. Whitney was so popular with Detroitersthat on “the day of his burial every place of amusement in Detroit remained closed between the hours of two and four P.M.” (Leavitt 95). His circuit rival in Toronto was H. R. Jacobs who leased the TOH.


Born in Syracuse, New York, Jacobs is credited with developing the “10-20-30” cent chain of melodrama houses, named so because this was the range of ticket prices charged in his theatres. In Canada, he controlled popular houses in Toronto and Montreal in partnership with Sparrow. Sparrow, who moved to St. Catharines, Ontario from England when a child, began his
theatre career in bill posting (Graham 191) and promotion. His experience in advertising was no
doubt an asset to Jacobs. For example it was Sparrow who was instrumental in reducing the
“Canadian ‘Paper’ tax” to “six cents a pound and fifteen per cent ad valorem on printing of every
description, which [made] the tax merely nominal” (“Canadian ‘Paper’ Tax Reduced.” New York
Dramatic Mirror. 2 Jun. 1894:9). But Jacobs also had a talent for promotion. The New York
Dramatic Mirror writes:

He is an excellent advertiser, and no attraction that ever has played at any of his
theatres can complain that it was not billed. It is recognized that Mr. Jacobs’ theatres
are among the best billed and advertised in the country. Mr. Jacobs’ representatives
realize Mr. Jacobs’ ideas in this direction, and they know that their positions depend
upon their ability to keep respective theatres well advertised. (“H. R. Jacobs.” 7 Jan.
1893:3)

In 1893 Jacobs is reported in the New York Dramatic Mirror to manage “more theatres in
the United States and Canada than any other man or firm” (3). His circuit included theatres in
Reading, Pennsylvania; Brooklyn, New York; Hoboken, New Jersey; Buffalo, Toronto, Chicago, and
Paterson, New Jersey with his offices located in his Third Avenue Theatre in New York City. Unlike
Whitney, Jacobs’ management style was hands-on:

Mr. Jacobs almost lives upon the railroad trains, and is well known to every Pullman
car conductor and porter in every part of the United States. It is as nothing for him
to leave New York on a Sunday morning, spend a week on the road and arrive in
New York seven days later, having in the meantime visited his whole chain of
theatres. [...] A great volume of mail matter arrives at his [Jacobs’] office. Letter after
letter is opened. The contents are digested, and the decision in pencil is endorsed on
the back. When all has been finished, Mr. Jacobs asks for the contracts that have been
submitted for his approval or disapproval during his absence, signs or rejects them,
looks at his watch, steps into his cab, bids those about him good-bye and with a wave
of his hand is off to catch the train that takes him on his regular journey. (3)

The claim by Charlesworth that Jacobs’ protégé, Small, was lax in keeping records (More
Candid Chronicles 276) may find its origin in his mentor’s managerial practices:
At each of Mr. Jacobs’ theatres is a resident representative, as well as one at his general office in New York city. Mr. Jacobs personally looks after his immense business in all its details, and books all the attractions upon his circuit. His memory is remarkable. He never forgets anything he should remember, nor does he rely on memoranda. (3)

In Toronto’s daily newspapers between 1889 and 98 there are frequent references to Jacobs’ visits on business. His involvement in all facets of the management of his theatres means that the local managers at the TOH did not control their theatre’s repertoire to the same degree as Sheppard did at the GOH.

Between 1889 and 1894, a pattern of management emerged in Toronto with Sheppard offering quality entertainment at the GOH, Morris and Jacobs offering popular theatre at the TOH and the AOM in a constant state of flux between legitimate and popular fare. (see Appendix C ) While Jacobs and Whitney were able to keep the city’s two oldest theatres lit, the existence of a third theatre seemed to be one more than theatre traffic in the city of under 200,000 would allow.

By 1895 the circuit system with all its aspirations to provide profit and stability wasn’t working, even in Toronto. Circuit managers began to compete by booking similar productions in rival theatres with the hope of driving the less popular or accomplished out of business. Acts were frequently required to travel great distances or to double-book to assure business only to leave disadvantaged theatre managers with empty theatres. Tensions between theatre managers and booking agents escalated. A system that had intended to provide greater cohesion ultimately only introduced new chaos. With the apparent failure of the combination-circuit system, it fell to the local theatre manager to develop new strategies to entice audiences.

In Toronto, where financial stress was not a motivating factor, it was the failure of the combination-circuit system to provide a stable supply of talent from the beleaguered United States
that worried theatre managers most. This was exacerbated by the uncertain competition offered by a third theatre, the AOM, in a city barely large enough to sustain two, the establishment of the Syndicate in 1896 and the heightened competition that developed when the innovative and ambitious Small took over management of the TOH in the summer of 1894.

4.3.2.4 Ambrose J. Small - Resident Manager: Toronto Opera House.

Charlesworth’s post-materialist ideology could only have clashed with Small’s capitalist sensibilities, and as it happens he does not remember the TOH manager kindly in his memoirs. This and the mysterious nature of Small’s disappearance in 1919 have contributed to the creation of a myth that characterizes Small as unethical and grasping, and his narrative continues to evolve. Today Small is the subject of one full-length history, The Strange Case of Ambrose Small, a full length film, Stephan Scaini’s Let Sleeping Dogs Lie, (1998) a legion of newspaper articles and features in several scholarly articles. Small appears in a work of fiction by Michael Ondaatje’s In the Skin of a Lion, and is the subject of a growing number of websites.

The Small of legend and fiction aside, evidence suggests that the TOH’s manager was a complex and contradictory man. While Charlesworth remembers him as a shady manipulator whose mysterious disappearance was “the culmination of a life successfully devoted to the acquisition of money” (Charlesworth More Candid Chronicles 274), and as a deliberately cruel man who “seemed to take a positive pleasure in petty acts of meanness and villainy that left incurable wounds” (275), other members of the eighteen-nineties press suggest that, early in his career at any rate, he was extremely popular and competent.

Small, nicknamed “Amby,” was born to Irish Catholic parents Daniel and Ellen Brazil in 1863 but was raised a Protestant (McClement 58 ). His father managed the bar in the Kormann
House Hotel, a small hotel located beside the GOH. It was at the GOH that Small, disenchanted by the hotel business, began work for Sheppard as agent, treasurer and trainee assistant manager in 1889. Small’s links to the Kormann family remained however. The Kormanns are frequent advertisers in the TOH’s programmes, and Small would later marry Theresa Kormann, the plain, plump and wealthy daughter of his father’s employer.

At some point during his early training, and for undisclosed reasons, Charlesworth maintains that Small fell out with Sheppard and travelled “fifty yards away” (Charlesworth More Candid Chronicles 278) to find employment at the TOH. There Small worked as a treasurer and continued to learn the theatre booking business. Theatre columns are full of references to the attractive treasurer with the handlebar mustaches who posted bills quickly and was solicitous to all the public alike and critics afford respect to the theatre manager who revitalized the repertoire of the TOH (“Stage and Platform.” Saturday Night [Toronto] 4 May 1895:6).

In the following excerpt Charlesworth provides his warrant for the claim that Small was manipulative and unprincipled:

The first inkling that Small’s amiability was something of a mask came in the mid-nineties when it was suddenly announced that Morris had been deposed from the management [of the TOH] and Small put in his place. Morris told me that his dismissal had been accomplished by slander and backbiting engineered by Small, whom he claimed he had always treated with kindness and generosity. Advantage had been taken of his good nature, he said [...].(280)

It is difficult to know whom to credit in this case. While Small may have played a factor in Morris’s leaving, it is also true that Morris began a rival programme of summer opera in the city in the Pavilion during the summer of 1894 (See Appendix C). The company failed shortly after opening and there are suggestions in the New York Dramatic Mirror that Morris mishandled this company’s funds (“Canada.” New York Dramatic Mirror. 11 Aug. 1894:12; 1 Sept. 1894:16.). Small has already
been appointed manager of the TOH at this point.

However achieved, by the 1894/5 season, Small was manager of the TOH and responsible, in the eyes of the many critics, for bringing improved affordable popular theatre to Toronto. He appears to have been innovative in business practices and introduced such incentives as Bargain Matinees that were targeted at young families:

BARGAIN MATINEE CRAZE/ The Public Insists on Them and Manager Small Will See That They Get Them/ The “bargain matinee” idea of the management of the TOH has been a taking one, especially with ladies and children. The same low price of fifteen cents for the entire balcony and twenty five cents for any seat on the lower floor will be continued. (“Bargain Matinee.” News [Toronto]. 16 Oct. 1896:2)

Faced with the need to expand the TOH’s audience in 1894, Small first had to deal with the constraints provided by Toronto’s rival theatres. He was not able to book legitimate theatre because of Sheppard’s hold on the market and his own theatre’s association with Jacobs, and he was faced with competition from the AOM which had turned to popular theatre and vaudeville after its failure as a legitimate house.

In 1894, the AOM had once more renovated and changed management. M(arion) S. Robinson, who brought the dime museum to Toronto earlier in the decade, advertised an image change for the beleaguered theatre: “A new policy and a new management” (Star [Toronto]. 1 Sept. 1894:3). This new policy included changing the theatre from a first-attraction house to a popular-run venue with ticket prices ranging between 10 and 30 cents and “no higher” (3). In light of this increased competition, Small initiated a strategy to rebrand the TOH as a theatre that offered legitimate theatre at popular prices, a tactic that was initially successful. Saturday Night reports of Small “At the TOH, I think, Manager Small has presented the best list of attractions in the history of the theatre”. (“Stage and Platform.” Saturday Night [Toronto]. 4 May 1895:6).
4.3.2.5 The Role of the Resident Theatre Manager.

With the installation of Small as manager at the TOH during the 1894/5 season, Toronto’s professional theatres came under the long term (approximately twenty years) directorship of two local managers. The late nineteenth-century resident theatre manager’s duties varied depending on his relationship with the theatre’s owner and circuit managers. In general, they could be expected to oversee the maintenance of their venue, supervise a staff that typically included set builders and technicians, orchestra members, ushers, advertising personnel and a treasurer. Their thirty percent split from a theatre combination production paid all employees as well as their own salary (Bernheim 48). In addition to their financial arrangement with booking agents, they could expect to pay out, depending on their arrangement with the building’s owner, for a number of city taxes e.g., property, business and water taxes as well as insurance coverage. As income in addition to their share of performance profits, they received monies from advertising in programmes and on curtains as well as from cloak rooms and candy machines (E.W.M. Flock Papers. 5 Jan. 1920).

Resident managers were also responsible for acquiring theatre licenses. These costs were not stable and on December 12th, 1895 the News reports that a sub-committee of the Property Committee proposed that the license fee of $100 for public halls and theatres be replaced with a charge of ten cents per seat. This change in policy meant that Massey Hall would pay “$400 a year, while other halls will be increased in proportion to the seating capacity” (“License of Public Halls.” News [Toronto]. 12 Dec. 1895:4). This change meant an approximate increase of $20 to $70 for the GOH and AOM.

Compared to the seventy percent split collected by road managers, a resident manager’s profits were slim. This was why it was so important to organize to maximize profits. This is also the
reason why many managers purchased the rights to produce individual combinations. In doing so, they could share in the larger portion of profits afforded combination managers. Sheppard’s son managed his father’s *Dr. Bill* combination and circuit managers Whitney and Jacobs also managed combination productions as did Whitney’s sons (‘Canada.” *New York Dramatic Mirror*. 29 Aug. 1891:10; 29 Oct. 1892:12; *World* [Toronto]. 23 Dec. 31 1892).

The most common source of revenue for theatre managers other than box-office receipts came from advertising. Programmes came with the price of a ticket although, as the following letter to the editor of the *Mail* shows, programmes were not available to all. It is possible that this letter is puffery provided by AOM management:

"Programmes for the ‘Gods’”/ *To the Editor of the Mail* SIR,-I have recently become a resident of the city of Toronto, and here, as in my former home over the line, I spend a great deal of time and surplus cash in patronizing the theatres; but unfortunately I am so very poorly supplied with the latter ‘necessary’ that I have always to go to the ‘gods’ or not go at all. Now, I was greatly surprised to find here that the Academy of Music is the only one of Toronto’s theatres which supplies the patrons who are forced to occupy a “place above their fellow-men” with the necessary programme. Now I kick on that, for while I put 75¢ into the theatres every week, and don’t get a programme, another person only goes once every six weeks and sits in a second gallery seat, and he is handed one every time, notwithstanding the fact that I put ten times as much into the concern as he does. Come, now Messrs. Sheppard and Frank, spend $3 a week more and give every patron of the house a programme - the same as is done in all American theatres-and you will everlastingly oblige./A. Kicker. (‘Programmes for the ...” *Mail* [Toronto]. 29 Mar. 1892:16)

Advertisements in the programmes from the AOM, the GOH and the TOH all show a wide variety of clients from those who sold chewing gum to the manufacturers of kitchen stoves or rubber boots, but don’t seem to cater to one sector of the population. Rather, they predominately represent businesses geographically close to the theatres and counter any notion of an advertising audience targeted by gender or class (“Programmes” Metropolitan Toronto Library).
Despite competition from rival theatres, by the end of the 1895/96 season, Small had made a favourable impact on the Toronto theatregoer and had enhanced the fortunes and prestige of his small popular-run theatre; however, if Small had already set his eye on challenging the Whitney/Sheppard control of legitimate theatre in the city this early in his managerial career, he would need to sever ties with Jacobs. This latter goal was achieved in 1898 when the Sparrow-Jacobs partnership was dissolved, but Small would not be able to situate himself as a manager of legitimate theatre until the next century. For all his initiative, he had not anticipated the formation of the Theatrical Syndicate.

Initially Small was aided in his management strategies by the fact that the AOH continued to falter. It closed, renovated and reopened in the 1895/6 season renamed the Princess Theatre (PT). It was announced that the PT would return to its former status as a rival legitimate house to the GOH with a resident stock company that would perform under the management of a Frank Connolly. As the season progressed no stock company materialized, however, and the theatre was dark more often than open. In a single season with the threat of bankruptcy imminent, the new PT changed management three times. It ultimately closed due to “financial embarrassment” (See Appendix C) on January 11, 1896. By February 1896, Sheppard as manager and Whitney as lessee had again taken over the failing theatre just months before the formation of the Syndicate in August of the same year.

4.3.3 1896-1900: Lock, Stock and Barrel; The Syndicate Takes Control?

4.3.3.1 “Let’s go on with the Show”: The Theatrical Syndicate.

Because the contemporary histories of the Theatrical Syndicate and Small have been written by their censors, by Fiske and Bernheim, in the case of Small by Charlesworth, and because many business records related to their practice are missing or require further study, there remains
much to be known about these theatre managers. Certainly the sheer scope of data involved in a study of the Syndicate alone is daunting. Bernheim, who has left us with the most considered and comprehensive description of Syndicate business practices was nonetheless sponsored by Actors’ Equity, a union that formed to protect actors from Syndicate policies. Ultimately the anti-Semitism and professional jealousy that undermined much of the characterization of the Syndicate during its tenure organized and streamlined a business that until 1896 had been haphazard and rarely profitable into a lucrative well-oiled machine. Many of the business practices attendant to touring professional theatre and film today began with policies introduced by the Theatrical Trust.

According to Syndicate founder Klaw, the partnership was formed over a “casual” lunch “early in 1896” (qtd. in Bernheim 46). Although he remembers it as happenstance gathering, this collection of theatre producers, booking agents and managers represented a suspiciously fortuitous federation of talents, a group who collectively controlled first-run theatres in all parts of North America, and who combined the expertise required in legal, booking and production fields to monopolize theatre business for more than a decade. They were:

A(braham). L(incoln). Erlanger: Erlanger, born in Buffalo, New York was the long-time partner of Klaw. At the time of the Syndicate’s formation, Klaw and Erlanger already controlled the most prestigious and powerful booking agency and combination management firm in New York. Erlanger oversaw much of the Syndicate’s booking of artists.

Marcus Alonzo Klaw: Klaw, from Paducah, Kentucky, was a lawyer. His legal shrewdness proved to be invaluable in structuring the group’s contract. Together, Klaw and Erlanger controlled attractions for “practically the entire South” as well as held contracts with major cities in the North. Before the formation of the Syndicate, Klaw and Erlanger held contracts with a number of theatres
that provided them with “exclusive booking privileges” (49). Prior to the Syndicate’s formation, they conducted business with both Greene at the Academy and with Sheppard at the GOH, as had

**Charles Frohman**: (1860-1915) Frohman, from Sandusky, Ohio brought not only the prestige of his producer brother Daniel’s New York and European connections but was the only Syndicate manager with credible production skills.

**Samuel F. Nixon**: (really Nirdlinger, 1877-1931) Nixon, born in Fort Wayne, was partner to

**Fred Zimmerman**: (1843-1925) Zimmerman, from Philadelphia, managed “the leading theatres” (48) there as well as holding theatres in Pennsylvania and Ohio. He and Nixon managed the road business of the Syndicate and served as advance agents.

**Al Hayman**: (1852-1917) Bernheim gives Hayman of Wheeling West, along with Erlanger, credit for conceiving of the syndicate, claiming that Hayman was “one of the cleverest and shrewdest men in the game” (47). A business associate of Frohman’s, he managed a number of Western theatres.

The Syndicate was, in essence, an extended circuit that controlled the booking of all first-class theatres in the United States capable of providing audiences for a sustained visit (47). There had been other attempts at such organization. For example, a group of dramatic agents had attempted to organize in 1891 in order to assure that “a certain class of managers, who when once on the road, forget all their obligations” were held accountable (“Dramatic Agents Combine.” *New York Dramatic Mirror*. 17 Jan. 1891:3). The key to the Syndicate’s success, however, was that it called itself a “partnership,” a strategy that allowed it to defend and win the anti-trust lawsuits filed by Fiske and New York producer David Belasco (1853-1931). Bernheim holds that the Syndicate was the only booking agency that “established and maintained its position not through control over production or product, but through control of land and buildings; and which had no invested capital
to speak of, virtually no tangible assets, except cash held as income awaiting distribution” (55). He goes on to explain that:

The Syndicate was a service organization, and the service it rendered was booking. Its income came from two sources - the profits of the pooled theatres and the commissions or fees from booking. The total net income was divided between the three partnerships, at first on the basis of an equal share to each; later on the basis of 25 per cent to Nixon and Zimmerman, and 75 split between the two others. [...] Somewhat conflicting are the statements regarding the booking charges made by the Syndicate to the theatres. There is no question about the fact that the theatres paid on a percentage and a flat fee basis. (55)

There is further confusion over whether the Syndicate took its percentage from the production’s gross profits, the theatre’s gross profits or the latter’s net. Most likely, it was the last case. Syndicate members claim their charges were negotiable and variable, that they allowed the theatre manager to deduct “all legitimate expenses, including rental and manager’s salary” (56). Belasco countered “that the Syndicate’s charges were 5, 7½, or 10 per cent of the gross with frequently a further percentage on the profits of the house at the end of the season” (qtd. in Bernheim 55).

At no time, however, was the Syndicate willing to sustain a loss. If theatre managers did not comply with Syndicate membership and conditions, the Syndicate simply removed their artists. With their control of all “first class” talent , they were able to coerce reluctant theatres to become part of their network at their risk of being forced out of business altogether.

At the heart of the controversy surrounding the Syndicate was the allegation levelled by Belasco and colleagues that the agency accepted booking fees from actors. The Syndicate denied this charge outright. In either case it was the actor-manager, in particular, who stood to lose the most from a Syndicate-run system. The Syndicate became a middleman these practitioners had hoped to eliminate by overseeing their own itineraries. Many of the American theatre’s elite such as Richard
Mansfield (1854-1907), Joseph Jefferson, Nat C. Goodwin (1857-1919), James A. Herne (1839-1946) and Minnie Maddern Fiske initially resisted playing in Syndicate theatres. Ultimately all but Fiske succumbed, perhaps because they had no choice, perhaps because they eventually came to recognize that the Syndicate offered a financial security they lacked otherwise. In 1896, the Syndicate was able to control over thirty-three theatres in the United States. Toronto theatres are not listed as Syndicate houses until 1898. Whitney’s Detroit theatres don’t join until 1901. By 1903 the Syndicate could list eighty-three including both Whitney houses (49-51).

A libel trial that took place in 1898 between Syndicate members and *New York Dramatic Mirror* editor, Fiske, suggests some tension between the Whitneys and the Syndicate. There was an allegation that the Syndicate prevented one of Whitney’s sons from using a black-listed actor. (“The ‘Pool’ . . .” *New York Dramatic Mirror.* 2 Apr. 1898:2). Klaw may also have entered into direct competition with Whitney in Detroit. Transcripts of the trial show Klaw to manage a Detroit first-run theatre by 1898:

Q. In the city of Detroit you control all the theatres there, don’t you: [Objection; sustained.]
Q. You know in the city of Detroit that no company can play except by your consent and that of your pool, don’t you? [Objection: overruled.]
A. I do not.
Q. You are in a position to charge whatever you choose, and demand from any manager or theatrical star whatever price you please for playing your theatre in Detroit, which you control, can’t you?
A. I have not admitted that we control that theatre in Detroit, Mr. Kling. Now don’t put words in my mouth. (2)

Bernheim lists an Empire theatre in Detroit as a Syndicate house in 1898 (51). If this is Klaw’s theatre referred to in the above quote, it was not one of Whitney’s theatres. Why Whitney would have conducted business with the Syndicate in Toronto earlier than in Detroit is not clear. Again, it may be because, as Charlesworth claims, the Whitney-Sheppard partnership had some
power in the industry. He remembers that “Trust” in its early days “found it advantageous to maintain close relations with Messers. Whitney and Sheppard and so long as the latter remained in active management Mr. Erlanger refused the overtures of any other aspirants” (Charlesworth “Music and Drama.” 6). In other words Whitney and the Syndicate had a kind of gentlemen’s arrangement that allowed them to draw on Syndicate talent while not being completely dependent on it for bookings.

The key disadvantage of doing business with the Syndicate for most resident theatre managers was that theatre seasons were “packaged.” Productions with name actors were guaranteed as part of a season that included combinations featuring lesser rank-and-file actors. This meant a small city the size of Toronto could expect to see fewer star turns and a great deal of mediocrity. Furthermore, companies that provided commercial success were favoured by the Syndicate. The journalist Norman Hapgood wrote that “[t]hey [the Syndicate] dread anything austere and tragic. It means to them the same as unpleasant or dull. Obviously, therefore, actors are kept from showing talent in some higher lines as surely as are playwrights” (qtd. in Tunney).

Playwright Davis Owen was also critical of the Syndicate’s motives. He regarded them as brilliant businessmen, but he too felt that they failed to appreciate the art of the drama or understand the craft of the practitioner. He recognized that they took the theatre from a “rather slap happy sort of racket where practically nobody at all ever made any real money and nobody ever expected to” to that of a profitable conglomerate:

Unfortunately, however, Frohman, Hayman, Klaw and their associates, were better architects than they were house furnishers. They performed miracles in building up a really imposing structure, but after it was built they never had the slightest idea what to do with it. I have watched the rise, and later the slow decay, of these well-planned and ambitious syndicates more times than I like to think about, and I have come to the conclusion that it would have been a good thing if, in each of these
groups of hard-headed businessmen, there had been at least one of them who had had a vague idea of what the theatre really ought to be. (22)

Owen does not expand on what the theatre “really ought to be,” but as he left the popular melodrama behind early in his career to write a form of naturalism, it seems reasonable that he came to believe the new drama should contain a type of authenticity and relevance not found in the melodrama.

Davis Owen extends his criticism of booking unions to popular price models such as the Stair and Havlin Circuit, the Columbia Wheel of burlesque shows, the Shuberts and the Keith, Albee, Orpheum vaudeville circuit (22).

Bernheim feels that American theatre/art developed “in spite” (60) of the Syndicate’s philistine tendencies. Alternatively it can be argued that a professional Canadian drama and craft did not. The Theatrical Trust was able to streamline and centralize the production of legitimate theatre to such an extent that it was no longer possible for local production other than amateur to form in Toronto. Nor were Toronto audiences well served by the Syndicate according to a Toronto Star article printed in New York Dramatic Mirror:

Jack and the Beanstalk is one of Klaw and Erlanger’s shows. That is to say it is run by members of the Trust, which is engaged in the piratical enterprise of choking the life out of the dramatic art in America, and its appearance in Toronto is coupled with one of those peculiarly irritating injustices to which the Trust is constantly submitting its patrons wherever they happen to be helpless. For the past few weeks Klaw and Erlanger - who, it is to be remembered, control the Grand Opera House [italics mine]- have been putting in shows of the rankest kind: Joe Murphy plays without Joe Murphy, and Primrose and West’s Minstrels without Primrose and West. For these and similar ‘attractions’ the price of admission has been 50 cents, 75 cents and $1. the time honored price of admission to the Grand. But, no sooner do Klaw and Erlanger bring to their theatre a piece which has had some vogue in the States, and which might be reasonably expected to do pretty well in Toronto, than up go the prices to 75 cents, $1 and $1.50. That is to say, the ordinary patrons of the theatre can see only shows of the poorest class at the ordinary prices of admission. But as soon as a show worth looking at comes along they are forced to stand a 50 per cent. increase in prices. [...] 

In the case of Jack and the Beanstalk this policy is the more indefensible,
because the same company appeared in the Lyceum Theatre in Detroit two weeks ago at “popular” prices so-called: that is you could get to see the show for 15 cents. It is by such means that the Trust has made itself so thoroughly detested. (“The Grab Game...” qtd. in *New York Dramatic Mirror*. 25 Dec. 1897:1)

This quote shows the GOH to be a Syndicate house by December 1897. By 1898, the Syndicate predominated in legitimate theatre across North America and Bernheim argues that while it was by means of economic force and well-planned campaign that the Syndicate obtained a foot-hold, it was by virtue of the genuine advantages it offered theatre owners that it was able to make such rapid strides and to maintain itself in power so long. Whatever playwrights, actors, producers and the public may have suffered from the existence of a theatre trust, there is no question that the theatre owners gained. (52)

He goes on to argue that while the Syndicate provided economic aid in a time of recession, [t]he practices of the Syndicate have in many respects been extremely questionable” (63).

By 1898, Whitney and Sheppard ran two legitimates houses, the PT and the GOH in Toronto. Both were listed as Syndicate houses. The PT remained dark for many nights during the 1896 season under the management of Whitney and Sheppard providing some indication that they did not join the Syndicate until 1897. The resurgence of the stock companies, originally conceived to counter “Trust” domination in many centres, offered the management team a solution.

4.3.3.2 Stock Companies: The Cummings Stock Co. and Beryl Hope.

Fiske, in his campaign to crush the Syndicate, printed an editorial from the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle* dated December 15, 1897 that argued that stock companies were “HERE TO STAY/ THEY ARE ONE OF THE RESULTS OF TRUST OPERATIONS/ They Aid in Checking the Plans of Schemers Who Seek to Rule the Theatre, and with the Alliance Now Forming Will Bring Freedom to the Stage” (4). The article goes on to claim that stock companies are, in most cases, equal in quality if not superior to “touring companies” and that “fidelity to [...] home
institutions has led many of the critics to praise the organizations at the expense of touring companies” (4) But if stock companies were one strategy to elude the control of the Syndicate, the booking giant was prepared to compete here as well. Confronted by a rash of such independent companies, they in turn organized a chain of Syndicate-managed stock companies.

In October 1897, Whitney and Sheppard announced that they would house the Cummings Stock company under the proprietorship of Hayman, Klaw and Erlanger at the PT (See Appendix C). For the former AOM, a stock company seemed a solution to years of erratic policy and lost revenue. Although the PT was a Syndicate house, the Cummings Stock Co. played under the management of Stair of the Stair and Havlin circuit who directly rivalled Syndicate operations in the next century when the circuit offered its more than two hundred theatres to opposition players organized under the name of the Independent Booking Agency (Lippman 38-41).

The new attraction opened for a four week stay on Monday September 27 “presenting as their opening bill for public favor Wm Gillette’s famous comedy ‘All The Comforts of Home’” (“Music and Drama.” Globe [Toronto]. 17 Sept. 1897:2), that turned into a five year stay. They were replaced by the Valentine Stock Company which Charlesworth described as “cheap” (Charlesworth “Music and Drama.” 6).

Ralph Cummings was a the star attraction of the Cummings Stock Co., an American troupe that was managed by brother Robert. The company had first appeared for a brief run at the TOH as part of Small’s attempts to draw quality theatre, another example of crossover between the legitimate and popular theatres in the city. The PT was dark, as it so frequently was at the time, and Sheppard asked them to finish out the season in his theatre with the added enticement being the opportunity to play at first-run prices.
The first stock company to play for a prolonged period since Morrison’s and Pitou’s companies in the eighteen seventies, Robert Cummings leapt at the stability provided by Sheppard’s offer and went on to compound his success by mounting a summer season in Toronto as the Robert Cummings Stock Opera Company after Ralph and his dramatic company have moved on to a summer season in Detroit. In its first season, Robert Cummings offered a season of legitimate remounts, some not seen previously in Toronto, such as Wilde’s *Lady Windermere’s Fan*.

The company ended its run only when the weather became hot on June 4th 1898. The *Globe* lamented that “[t]heatre-goers will not attend the theatre in hot weather, however, and so it was throug [sic] advisable to close” (“Music and Drama.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 6 Jun. 1898:8). The brothers parted ways that summer, and Robert Cummings returned with an all new dramatic stock company, minus Ralph, the following season (“Canada.” *New York Dramatic Mirror*. 16 Apr. 1898:20). The Cummings Stock Co. provided a certain success for Sheppard and Whitney and the PT at last. The GOH remained the only first-run Syndicate touring house in the city, but the PT, also under Syndicate sanction, was able to provide Toronto with a second full season of legitimate theatre.

Not to be outdone when it came to stock theatre, Small felt he could compete here as well. He not only offered a summer season of stock theatre to counter Sheppard’s, he even borrowed a leaf from Sheppard’s book and approached one of Sheppard’s bookings, the Beryl Hope Stock Company. The Beryl Hope Stock Company had come to the GOH with a production of George Broadhurst’s (1866-1952) hit *What Happened to Jones* (1897) the last week in May 1898 at legitimate theatre prices. A week later, Hope moved to the TOH with the same production now to be viewed at popular prices or as Small advertises “a sensational cut in prices” (“Music and Drama.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 4 Jun. 1898:15).
At first it seemed as if Small had found a market for his summer stock company. While the *Globe* found Hope’s production to be “somewhat forced and [to have] considerable of the improbability about it, [...] the fair sized auditorium seemed to enjoy the many ridiculous situations which no doubt they are, thoroughly” (“Music and Drama.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 31 May 1898:12).

In a *News* interview Beryl Hope is described as “vivacious, piquante, full of esprit and with a full knowledge of what theatrical art ought to be were it left to the audience untrammelled by the dictation of the public” (“The Taste of Toronto.” *News* [Toronto]. 9 Jul. 1898:7). She tells the interviewer that she is twenty-four, born in Kentucky and convent educated. As was frequently the case in the popular theatre, the interviewer attempts to legitimate Hope by placing her above the social class dictated by her position as actress and working woman:

> Her manner shows traces of that verve generally seen in the educated Frenchwoman and the Americaine who has been abroad, attributable in her case to French ancestry—for her father was a Frenchman and an actor. Her dark eyes, shaded by black curls, are as expressive as her speech, and both are quick to answer the least suggestion of humor, or cynical comment, when deserved. (7)

During the interview, she offers the journalist evidence of her Canadian credentials by recalling that at the age of seventeen she left school to become McKee Rankin’s leading lady. She, later, went on to produce a version of Frohman’s *All the Comforts of Home* and then formed her own stock company. The article claims her to be the youngest leading lady in stock. When she came to Toronto, she had just completed runs in Montreal and Ottawa (7).

When asked how Montreal audiences differed from Toronto she claims: “[t]he taste of Toronto seems to run in the direction of light comedies” rather than old comedies and society plays, but then goes on to contradict herself by saying that the melodrama *East Lynne*, a popular theatre favourite, had been the most successful of her plays due to its “old-fashioned sentiment.” She
qualifies her observations by protesting that she isn’t completely able to judge Toronto tastes because, she is playing to popular prices (7). Asked if she feels that the stock company is back to stay, she answers: “I really think so. They are springing up in all directions as the only answer of provincial managers to the attempt by the Jewish syndicate [the Theatrical Syndicate] to control theatrical productions” (7).

It evolved that despite claims to have some of “the best artists on the road,” Hope offered mostly tired melodrama and worn popular comedies. Her repertoire is as follows: between May 30 - June 11th *What Happened to Jones* played for two weeks; between June 13 - June 18th *East Lynne*; June 27th - July 2nd *A Jolly Night* (Hennequin); July 4th - July 9th *Camille*; July 11th - July 16th *Rip Van Winkle* (Boucicault); and July 18th - July 23rd *Ten Nights in a Barroom*. Houses diminished after the first night. A review of *Rip Van Winkle* remarks that “[t]he house was fairly good for this season of the year, but not up to what it should have been, considering the excellence of her performance” (“Music and Drama.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 25 Jun. 1898:17).

For whatever reason, whether because of diminished houses, heat, inferior production values, Ms. Hope’s ambitions to play Broadway or all of these, the company left for New York after the performance of *Ten Nights in A Barroom*. The last performance in July was the usual ten cents for orchestra seats. “At the close of the performance to-night the various members of the company will go to their respective summer homes, after eight very pleasant weeks spent in Toronto. (“Music and Drama.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 23 Jul. 1898:15). The *New York Mirror* reported:

Beryl Hope closed her stock company on July 23 at Toronto after a continuous season of twenty-two weeks, [...]. The tour was most successful and Miss Hope received many offers of time in leading theatres for next season, but she decided to accept an offer made her by Charles P. Salisbury to head his stock organization. She will open with his company, in which she will be specially featured on Aug 14 at the
After Hope left the TOH, Small did not offer another season of stock theatre. Rather he returned to a season of popular favourites and continued with his “quality for less” strategy. Confronted by competition from both Syndicate houses and eager to expand beyond the profits offered by popular house prices, the Small of myth begins to take shape in 1898 when the TOH lessee, Sparrow sued Jacobs for dissolution of their partnership (“Reflections.” New York Dramatic Mirror. 5 Mar. 1898:2) and entered into a brief partnership with Small. Shortly after this, Small married the wealthy Theresa Kormann and began to buy or lease theatres and establish a circuit of his own (EWM Flock Papers). Many of the new theatres were legitimate houses; however, he retained the TOH, renamed it the Majestic and, after his break with Jacobs, booked talent for this house with the Stair and Havlin Circuit.

Owen Davis describes the Stair and Havlin Circuit in popular-priced houses as operating on a “Wheel” that coordinated “thirty-five theatres, five of them in Greater New York and others scattered about the country from Boston to Kansas City” (27). [...] Productions ran for either three nights or a week depending on the location. Each theatre in the circuit was considered a spoke in a wheel and was booked all at one time:

> It was necessary that thirty-five shows should be made ready to fill the time, and as the theatres all opened their season on the same day, usually late in August, the thirty-five companies had to be at the starting line. One great advantage of this was that a manager would be given a complete list of the towns his company was to play, and of the dates on which it was to play them. He knew just where his company was to be for its entire season of thirty-five weeks and the actors’ certainty of having a thirty-five weeks’ season made it possible [...] to cast [...] with experienced and responsible actors. (31)

There is much yet to be known about Small’s years as manager. Unscrupulous or not, it is
to his defence that Small took on management of a small touring theatre in one of the most difficult and competitive periods in the history of the theatre and not only survived but eventually built a circuit and a fortune. Another manager, an actor-manager in this case, who played in Small’s theatre throughout the decade, but survived less successfully in what was one of the most competitive and restrictive periods in theatre business history was Irish Romantic comedian Dan McCarthy.

4.4 Touring Management and the Career of Irish Ethnic Actor-Manager Dan McCarthy.

During the eighteen nineties, McCarthy brought a total of thirteen productions to Toronto. In this time he would work with all of Toronto’s resident managers including Sheppard, further evidence of the young actor manager’s popularity with Toronto audiences and his ability to adapt to nineties business practices. A version of his most successful play *True Irish Hearts* is housed as part of the Charles Morton Collection of Popular Theatre in the University of Chicago Library. The script is most likely pirated and the first page is dated 2-27-97. (University of Chicago Library). The playtext itself shows the comedy-melodrama to be influenced, as were all dramas of this type, by the work of Dion Boucicault. The text borrows the schemata of a complex plot that involves thwarted and resolved love matches among a triangle of love-crossed Irish lads and colleens, a villain who is the pawn of an English factotum, and a structure that is glued together by sensational stage setting, set business and song and dance.

Like much of melodrama, *True Irish Hearts* expects its audience to be conversant with the form's conventions and stereotypes. The narrative has the logic and feel of a fairy tale with much that is sentimental and plot elements that seem magically resolved. For example the villain, George Wolfe who tries to cheat two young heirs out of their rightful inheritance lives in a castle that looms in the background of most scenes. Why he needs the money is never explained nor is it perhaps
necessary to know given that Wolfe’s name immediately connotes all that is imperial and avaricious.

Unlike Boucicault, however, McCarthy was an American national and close reading of *True Irish Hearts* shows him to be more interested in redeeming the working-class American hero than the Irish national. Other than a passing reference to the Killarney lakes, the geographic specifics and situated political and cultural references to Ireland are kept to a minimum in McCarthy’s spoken text, and those that are introduced would have been recognized clichés by 1897. Only McCarthy’s song lyrics introduce Irish political references but even this is a convention of the American Irish drama, and, as will be shown, these verses serve as warrant to the primary thesis of the drama, i.e., that all honest hard-working men and women are worthy, if not noble. Ultimately, the distant Irish settings in McCarthy’s plays provided a screen for an interrogation of the United States’ social injustices, of the targets of poverty, poor schooling, unfair labour practices, legal corruption and cultural prejudice without providing the specificity of a North American context. The Irish setting also allowed McCarthy to draw on a body of “Irish” music, extant and original, traditional and popular, Irish and American, that had proven appeal and ameliorated his message.

It didn’t hurt McCarthy that the Irish represented a large percentage of the popular theatre’s targeted audience, particularly so in the cities of the American North East and Central Canada to which McCarthy toured; however, McCarthy's play was constructed to legitimate a wider demographic, one with a common philosophical heritage, to those in possession of “True Irish Hearts.” It was a strategy that assured the young actor manager McCarthy more than a decade of top billing and full houses in popular theatres across the northern United States and Canada. In Toronto he would frequently play to standing room only houses.
4.4.1 Actor-Managers of Combination Productions.

There were three common structures for management of an individual touring combination production in the eighteen nineties:

a) The most common was the company with two overseers, a business manager and a stage manager. The business manager conducted the daily administration of the company. The stage manager in the nineties was an individual who both supervised the conduct of the company and "directed" or ran rehearsals.

b) A second model occurred when a single individual owned the rights to a production or playtext and hired a production manager to supervise a number of simultaneous runs on circuits. Each production would have its own stage manager.

c) The final system was that headed by the actor-manager. In these cases, the lead actor performed, sometimes wrote, directed and conducted the business of a company although s/he sometimes hired a stage manager to “run” rehearsals and police performances.

The late Victorian period was a time of great innovative actor-managers of the legitimate theatre such as George Alexander, Irving, Herbert Beerbohm Tree and the Kendals. With tight economic and aesthetic control over their performances, they played a significant role in enhancing the prestige of the nineteenth-century theatre.

In the North American popular theatre, actor-managers of lesser stature such as McCarthy often took on a managerial role out of financial expediency. With seventy percent of profits from any given production going to a combination’s owner/manager (Bernheim 56), it was more profitable if a lead actor could both manage a company and collect a salary as its star. In McCarthy’s case, he collected salaries as actor and manager, as well as royalties as a playwright with additional revenues.
from his second and third-run combinations. Presumably he also collected royalties from songs written for the production. Alternatively his expenses included travel usually by rail, actor and production crew salaries, copyright fees, and theatre rental and license fees. For McCarthy, costs also included the construction and maintenance of sets, props and costumes, although companies had the option of using set pieces and props available to them in local theatres.

An advantage for actors who took on management of their combination companies lay in the protection such control provided against the uncertainties facing many touring practitioners who relied on an acting career only. Prior to the implementation of such security measures as the Actors Fund and, later, Actors’ Equity, actors worked at the mercy of company management. In the August 1924 edition of *Theatre Magazine*, Burr C. Cook writes of the harsh and uncertain conditions for the touring actor in pre-union days. He remembers that actors were required to rehearse for little or no wages, and if the play they were in failed, they received no wages for the time lost in rehearsal. In addition, transportation to the first performance venue and from the last was paid by the actor. They also covered the cost of costumes. There was no compensation for illness and they received no notice when fired. In all, a working actor might perform as many as fourteen performances a week with contracts that were seldom binding (43).

4.4.2 *The Popular Drama and True Irish Hearts.*

McCarthy’s livelihood relied on assuring a recognized and appealing product, one with conventions and tropes that had been well established by the eighteen nineties. Unlike some “ethnic” or minority actors, Irish Dialect actors were required to have some claim to authenticity; i.e., they were expected to be, at the very least, of Irish descent, if not of Irish birth. Other nineteenth century stereotypes such as the German, Swedish and African-American representations in the nineteenth-
century theatre demanded no such claim to an authentic heritage.

In Toronto, Irish melodramas were popular and played frequently, sometimes in competition with each other, one at the TOH and one at the GOH. This was partially because of Syndicate tactics and partly because of the city’s large Irish population which made the city a popular stop on any Irish drama’s circuit, but the Irish in Toronto were by no means a unified population, nor were they numerous enough to sustain the frequent Irish dramas to play the city solely. They can, however, be understood as part of a wider category of cultural “others” that resided in the city.

4.4.2.1 The “Other” on the Toronto Stage in the Nineties.

Sociologist Erving Goffman argues that individuals are role players engaged in the presentation of social masks and that human interaction is analogous to the relationship between audience and actor in a theatre. In society individuals perform various personas or roles. The audience of any such social “performance” is constantly in the business of evaluating the merit and veracity of another individual’s performance. Social actors, then, are engaged in a process of “impression management”, a negotiation between their “expressions given” and another’s reading of their “expressions given off”.

While Goffman assumes that social actors perform selves, he does not consider in any explicit manner the counter relationship, how the hierarchy of the theatre’s types and genres, performance theories and stage conventions as well as the theatre’s socio-economic practices shape societal interaction. For example, he does not resolve the privileging of the revelation of "emotional truth" that underlies approaches to realism and naturalism in the legitimate theatre over the representative or performative, nor does he weigh the assumption that tragedy has more cultural value than comedy or sentimentality and so forth. In a related vein, Nina Auerbach in Private
Theatricals: The Lives of Victorians premises her argument that Victorians, in the wake of new theories that argued for the absence of a deity, felt a responsibility to create “an authentic self,” one that avoided falseness or “theatricality.” The assumption in this case is that the actor’s business is to create fictions rather than, as those practising in Stanislavsky’s school of performance would have it, reveal “truth.” In the divide between theories that privileged the performative and the revelatory which evolved in the late nineteenth century, it was most commonly the popular theatre that celebrated stereotypes and one-dimensional character delineation. In particular, the ethnic “types” to play on the popular stage relied on such coding and decoding of their society’s aliens.

In a sense, the vast majority of the productions to tour to Toronto in the eighteen nineties were, strictly speaking, other in the cultural and ethnic sense in that they represented narratives and characters that were not Canadian. These were the norm however and the characters in most touring dramas weren't perceived in themselves as unusual. The other in the eighteen nineties theatre was most commonly marked as alien either by accent or physical appearance. Socially aberrant types such as the fallen woman were typically drawn from the affluent social classes and only marked as other in the sense that they had strayed. The possibility of their being invited back into the cultural centre was a prerequisite convention of the dramas they inhabited (See Chapter Three).

The Irish ethnic actor, however, was a curious blend of the familiar and the foreign, and relied on a mix of ridicule and empathy to affect audiences. Newspaper coverage of popular genres was not as comprehensive as it was for the legitimate theatre primarily because of the quality press’s desire to distance themselves from the low wage masses; nonetheless, based on the notices and coverage that span a decade, there is evidence that, when viewing McCarthy’s productions, Toronto audiences managed to mediate a response that incorporated an identification with an Irish diaspora,
the appreciation of a group of disenfranchised or compromised working-class heroes, and an evocation of cultural identity realized through absence.

One intangible in the last process is the relationships created between a Torontonian’s situated cultural and ethnic identity and one rendered on stage, particularly if an audience member wasn't part of the dominant culture, i.e. English Protestants. This was complicated by the fact, that in many cases, the cultures that Torontonians might recognize or identify with or reject on the stage were hybrid American creations of Irishmen, Scots, Germans, Swiss, African, Western or Southern Americans and so forth, frequently played by actors who had distant claims, if any, to the nationality or race they represented. James O’Reilly, the “popular German comedian” who toured in The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad is one case, and the many minstrel show performers are another. Perhaps some Torontonian audience members, other in relation to most nineteenth-century characterizations themselves, felt some comradeship with these stage aliens so carelessly rendered at the hands of American actors.

4.4.2.2 Irish Theatre and the Irish Ethnic Actor.

While Dion Boucicault did not originate the Irish Romantic drama, it was his popular melodrama The Colleen Bawn, written in 1860, that the defined the form. In The Colleen Bawn based on Gerald Griffin’s novel The Collegians, Boucicault built on the features of his previous works, dramas that had assured his success as one of the most popular of nineteenth-century practitioners. The melodrama of this period owes many of its conventions to him, in particular the “sensation scene.” In addition to the enduring success of dramas such as The Corsican Brothers (1852), London Assurance (1841) and The Octoroon (1861), he was celebrated for the Irish dramas Arrah-na-Pogue (1865) and The Shaughraun (1875). Of his first Irish drama, Boucicault boasted:
I have written an Irish drama for the first time in my life. The field of Irish history and romance is so rich in dramatic suggestions that I am surprised that the mine has not been regularly opened before. I had long thought of writing a play gathered from my native country but this is the first time I ever tried it. I hope that the play will lead other greater men, of finer genius and talents than I possess, to give you plenty of Irish plays. (qtd. in Fawkes 118)

*The Colleen Bawn* was so successful that Boucicault was able to take it to London on what was the first “extended run” (121). It was there that Queen Victoria saw the drama a total of three times, although her husband was ill at the time. It was the last public performance she would attend while he still lived (123). While the plot of *True Irish Hearts* has much in common with Boucicault’s *The Colleen Bawn*, and, paradoxically, given both playwright's tendency to build narratives with stereotypes and conventional plot twists, Boucicault acknowledged that most of his plots were “borrowed,” while McCarthy claimed his narrative to have been original. He even went so far as to bring a lawsuit against a Jane Kantrowitz for producing a play that he claimed was plagiarised from *True Irish Hearts*. (“Looks Like a Bad ...” *The New York Times*. 17 July 1893:9).

In all of his Irish dramas Boucicault played a similar character, a peasant Irish lad, unschooled and fond of the bottle, who chooses to live on the periphery of his village but is accepted because of his charm, quick tongue and propensity for engaging in heroic deeds. This is the type on which McCarthy would model his character Lanty Lanigan in *True Irish Hearts*. Boucicault claims to have written the Irish drama in order to address the nineteenth-century theatre's “‘libel’ on Irish character” (qtd. in Butler Cullingford 14), but as critic Elisabeth Butler Cullingford points out opinions differ on his success. Fellow countryman Shaw was not alone in feeling that Boucicault’s representations of Irish rogues did more harm than good.

Until recently, however, most agreed that Boucicault’s Irish melodramas were constructed to entertain rather than agitate English-Irish political tensions. It is for this reason that the villain of
his dramas was typically an Irish informer such as the rent-collector Feeney in *The Colleen Bawn* or Kinchela in *Arrah Na Pogue* rather than the British officials in his dramas. In the latter play, he went so far as to construct an occupying British officer named Molineux who falls in love with an Irish lass Claire Ffolliet and with Ireland and thus redeems himself. Nonetheless Butler Cullingford suggests that Boucicault’s plays were subversive in so far as:

[i]n Boucicault’s Irish plays, character, setting and plot are constructed to produce not rational assent, but warm feelings. Mass culture, he understood, operates not through intellectual analysis, but through the politics of empathy. Boucicault’s charismatic portrayal of Irish heroes exploited his popularity as an actor in favour of the Irish underdog; his most sympathetic characters, Myles-na-Coppaleen, Shaun the Post, and Conn the Shaughraun, were all Irish Catholic peasants. He also manipulated the ‘sensation scenes’ so that technical triumphs of staging were invested with non-verbal political affect. In both *Arrah-na-Pogue* and *The Shaughraun*, complex mechanical scenery produces the spectacle of an Irish prisoner escaping from an English-run jail and compels even an English audience to cheer for the fugitive. (18)

She shows also that the plots of Boucicault’s Irish melodramas are all set against a backdrop of political oppression and could be understood to appeal to the Irish Republican Brotherhood known as the Fenians, a group dedicated to freeing Ireland from English oppression and the first such group, Butler Cullingford notes “to appeal to the citizens of the Irish diaspora” (19) in particular the famine victims resident in the United States and Canada.

Boucicault shaped a dramatic genre and stereotype that would be influential well into the next century. His Irish rogues underpin the characters of early film such as Gerald O’Hara, Scarlett’s father in *Gone With the Wind* (1939), George M. Cohan’s (1878-1942) Irish stage dandies, and the Irish characters played by James Cagney (1899-1986) including Cohan himself in *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (1942). By the eighteen nineties while Boucicault’s dramas were considered classics performed on the legitimate stage, their place on the legitimate stage had just began to diminish in the light of an Irish national drama begun in the work of Lady Gregory (1852-1932) and John Butler
Yeats (1839-1922) at the Abbey Theatre (1904). Certainly by the end of the century, the Irish Dialect actor, no longer as valued as an ambassador for Ireland, had just begun to develop into a distinctly American type on the North American touring stage. Paradoxically, many had started their careers representing another American racial stereotype.

A number of Irish ethnic actors, including McCarthy himself, began their performance careers as minstrels. Popular Irish actor Joe Murphy recalls his beginnings:

I first went on the stage as an endman with Backus and Burbank’s San Francisco Minstrels at the old San Francisco Hall, afterwards Maguire’s Opera House. Subsequently I travelled all over South America with a minstrel company. I might mention incidentally that I was one of the first endmen to introduce Irish songs in a minstrel performance. Minstrelsy has had its day. Its most amusing features have been absorbed in farce-comedies and other nonsensical entertainments of the potpourri order. (‘Mirror Interviews.’ New York Dramatic Mirror. 8 Feb. 1896:18)

Murphy, like McCarthy, was born in New York but claims to have based his characters on the study of pure Irish “types” he discovered in Canada:

There are plenty of Far Downs in New York city, but most of them have become more or less Americanized. I happened to run across a genuine type in full preservation while hunting in Canada. His occupation was that of a guide, and I engaged him to accompany me on hunting and fishing trips for three consecutive years. During that time I studied his brogue in all its eccentricity of expression and intonation. I studied his gestures, his walk, and his entire make-up and individuality. Finally I bought the coat he wore, and it is the identical coat I wear as the Shaun Rue. (18)

And so, in Murphy’s version, the late nineteenth-century Irishman was based on a Canadian. Cultural authenticity aside, Murphy claims that his primary goal in the Irish drama was to elevate and legitimate the low-wage workers who attended his plays: “I was one of the people myself, and I endeavored to faithfully reproduce the nobler type of workingman upon the stage” (18). For Murphy and his rival McCarthy, the Irish ethnic type was an exemplar of working-class values. There is a hypocrisy to Murphy’s claim, however, as by the eighteen nineties he played at legitimate
prices, prices that were beyond the reach of many of his alleged audience. This was not the case with McCarthy. A generation of Irish dialect acting separates the two Irish Dialect actors although they frequently competed in touring centres.

McCarthy, while born in New York City, spent his childhood in Hartford, Connecticut where, a New York Dramatic Mirror article claims, his father was a “popular” local politician called “King” McCarthy. He was remembered as “an excellent dancer” who passed his skills on to his son and namesake (“Death of ‘Dan’ McCarthy. 21 Jan. 1899:17). Jigs and reels would become a regular feature in any McCarthy show. As a teenager, Dan was so proficient a dancer, he was able to dance in Hartford’s Newton’s Varieties and began a career in vaudeville at the age of thirteen. For five years he performed with fellow Irish Dialect actor and piper Thomas F. Kerrigan, (Odell 1878-1879 688). Together, the pair went on to write and perform hits songs such as “Give an Honest Irish Lad a Chance” and “Casey’s Ball Last Night” (“Music for the Nation...”). He met his future wife Kittie Coleman in Hartford, and they “became a well known team in vaudeville, doing a neat song and dance that was very popular” (“Death of ‘Dan’ McCarthy. New York Dramatic Mirror. 21 Jan. 1899:17). Between 1884-86 Coleman and McCarthy formed and acted in a theatre company in Hartford called the Ivy Leaf company (17). Late in 1886, McCarthy turned his hand to playwriting, produced True Irish Hearts and went on the road. When he became too old to play the twenty-one year old protagonist, Lanty Lanigan, he wrote similar Irish Romantic vehicles for himself: e.g., The Cruiskeen Lawn, The Rambler from Clare and The Dear Old Irish Home.

4.4.3 True Irish Hearts.

The conditions under which the Charles Morgan Agency version of True Irish Hearts play was copied are unknown, nor can it be certain that the performance pirated was one that McCarthy
performed in. He had secondary tours of the production under his own management and authorised
the production of the play by other combinations (see Section 4.4). If the date of February 1897
recorded on the cover of the text is accurate, it would have been a late performance by McCarthy,
who was thirty-seven at the time and old to play Lanty. If it refers to other than a performance date,
attributing one is more difficult. *True Irish Hearts*, like much melodrama, included improvised text
and was subject to change throughout its performance life. What argues for this being a version of
McCarthy’s script, other than the name written on the cover, is that the characters, scenes and
narrative match those in reviews and programmes of the play. A separate songster or collection of
lyrics titled *Dan McCarthy’s True Irish Hearts Songster* that dates from earlier in the decade doesn’t
provide any corroboration. While the collection includes lyrics to the title song, it is difficult to
determine when or how many of the other songs included in this collection were performed for the
Morgan version. While some songs clearly match events in the narrative, others seem to have no
relationship. The Morgan scribe identifies few of the titles of the songs, merely provides a stage
direction, e.g. “Sings”, “Song.”

What can be determined with more certainty is that the Irish romantic hero of the piece owes
to Boucicault his resilient spirit and Irish charm but has begun to show characteristics of the Irish
dandy portrayed by twentieth-century stage Irishmen such as George M. Cohan, whose characters
combined an Irish tenacity with a set of American cultural values that were intended to assure Irish
immigrants a part in the American Dream. Moreover, while the political themes that served as
subtext for Boucicault’s dramas are hard to find in Cohan’s work, a residue remains in McCarthy’s
who, as a first generation American, built on Irish resentment to justify or provoke a social mobility
McCarthy believed was denied Irish Americans.
*True Irish Hearts* takes place in a small unnamed Irish village located on the shores of the Killarney Lakes. The plot revolves around the missing will of Mr. Terrance O’Neal. Without the will, his two children Rose and young Danny, also known as Little Bright Eyes, must depend on the care of local official Wolfe, who is described as a “wolf by name and nature” (McCarthy 1). His government function isn't explicitly identified, nor is Wolfe referred to as English in the play; however, he collects money from the villagers and has influence at the “Royal” courts. Wolfe is aided by his servant, Batt Mooney, nicknamed Moonface Batt. It is the Irish traitor/informer Batt, in his willingness to oppress and betray his own people in order to profit personably, who is the true villain of the play.

Wolfe and Moonface contrive an elaborate and incredible plot to trap the children in the nearby Miser’s Cave unless Rose agrees to marry Wolfe and sign her father’s fortune over to him. As can only be expected in a melodrama, she sees through Wolfe, rejects him, and she and her brother are carried off to the cave. The disappearance of the two heirs is attributed to Rose’s lover, lawyer Miles O’Connor, by the locals. He has been set up by Wolfe and Batt with a planted gun and is taken to court and sentenced to death.

As the final scene of Act IV opens, the heirs are found in the cave alone, hungry and thirsty. It isn’t clear how long they have been there but it is long enough for a trial to have taken place. They have not been discovered because the villagers believe the cave to be haunted. Wolfe has hired men to make ghost noises each night and the locals are afraid to approach it. All seems lost for Rose and young Dan until local village lad Lanty Lanigan swings in on a rope. He rescues the children while O’Connor’s death bell tolls, and he rushes to the local court where he reveals Wolfe’s plans and saves the young lawyer.
This central plot, sketchy in so many ways, is only intended as backdrop for the genre’s requisite set business, song and dance. Consistent with all Irish picturesque dramas, *True Irish Hearts* relies heavily on spectacle, improbable narrative, and non-sequitur to heighten its considerable drama. Scenes include a stage fight, a dance competition, the rescue of a drowning victim, dog tricks and a shadow chase of the young Danny by an escaped Russian circus bear.

The bulk of the action in *True Irish Hearts*, however, centres on the village locals and their love play. The young Lanty is an illiterate and charismatic singing shepherd. He is in love with colleen Kitty (sometimes played by McCarthy's wife) but cannot marry her because she objects to his drinking and general lack of ambition. In rescuing the O’Neal children, he proves himself worthy to “accept the blessing of all these true Irish Hearts” (59), Kitty being numbered among these. A third love subplot concerns an old fisherman Darby Doyle and Kitty’s mother, Mrs. Brady who spends much of the play trying to convince Darby to look past her age and consider her true worth as a provider and domestic manager.

Typical of Irish Romantic drama *True Irish Hearts* is not short on banter and word play. This is an example of McCarthy's where Kitty and Lanigan discuss his drinking problem:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KITTY</td>
<td>Well, when you go up on that bridge to-night, see that you mind your business and don’t fall asleep as you always do. Now, do you remember the last time I went up there, I found you asleep, and says I; what are you doing here?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANTY</td>
<td>And I told you I was studying the stars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KITTY</td>
<td>Yes, with your eyes shut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANTY</td>
<td>Oh no, Kitty, that the night I was nearly blind and weak in spirits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KITTY</td>
<td>Faith I think your were nearly blind from too much strong spirits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANTY</td>
<td>Oh no, darling, devil a drop. My eyesight was very bad that night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KITTY</td>
<td>Well, why don’t you see Dr. Coffee about them? He’s a good doctor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANTY</td>
<td>So I did, and he told me to use glasses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KITTY</td>
<td>And did you use them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANTY</td>
<td>Did I use them? I used so many the night you saw me that I could see double. (29)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
McCarthy’s love play is situated in a world of castles, evil landlords and virtuous maidens. The subtext of a bitter history of famine, Fenian raids and Home Rule seems far away until one considers the lyrics of the title song “True Irish Hearts”:

I’m a true-hearted lad from the Emerald Isle,
The land where her son’s n’er fear,
My song is in praise of the heroes of old,
To every true Irishman dear.
For centuries England has held us in fear,
And called us an ignorant race,
But the glory of Erin again will return,
And fling back the lie in their face.

[...] There’s a name that will live in all Irishmen’s hearts,
When kingdoms and crowns are forgot,
A name that the whole world honors to-day.
And one without blemish or blot.
The fetters that bound us he holds to the light,
Her tale of oppression to tell,
Behind such a leader with us in a fight.
Her own son, Charles Stuart Parnell (Songster 2)

Another song in McCarthy’s songster “As I stood by the door” refers to homes left deserted during the Famines. It seems that here is the missing political subversion offered by Boucicault’s texts; however, closer reading of McCarthy’s lyrics show him to be less concerned with agitating Irish nationalism in North America than he was with legitimating the Irish working man in American and by extension all the immigrant working underclass. The lyrics of a song called “Erin’s Isle” asks why the Irish are socially repressed:

[...] I’ve heard them call us ragged Pat, and dirty Irish too;
But let me tell you we can dress in style that’s always new.
Why can’t Pat be a gentleman? they ask me to explain,
Well, Pat always was a gentleman, and one he will remain. (Songster 7)

These sentiments are also found in McCarthy’s greatest hit “Give an Honest Irish Lad a Chance” which has a clear American context:
My name is McNamara, and I come from County Clare
In that darling little isle across the sea,
Where the mountains and the hills, and the brooks and rippling rills,
And nature’s sweetest music all the day!
Our little farm was small. It would not support us all.
So one of us was forced away from home;
And I bade them good bye with a tear drop in my eye,
And I sailed for Castle Garden all a-lone.

CHORUS
[...].
When I came to New York I tried hard to get work.
Yes! I traveled through the streets from day to day,
And I went from place to place with starvation in my face
When I ask for work they want no help they say!
Yet, still I wandered on in hopes I would find one,
Who would give a lad a chance to earn his bread;
And I find it all the same, and I know I’m not to blame,
And I oftentimes here wish that I were dead.
(McCarthy “Give an Honest Lad...”)

For McCarthy it is the honest working American, no matter her/his heritage or faith, no matter if s/he is thinly disguised as an Irish national, who is to be celebrated. In _True Irish Hearts_ when Rose refuses to marry Wolfe, he marvels that she can be happy living with the local villagers:

WOLFE So, at last I understand you. You prefer to remain here among the low, ignorant, poverty stricken, when if you had have done as I have asked you you would have had your own home, and live like a lady. And this is your answer eh?
ROSE Yes,- a thousand times, yes. Sooner would I dwell all my life among the poor and true hearted, than live among vice and broad-cloth. (25)

While McCarthy’s attack on American class values and social inequity could resonate with all marginalized workers, the mainstay of popular theatre audiences, when it came to playing at the TOH and before a Canadian audience, it didn’t hurt McCarthy’s chances of success that many in the audience were working Irish and Roman Catholic.

4.4.3.1 Toronto Irish.

It is a starting point in many nineteenth-century histories to suggest that Toronto was
a predominantly British Protestant city both demographically and by inclination. It is also true in many senses. This characterization should be qualified, however, by the fact that Britain itself was a nation of four countries divided by distance, religion and cultural tradition. Each nation was further separated by regional bias. Bigotry against Scot, Highlander and Lowlander, Englishman, Northerner, Midlander and Southerner, or the Welsh and Irish, Catholic and Protestant was not uncommon in nineties Britain and much of this antagonism found its way to Canada where is resulted in a modified pecking order with the English and Scots at the top of the status pyramid, the Scots being particularly successful in politics, legal, military and engineering professions. On the low end in Britain were the Irish, with the Irish Protestant holding slightly more sway than the Irish Roman Catholic. It has long been held that this hierarchy was transplanted to Canada where many unschooled and illiterate Irish Catholic farmers were unable to find work and were offered little chance of upward mobility after the Potato Famines. Some historians counter this construction and suggest that the Irish in Canada were afforded comparable opportunities and rewards to other immigrant Canadians although a very real cultural antagonism existed.

Part of the debate amongst scholars over the conditions afforded Irish immigrants in North America results from the claim that the patterns and scope of Irish settlement were poorly documented. General consensus among these scholars is that the number of Irish Protestants emigrating to North America was higher than records show. While Irish Catholics, mostly famine refugees, recorded their nationality, many Irish Protestants, Orangemen aside, were more ambivalent about their heritage. For example, on census forms, Irish Protestants and Ulster Scots merely described themselves by faith, i.e., as Protestant, rather than by nationality. For this reason, these settlers were frequently factored into English emigrant statistics rather than Irish. In addition, if the
Irish, who left in great numbers at the time of the Potato Famines sailed from a British port, this was entered as their point of exit rather than Ireland and they were also recorded as English settlers. Irish entering from United States ports to Canada were not necessarily traced at all. Even so the recorded total listed in the 1891 census shows a sizable 625,000 citizens of Irish descent “compared with 700,000 English and 400,000 Scots” (Akenson 699).

In Toronto, the Irish were represented at all levels of society. The uncertainty of demographics aside, by 1900 there is no doubt that they were one of the largest, if not the largest, ethnic group in the city, large enough that Toronto was referred to as the “Belfast of Canada.” Irish immigrants were both respected, particularly if they were English Protestant Orangemen, or vulnerable to class and/or religious prejudice, particularly if they were Roman Catholic.

Their cultural standing was informed by historic Irish enmities which were transferred to Canada in the nineteenth century. By the eighteen nineties events such as the Donnelly murders (1880), the controversy surrounding the assassination of popular Irish statesman Thomas D’Arcy Magee (1825-1868), and the Fenian Raids (1866-71) all contributed to a belief held by many non-Irish Canadians that where there were Irish, in particular Irish Catholics, there was social unrest. The 150,000 to 200,000 Orangemen in Canada, not all of them Irish, many of them wealthy and influential, and most of them in Ontario and New Brunswick, promoted this myth. In Ontario one of every three Protestants was an Orangeman (326).

The single greatest root of dissent arose from an unease over the sheer numbers of Irish that emigrated to Canada after the Potato Famines (1845-1851). Some Canadian politicians and their constituents felt that Canada was being saddled with Britain’s responsibilities and resented the imposition. Because so many Irish frequently felt unwelcome, their population in Canada reached
its peak by the eighteen seventies, after which many went to America where they believed they would be more welcome (329). McCarthy’s song lyrics suggest that the welcome there was not typically warm and the American Roman Catholic Irish suffered significant marginalization well into the next century.

At the time McCarthy toured Canada, the Irish population was declining. British and Canadian records show that “persons of Irish ethnicity composed the largest non-French ethnic group in Canada until the late 1880s or 1890s” (125) but was surpassed by the English in 1901 (Akenson 126) while still representing a substantial portion of Toronto’s population. Akenson further claims that many histories of the Irish in North American are: “based on a derogatory (and inaccurate) interpretation of the cultural background of the nineteenth-century Irish Catholic migrants. Simply put, the general view has been (and still is) that the cultural characteristics associated with the Roman Catholicism in Ireland were an impediment to the migrants’s adaptation to the New World” (127). Akenson cites Gordon Darroch and Michael Ornstein’s findings that all Irish in Canada were able to farm without undue impediment, and that: “farming [was] the most common Irish Catholic occupation, as it was with most Irish Protestants [...]. Further, Darroch and Ornstein show that, contrary to the hypothesis, Irish Catholics in Canada did not have a markedly lower economic profile than did persons of Irish Protestant ethnicity” (131). However, they also find that:

Catholics were under-represented in the professional class - only 3 per cent of the total population, in any case - and were more likely than other groups to have labouring occupations, but not markedly so. Put simply, persons of Irish Catholic ethnicity did slightly less well than did persons of Irish Protestant ethnicity, but not enough to lend credence to the idea that Catholics were heavily handicapped by their cultural background. Strikingly, in rural areas it was found that the Irish Catholic had slightly greater proportions in the bourgeois occupations than did the Scots or Germans. (131)

The numbers of Irish to find their way to the theatre in Toronto cannot be measured. The Irish
newspaper *The Irish Canadian* did not advertise or encourage theatre attendance either and the Roman Catholic Church in Toronto strictly controlled its members. Certainly its female congregation was encouraged to restrict their activities to the private sphere and that: “[e]ven when, in the 1890s, the movement for women’s rights began, the Irish Catholic wife and mother was warned not to interfere in the sphere of men, lest her children and home suffer because of these unfeminine distractions” (qtd. in Nicolson 759). Nevertheless while it is unlikely that the Irish Roman Catholic church in Toronto encouraged its congregation to attend the theatre, doubtless many did. After all, they were one of the targets at which McCarthy aimed his performances. Further, the cultural chauvinism found in McCarthy’s song lyrics argues for a counterculture to the Protestant orthodoxy of sufficient number that McCarthy could rely on them for a portion of his touring revenues.

4.4.4 *Dan McCarthy - A Decade on the Road.*

4.4.4.1 Two *Irish Hearts*: 1891, 1893.

McCarthy’s primary management and artistic policy, then, was to perform his Irish dramas to an audience that would identify with its characters and themes; in particular, with audiences that were not part of the Syndicate’s targeted audience. Consequently he toured cities and centres that combined a sizable Irish population, Irish centres like Boston and Toronto, and cities with a large working-class populations such as Philadelphia and Chicago. As the decade progressed, this audience, diverse as it was, turned out to be a fickle one for the Irish Dialect actor. At the peak of his career, he had been able to manage and tour three road combinations and was contemplating a European tour (“Mr. McCarthy’s Irish Triplets.” *New York Daily Mirror*. 15 Aug. 1891:2). His obituary remembers that, “[h]e made a great deal of money with his starring tours until latterly, when his tours only met with spasmodic success” (“Death of ‘Dan’ McCarthy.” *New York Dramatic
Mirror. 21 Jan. 1899:17). When he died his family had to rely on the Actors Fund to pay for the funeral. The narrative of Dan McCarthy’s career on the road, however, is not one of steady decline. Rather the predominant pattern is that of a performer with considerable charms, a triple threat with competent to strong performance skills and a keen business resiliency who used all these to adapt to the challenges thrown at him by the rigours of touring theatre during the competitive and changing eighteen nineties.

McCarthy’s first visit to Toronto during the nineties was with his great success True Irish Hearts which he brought between Oct. 12 - 17 1891. The comedy then in its fourth season was one of three Irish comedies written by the actor/author and co-produced with business partner Gus Reynolds that toured simultaneously that season. Excited by the prospect of expansion and a possible tour to Europe, McCarthy explains to a reporter from the New York Dramatic Mirror that “[t]he three plays are in active rehearsal [...] The scenery is unusually elaborate. [...] Gus Reynolds will head The Dear Irish Boy company, playing, as hitherto, the character of McClutchy. Matthew Leland will be the business manager. I shall personally direct the tour of The True Irish Hearts company” (“McCarthy’s Irish Triplets.” 15 Aug. 1891:2). Gus Reynolds had been a member of one of Dion Boucicault’s companies where he played Dingley in Robert Emmet at Chicago’s the McVicker’s Theatre in 1884 (Walsh 163). His presence provides a link between the Irish Romance pioneer, and McCarthy but the nature of their direct relationship, if any, is undocumented.

When McCarthy brought True Irish Hearts to Toronto in the nineties, the topic that interested most Irish and non-Irish alike was the possibility of Home Rule in Ireland, providing the lyrics to McCarthy’s title song with topical reference. Former Liberal Ontario Premier and Irish Nationalist, the Honorable Edward Blake (1833-1912) was invited to give a speech in favour of Home Rule at
the Eighty Club in London the following year. There, he argued that the Home Rule once afforded Canada at the time of Confederation should be expanded to Ireland. “I am arguing from Canada, once discontented and rebellious - (cheers) - but which Home Rule has made peaceful, contented and law-abiding - to Ireland, which has been for want of Home Rule agitated, and lawless, but which from my soul, I believe will under Home Rule, become peaceful, contented and law-abiding” (Blake 29).

When he introduced *True Irish Hearts* to the TOH in 1891, Frank Morris was manager. A description of the TOH (then named Jacobs and Shaw’s) from 1886 describes the theatre as painted in an “old blue” and “terracotta” colour scheme, and lighted by a “London sun-burner chandelier of 70 lights” (qtd. from *Mail*, 19 Aug.:1886 in Baillie 124). It was furnished with “iron folding chairs and bottoms” (124) which were puffed as “cleaner and cooler than cushioned chairs” (124). Because the theatre is often referred to by the press as intimate or cozy in comparison to the GOH, this suggests that it was small in some sense although its seating capacity was comparable to the other theatre’s. In light of its original function as a skating rink, it may have had limited fly space and/or a lower ceiling. Tickets for the TOH’s performances were sold directly through its box office.

There are few reviews for *True Irish Hearts* or any of McCarthy’s performances. Press in Toronto consistently dismissed the genre of Romantic Irish drama with its contrived plots while at the same time reporting its success with audiences. True to the practice of promotional columns, the advance press for McCarthy’s melodrama contains a testimonial from a Philadelphia paper that describes the melodrama as popular and entertaining with scenery that was “a special object” (“Music and the Drama.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 10 Oct. 1891:6). Of the Toronto production, the *Globe*’s review is more puffed description than criticism:
it was easy to see that genuine fun was being provided besides a strong and interesting plot. The scenery was realistic, and the lakes of Killarney, the ruined abbey, the miser’s cave [sic] and other scenes were strikingly beautiful. Dan McCarthy, of course, sings Irish songs and ballads, dances the jig and reel, plays the bagpipes and cracks jokes all through the evening. An acting dog furnishes a good deal of fun, and Mrs. Brady carries him off on her shoulder, with his teeth fastened in Dan’s old coat, the fun is at its height.” (“Music and the Drama.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 13 Oct. 1891:6)

Thin as it is, McCarthy could consider this a positive review because it praises his production values, a point of much criticism when it came to the Irish Picturesque drama. The following excerpt from the *New York Dramatic Mirror* is an example of the contempt that Irish productions frequently encountered:

A certain Irish comedian, who tours the small towns of New England encountered another actor on Broadway the other day and said, “Joe, you’re the very man I’m looking for. I want you to go with me next season. I’ve a splendid part for you in my new piece.’ Naturally, ‘Joe’ expressed curiosity as to the part. ‘What do I play, Dan?’ he asked.

‘Well, you play a young sporting gentleman. You make your first entrance on horseback surrounded by a pack of fox hounds.’

‘And where will you get the fox hounds, Dan? Are you to import them?’

‘No, but I’m expecting a litter from Jack, my bull terrier,’

‘But, Dan, bull terriers are not fox hounds.’

‘No, but I’ll have property ears made for the dogs and the audience will think they’re the real thing.’

This makeshift at realism did not strike ‘Joe’ as plausible, and he declined the part. (*New York Dramatic Mirror*. 9 July 1898:13)

Between Sept. 5-10, 1892 McCarthy returned to the TOH with another crowd favourite *The Rambler from Clare*. It is said to be “a rollicking dramatic picture of farm life in Ireland, a kind of Irish ‘Old Homestead’” (“Music and the Drama.” *Mail* [Toronto]. 5 Sept., 1892:6). He played counter to Murphy at GOH who was starring in George Fawcett Rowe’s (1834-89) comedy *The Rose of Killarney* or *The Donagh*. McCarthy returned with the following season *The Rambler from Clare* over the Christmas/New Year week, Dec. 26-Jan. 1 1892/3.
In 1893 McCarthy visited in May with a farewell performance of *True Irish Hearts* this time under TOH manager Morris. Although the play was dated and had been performed by other companies with less success than McCarthy’s, the actor manager’s version remained popular with Toronto audiences, in particular those in the cheaper seats: “The star, Dan McCarthy, was vociferously welcomed, the occupants of the upper tiers being particularly demonstrative. The manner in which Mr. McCarthy was received conclusively proved that he stands upon a high pinnacle in the estimation of Toronto lovers of Irish drama” (“Music and Drama.” *Globe* [Toronto]. 16 May 1893:8). *True Irish Hearts* did not play Toronto again and was never performed under Small’s management. The general narrative and thematic formula of McCarthy’s dramas remained the same.

4.4.4.2 After - 1895 - 1899.

After Small became manager of the TOH, McCarthy’s popularity with Toronto audiences remained; in fact, there appeared to be a design to bring McCarthy to the city more frequently and for longer stays under Small’s management. McCarthy played a full week with *The Pride of Mayo* between November 4th and 9th, 1894 and returned in at the end of the season for another week in April 1895. This time McCarthy performed a two play repertoire of *Pride of Mayo/Cruskeen Lawn* (“Dan McCarthy at ....” *News* [Toronto]. 29 Apr. 1895:4). The papers report that the Irish actor is sure to please, although this review points once again to some qualitative shortcomings in McCarthy’s productions:

Dan McCarthy is one of the actors whom I never fail to see when he visits Toronto. What he may be off the stage one can only guess, but on it he seems such a light-hearted and good fellow that one is benefited by seeing him. There are greater actors and better stagers, supported by stronger companies, whom I would pass by at any time to see McCarthy romp with the children and turn the laugh on the villain. That others feel the same is shown by the good houses which always greet him in Toronto. (“Stage and Platform.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 4 May 1895:6)
When McCarthy returns for a longer two week stay between Sept. 2 - 7, 9-14 four months later, however, with another double bill, *The Rambler from Clare/ Pride of Mayo* McCarthy seems to have overstayd his welcome and, for the first time Toronto reviews are critical. The *Saturday Night* critic observes: "After seeing Dan McCarthy’s company in two of that author-actor’s best Irish pieces, I think many people have decided that the company needs weeding out and that a better stage manager [McCarthy] is required" (“The Drama.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 14 Sept. 1895:6).

The Dialect actor struggled to receive positive critical reception for the rest of the decade. By Jan. 20 - 25, 1896, when McCarthy returned with *The Cruiskeen Lawn* the Syndicate controlled Toronto’s legitimate theatres and McCarthy was restricted to non-Trust houses and popular prices. The *News* argues that the play “can boast no novelty in plot or character. It has the time worn villain with conventional style of hat, lace cuffs and riding whip. He is still the relentless mortgagee, of the land on which the hero lives. The latter is thrown into the inevitable jail on a false charge, he escapes and the last act sees substantial justice dealt out to his persecutors” (“The Theatres.” *News* [Toronto]. 21 Jan. 1896:2).

In February 1897 *The Dear Irish Home* again failed with the press. Reviews expressed a general weariness with contrived Irish Romantic melodrama narratives:

> The Dear Irish Home is called a new play, but it is very little fresher than the remains of the Sunday roast of the average boarding house left over for Wednesday’s hash. There is the old mixture of estates, papers, shillalals [sic], whiskey, colleens and designing villains. Thomas Kavanagh alias Tom Casey, and Michael Duffy alias Mickey Casey, are firmly determined to possess the Kavanagh estates. (“The Drama.” *Saturday Night* [Toronto]. 20 Feb. 1897:6)

When McCarthy returned to the TOH in 1898 with his production of *Dear Irish Home*, the theatre was no longer under the management of circuit manager Jacobs. Small was now in business
with Montreal’s Sparrow. Competition was that much stiffer, a factor McCarthy couldn't help but be aware of. He now had to assure more for competitive prices. This time he seemed up to the challenge: “Since his last appearance here Mr McCarthy has greatly strengthened his company, and the piece has been improved” (“Public Amusement.” World [Toronto]. 10 May 1898: 5). A critic from the Globe observes: “Dan McCarthy shows little sign of the wear and tear of years of campaigning on the road and is as bright and jovial as ever. He was greeted with enthusiastic applause and kept the audience in a good humor during the whole evening” (“Music and Drama.” Globe [Toronto]. 10 May 1898:12).

But this was an isolated example of acclaim and by 1898, Charlesworth and many in Toronto’s audiences, were no longer enchanted by McCarthy or the Irish drama:

If Ireland had or has nothing else to complain of than the treatment meted out to her by the ordinary trans-Atlantic playwright her grievance in this respect alone would be a serious one indeed. [...] The scenery was good, and the play well mounted; but we beg to suggest the title, “Our Dear Old Irish Home,” is too much of a mouthful for these times, when short smart titles are the vogue, and we think that “Tommyrot” would be more easily rolled off the tongue, and much more appropriate (“News, Musical and Theatrical.” Mail and Empire [Toronto]. 10 May 1898:7).

My Dear Old Irish Home was McCarthy’s last offering to Toronto audiences. Whether McCarthy would have been able to remake his star after its failure is uncertain. His death was reported in Toronto papers in January 1899. New York papers cover the death in greater detail:

Dan McCarthy died in Bellevue Hospital on Jan. 15, of cirrhosis of the liver. A week ago yesterday he attended a performance of the Shaughraun at the Third Avenue Theatre, and the day following Jan 10, he went to Bellevue Hospital and asked to be treated for a kidney complaint. He was placed in ward 19, and when his illness became serious his friends were notified, and many of them called to see him. [...] His wife and a son, who is about sixteen years old, survive him. (“Death of Dan McCarthy.” New York Dramatic Mirror. 21 Jan. 1899:17)

The Toronto World merely reported his death to be of alcoholism. He was so closely aligned with his roles that no one questioned that he should die of this addiction. (“Dan McCarthy, Actor,
Dead.” *World* [Toronto]. 17 Jan. 1899: 1). Three months after his death, an advertisement appeared in the *New York Dramatic Mirror* informing readers that wife Kittie Coleman would be performing and selling McCarthy’s plays (15 Apr. 1899: 11). His son continued in the family business, in a sense, as an auditor for Cohan and Harris (“Daniel L McCarthy” *Variety Obituaries* 30 June 1943).

By the time McCarthy had died in New York, Toronto manager Small had already begun the process that would lead his establishing a Canadian circuit: a circuit that may have assured McCarthy’s future. In 1892, after the death of GOH owner Manning, Small bought his theatre and replaced Sheppard as manager. In doing so, he was under the mistaken belief that he would be able to control legitimate and popular theatre in the city. He had not counted on the extent of respect afforded Sheppard who still ran the PT. Of Small, Charlesworth writes that “It was a shock to him [Small] when he learned that Messrs Klaw and Erlanger, heads of the theatrical syndicate who controlled the booking of nearly all first class attractions, had decided to follow the fortunes of O.B. Sheppard, the ousted manager who had built up the prestige of the GOH, and intended to withdraw their bookings from the latter institution” (Charlesworth *More Candid Chronicles* 283).

Toronto saw its first moving picture with the aid of Thomas Armat’s Vitascope at Marion S. Robinson’s dime museum in 1890 (Gutteridge). By the end of the decade moving pictures were a regular feature at vaudeville houses including Shea’s. While it is widely held that film contributed to the death of the great touring theatre machine of the late nineteenth century, it is perhaps more accurate to suggest that film led to the demise of the popular theatre. While the Syndicate’s role in legitimating an elite theatre assured its audience and longevity, the popular theatre was replaced by affordable forms of escape such as vaudeville, variety and silent film. In the cinemas the low cost of a ticket allowed audiences to watch the popular theatre’s "little men" on the big screen, characters such as Charlie Chaplin’s and Buster Keaton’s hobos were able to reach out to a wider blue-collar
demographic. They were characters that had much in common with the working-class heroes of the popular theatre. As for Toronto and Canada, the day of the popular theatre was relatively short-lived. The elite theatre was already on a path to legitimation when Canada formed as a nation and the head offices of this theatre’s business had been established elsewhere. Any hope of a situated drama lay in the cradles of academia and amateur theatre.
5. CHAPTER FIVE: “From the Foyer:” Waiting for a National Drama: Catherine Nina Merritt’s *When George the Third was King*.

5.1 Shaping A Nation in Waiting - Matthew Arnold and the United Empire Loyalists.

During the month of February 1884 two cultural gatherings took place in the city of Toronto: the poet, critic, classical scholar and educationist Matthew Arnold came to Shaftesbury Hall on February 12th to lecture on “Literature and Science,” and a week later, on the 19th, the United Empire Loyalist Association met to plan a summer celebration of their contribution to Canadian nation building. These seemingly unrelated meetings had more in common than might appear on the surface. Both gatherings, their primary agendas aside, were built on a foundation of social and cultural insecurity that stemmed from the social upheaval taking place throughout the western world during the late nineteenth century, and both sought to entrench their value system and way of life at the expense of a growing industrial class. It is also the case that both played a role in the shaping of one of the nineties’ rare examples of local playmaking, Catherine Nina Merritt’s Jubilee drama, *When George the Third Was King*, performed on Toronto’s GOH stage thirteen years later. In his talk titled “Literature and Science,” Arnold, whose influence as a literary critic and scholar was considerable in the eighteen eighties, argued for lengthy and careful study of the arts and culture rather than the adoption of a pragmatist epistemology predicated on commercial gain and a “rule of thumb” ideology. As such he positioned those privileged enough to live a contemplative life in academia, particularly the liberal arts, above the working masses. The Loyalists, on the other hand, sought to entrench and promote Loyalist mythologies, while as Norman Knowles suggests in *Inventing the Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts*, enhancing the status of the middle-class professional in an increasingly industrial Ontario. Influenced by the notion that art was to be learned from one’s cultural betters, Merritt, an amateur playwright with an
alleged Loyalist heritage, wrote a play that borrowed heavily from existing conventions in order to enforce Loyalist mythologies.

Examples of Toronto playwriting and local production are extremely rare in the nineties, and it would be disingenuous to suggest that a pattern as defined as a social practice attended its production. Rather, by way of conclusion, this chapter considers this production in relation to the aesthetic and cultural determinants that shaped such local playmaking during the nineties and places Merritt’s efforts to develop a situated drama within the context of the nineteenth-century touring theatre’s imperialism.

5.2 Positioning Privilege: Matthew Arnold and the United Empire Loyalists.

5.2.1 Matthew Arnold: A Discourse for America.

One of the primary deterrents to local playmaking was the widely-held perception that a nation as young and inexperienced as Canada was not ready for a national literature. While Arnold is only one of many proponents of this argument, his is perhaps the most influential of those in the late nineteenth century in relation to the arts and culture. In his essay *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time* Arnold had maintained that a nation could only achieve excellence in the arts after a long history of practice, one that most commonly was accompanied by mediocrity or failure. A worthy national movement in the arts, when it did occur, was most often sparked by rare collisions of significant events with exceptional talents, a merging of experience and ability; Arnold termed these as “epochs of concentration”. Such movements, not always apparent to the masses, were to be recognized by the academic critic, a cultural watchdog who arbitrated these eras through careful study of all cultures and literatures. Because Arnold believed it to be so rare an event that all cultural variables came together to create a period of value, he placed most national literatures, particularly
those of new nations, as incapable of such ascendancy. He further urged all critics to study history’s cultural greats and anoint new cultural messiahs when they emerged.

While Arnold’s privileging of a western aesthetic hegemony and canon is frequently rejected by contemporary critics, his construction of a necessary national apprenticeship and its reception by careful criticism is a construction that has proven to have lasting significance. While the slow growth of a national drama cannot by any means be laid solely at Arnold’s door, he was a decidedly influential contributor to the notion that the ability to discern and practice excellence in the arts was learned and earned. In addition, by advocating a life of careful study, he played a role in distancing the two theatres of the nineteenth century, the elite theatre that privileged process and craft, and the commercial theatre that may have had many of the same goals but functioned, of necessity, for capital gain. As has been established in Chapter Three of this history, he was a decided influence on the criticism of at least one Toronto critic, the young and impressionable Charlesworth.

Arnold placed the critical property as secondary only to the artistic or the “creative power” while at the same time arguing that criticism is a creative act in itself. In doing so, he is careful to distance the critic, and more explicitly the Classically-trained, liberally-educated academic as guardian of the “world of ideas,” one who should be above the “world of practice” (243), a substratum that Arnold viewed as the realm of philistines: “I say the critic must keep out of the region of immediate practice in the political, social, humanitarian sphere if he wants to make a beginning for the more free speculative treatment of things, which may perhaps one day make its benefits felt even in the sphere, but in a natural and thence irresistible manner” (251). For Arnold, the ideal critic, one who dwells in the realm of ideas, serves as an arbiter of quality in the arts and by extension recognizes the value of a nation’s culture. A critic, in fact, should be someone very like
Arnold and his colleagues.

When Arnold brought his lecture to Toronto’s Shaftesbury Hall, he had long established himself as the premier British literary critic of his generation. His talk, titled “Science and Literature,” was intended as a rebuttal to fellow academic Thomas Henry Huxley’s address given at Sir Josiah Mason’s Science College at Birmingham in 1880. Huxley had countered Arnold’s claim, made in *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time*, that critics should embrace “Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have, for their proper outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another” (*Function of...* 258) by suggesting that a truly broad education must incorporate the practical and theoretical sciences as well.

Huxley began his lecture by attacking what he believed to be one of Arnold’s favorite straw men, the self-made industrialist, primarily because he believed their time to have passed. Nonetheless he advocated, like Arnold, a life of scholarly rigor. Furthermore, while both Arnold and Huxley agreed that a university education was a good,” it was imbedded in both their philosophies that an upper-school education was an elite activity, not intended for the “greatest number.” The real bogeyman for both was the utilitarian philosophy of Jeremy Bentham (1748 - 1832) and a materialist industrial orientation, one that threatened the theoretical academics.

When Arnold came to America in 1884 to refute Huxley’s claims, he did not entirely disagree with his opponent; however, while he recognized the value of a broad education that included the sciences, he once again privileged a liberal education grounded in literature and the classics:

> And so we at last find, it seems, we find flowing in favour of the humanities the natural and necessary stream of things, which seemed against them when we started. The ‘hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits,’ this good fellow carried hidden in his nature, apparently, something destined
to develop into a necessity for humane letters. Nay, more: we seem finally to be even
to the further conclusion that our hairy ancestor carried in his nature, also, a
necessity for Greek. (500-1)

At the time of Arnold’s speech, the divide between the practical and the non-material, a split with
its roots in class struggle contributed to the divide between the popular commercial theatre and the
elite drama and amateur forms and, in reference to this history, helped foster the university and little
theatre movements of the following century in Toronto.

When Arnold visited Toronto in 1884, he was sixty-two years of age and recently retired
from his career in education. In 1883, he had been granted a pension of £250 and embarked on a
lecture tour of the United States (Chambers 58 ). The Toronto press provided the following studied
critique of the senior scholar:

His entrance upon the stage was as impressive as the occasion demanded, and the
bows with which he acknowledged his reception were quite successful in exhibiting
the desirable mean between sweet graciousness and the condescension of a
consciously superior intellect. He is a distinguished looking gentleman, who seems
to carry his sixty-two years of life quite easily. His face is not a comely one
altogether, but he is undoubtedly what is generally known as ‘very intellectual
looking.’ His features are strongly marked, powerful, and expressive. He parts his
hair near the middle, wears a very high collar, and appears to find use for an eyeglass.

While it is unlikely that the fourteen-year old Charlesworth attended this lecture, there is every
reason to imagine that Parkhurst did view Arnold’s lecture. Arnold’s legacy can be seen in
Parkhurst’s conviction that North American work was inferior. For rival critic Charlesworth,
Arnold’s influence did not result in a pro-amateur bias although he did fulfill an Arnoldian role as
nurturer of a Canadian culture. Rather, the British critic’s influence can be seen in Charlesworth’s
elitist positioning and his professed if not actual rejection (he was employed as a critic of the
professional theatre after all) of the commercial and popular, and it most likely influenced
Charlesworth’s conviction that Toronto was a parochial city, one that was not ready for great art, one that was a great distance for its own epoch of concentration. Excerpts from his weekly columns titled “From the Foyer” show a conviction that Canada is still in its cultural infancy and that European drama should serve as the model for guidance:

a) Mrs. Fiske pointed out very truly that on this continent we were provincial as yet; we have no art atmosphere, and consequently no clear conceptions of what is good or bad. [italics mine] Some individuals may grasp every detail of the artist’s idea, but as a people the finer shades or an author’s idea or an actor’s ideal elude us. Therefore Ibsen is not understood and therefore the finest acting passes unapplauded. (Chalesworth “From the Foyer.” 23 Feb. 1896:8)

b) It is absurd to deny that on the stage at least the English art is the best; it is riper, more genial and broader in its scope. Since the Kendals started the invasion, the effects of English influence on the theatres of this country have been inspiring and beneficial. This is no fling at American art or American newness. We in Canada are apt to forget that every slur on America is a slur on Canada as well. The supremacy of England in dramatic arts is due not so much to our inferiority as to the old land’s riper experience, and we are content to look on her as our mother in arts [italics mine]. (2 Feb. 1896:8)

c) In Canada we are all too prone in art, in politics, and in social matters to glorify cheap achievements simply because they are Canadian. It is an insularity of judgement inherited from our English ancestors and intensified in some cases to the narrowest provincialism. The spirit becomes sillier still when it takes on a parochial color and the sycophants shout for what is tawdry and bad simply because it is native to a village or city. Nothing could be more ridiculous than the sight of a journal which claims to be metropolitan raving over trash in hysterical tones simply because it is a local product. (15 Dec. 1895:8)

d) The average entertainment calls for recognition on its merits as a performance. Standards vary in the different theatres, but the professional performers seek to gratify, so far as they can, their own particular clientele. The amateur performance, on the other hand, asks for acceptance on ground of its demerits. Its promoters say ‘We ask you to view this generously because the performers are amateurs who live here; they are crude and inexperienced; they have no earthly right to be on the stage, perhaps, but it pleases them and it won’t hurt you to give up your dollars to let them have a little fun.’ It is all very well to let them have a little fun, but really it seems to me it would be more honest to make their performances complimentary events. (8)
His disrespect for amateur work no doubt influenced Charlesworth’s evaluations of new and original works in the next century when he would become one of the judges for both the Earl Grey Contest and the Dominion Drama Festival; “The tendency of the amateur, however, is to, in vulgar phrase, bite off more than he can chew. [...] Neither should they attempt to introduce a new play when there are plenty of old ones that have been tried and not found wanting” (Touchstone “From the Foyer” 1 Mar. 1896:8).

Throughout his career, Charlesworth, while always willing to champion Canadian artists who came to Toronto on tour, never completely rid himself of the notion that new Canadian works were inferior. His criticism of Merritt’s work entered in the Earl Grey drama festival is an example (“Ottawa Orchestra Created Surprise.” Mail and Empire [Toronto]. 7 Apr. 1910:8). Ultimately, Arnold, in an attempt to position and privilege academia had, in the end, supported the craft of at least one commercial underclass, the daily newspaper reporter. Taking his lead, many drama critics frequently edified an elite theatre and drama of mythical proportions, at the expense of the popular and commercial, their daily bread.

5.2.2 The United Empire Loyalists and the Merritts.

When Merritt, a young woman of privileged birth, sensible to the notion that works of merit resulted from careful study of worthy models, came to write When George the Third Was King, she looked to models created for the American stage for mentorship. The play she wrote borrowed heavily from the popular nineteenth-century theatres tropes and models; moreover, she did not profit financially. Rather Merritt’s play was conceived as a celebration of United Empire Loyalist history.

Like Arnold, the United Empire Loyalists felt a need to promote and privilege their position in what appeared to them to be an alarmingly unstable social hierarchy at the end of the nineteenth
century. The February 19th, 1884 meeting at Toronto’s City Hall was one of a number of initiatives by Loyalist descendants and sympathizers intended to construct a privileged position for Loyalist families. It was a strategy that, as Norman Knowles explains in *Inventing the Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts*, resulted in securing a lasting myth for such families:

The Loyalist tradition is usually identified with a cluster of related ideas: unfailing devotion to the British Crown and Empire, a strong and pervasive anti-Americanism, suffering and sacrifice endured for the sake of principle, elite social organs, and a conservative social vision. This tradition occupies an important place in Canadian historiography. Several generations of scholars have identified the Loyalist tradition as one of the defining elements of the English-Canadian identity. (3)

Knowles questions the premises of this characterization and argues that the Loyalist myth has evolved and changed to suit this culture’s needs and interests, that their myth is a usable past that evolved in order to assure their precedence in society, i.e., “[t]he Loyalist tradition was not inherited, but was continually reinvented by groups seeking to create usable pasts that spoke to contemporary circumstances and concerns” (12). He shows that, “[b]y the end of the nineteenth century, filiopietistic descendants and status-conscious members of the middle class recast the Loyalists into a principled and cultured elite. Imperialists stressed the Loyalists’ commitment to Europe and attributed to them a divinely inspired sense of mission” (5).

In truth, the Loyalist history had not been as prestigious nor their loyalty as staunch as their myth making might suggest. In fact, rather than being the determined defenders of British values, Knowles shows that many Loyalists had been ambivalent about coming to Canada but had found it financially expedient: “In a report to the Loyalist Claims Commission in January of 1786, the administrator of Quebec Lieutenant-Governor Henry Hope, observed that the Loyalists were ‘chiefly landholders, farmers, and others from the inland part of the continent’ and that there were few
persons of great property or consequence’ among them” (15). Most had been “pioneer farmers of modest means” (15). Furthermore, he shows that: “[t]he original Loyalist settlers of Ontario lacked a coherent and cohesive identity. Mixed motives, ethnic and religious diversity, preoccupation with the everyday work of surviving in the wilderness, frequent relocation, marriage to non-Loyalist families, and the influx of large numbers of American settlers all contributed to the failure of the Loyalists to develop a distinct self-awareness” (20).

Once settled in Canada, many Loyalists established themselves in the middle-class professions as engineers, lawyers and educators. By the eighteen nineties, however, they found themselves confronted by a growing and seemingly threatening industrial sector. To secure their future, they began a campaign to educate the Canadian public as to their worth. They gathered, held celebrations and constructed monuments to Loyalists which were intended to commemorate the narratives of Loyalist settlement, e.g., Laura Secord (1775-1868), Barbara Heck (1734-1804) ‘the founder of American Methodism, and First Nations ally during the War of Independence, Joseph Brant (1742-1807). Loyalists produced history books and school texts in which their ancestors appeared favourably if not heroically and, in all cases, were constructed as being instrumental in shaping Canada’s history. William Canniff’s (1830-1910) The History of the Settlement of Upper Canada and Egerton Ryerson’s (1802-1882) The Loyalists of America and Their Times are examples (46). Knowles suggests that as:

[p]art of this larger phenomenon, the United Empire Loyalist Association of Ontario provided a forum in which its predominantly urban, professional, middle-class members could declare their patriotic and genealogical superiority and assert their claims to influence. Exclusive membership criteria, fraternization with distinguished social and political leaders, and officially sanctioned insignia all were part of a strategy to confer status and recognition upon the association and its members. (162)

It was as a part of the movement to secure this privilege that St. Catharine’s native Merritt
wrote the dramatized version of her family history. Merritt was descended from one of the most prominent of Loyalist families. Her great grandfather Thomas had distinguished himself in the War of Independence. Her grandfather, William Hamilton, was a St. Catharines-based engineer who had been instrumental in building the Trent Canal and later became influential in politics. As the following excerpt shows, members of the Merritt family had long been instrumental in forming the Loyalist Association and in documenting the Loyalist myth:

At the beginning of the 1859 sitting of the Legislative Assembly the Honourable William Hamilton Merritt [Merritt’s grand father] presented a petition circulated by his son Jedediah calling on the government to support actively the collection of documents relating to Upper Canada’s early history. [...] Feeling that Upper Canadian history was being neglected, William Hamilton Merritt used his political influence to displace the French-speaking majority on the library committee and managed to have his son Jedediah granted a sum of 200 pounds so that he could travel to England to collect documents. (31)

In truth, however, the Merritts’ history shows that their loyalty to Canada had been inconsistent. Thomas, great grandfather to Catherine and William Hamilton, had served under John Graves Simcoe with the Niagara Light Dragoon as a Loyalist. After the war, he settled in New Brunswick but returned to the United States in 1795. Members of the Merritt family returned to Upper Canada in 1796. Knowles argues that “Merritt’s interest in the past was more than a little self-serving. A close friend observed that the Merritts did not hide their desire that ‘posterity might know the energies pursued by them to establish an Independent Country and provide a good home as it had done to thousands of families now scattered throughout every portion of this Province’” (32). The Merritts, then, were not true Loyalists insofar as they were not descended from a family that could show residency back to the American Revolution and uninterrupted loyalty to Great Britain. They were not alone in this and many of the professionals who attended the meeting in Toronto in 1884 could not claim a pure Loyalist pedigree.
Most who attended the February meeting were professionals, however. Knowles claims there is evidence that they were “[a]larmed by the rise of the industrial plutocracy, the growth of the working class, large-scale immigration, and the social ills afflicting the cities and fearing the loss of their own status and influence, old stock Anglo-American families took refuge in a vanishing and largely imaginary past” (150). By the nineties, Loyalists and professionals were not the only groups to seek solidarity:

The expansion of capitalist enterprise, the introduction of new technologies, and changes in the organization of production created a new class of managers and significantly increased the size of the white-collar workforce engaged in clerical and service-oriented occupations. The expansion of the managerial and white-collar workforce extended the ranks of the middle class and introduced an unprecedented degree of hierarchy and differentiation into non-manual workforce that identified itself as middle class but felt increasingly insecure about its position. Membership in organizations like the United Empire Loyalist Association enabled the beleaguered group to assert claims to status and recognition based on ancestry and to associate with other more socially prominent individuals. (152)

Given their mixed origin and loyalties, the group was fractious from the beginning and did not officially organize until 1914 under an “An Act to incorporate The United Empire Loyalists’ Association of Canada.” Founding members included Merritt’s brother William Hamilton and the Lieutenant-Colonel George Alexander Shaw, who both participated in Merritt’s play and shared a desire with Merritt to present a revisionist history that placed the Merritts and their Loyalist colleagues as instrumental in shaping Canadian culture and values. The mode of promotion, a historical drama, was unusual given the rarity of local playmaking, particularly by women from families of her status.

5.3 When George the Third Was King: Toronto playmaking.

Given the infrastructure in place in the nineties’s professional theatre, Canadian playwrights who wanted to enter the theatrical profession had to, of necessity, submit their work to a theatre
company that toured throughout North America. Company managers who wished to pursue a professional career were required to join a circuit and participate in a career dictated by the Syndicate or circuit managers. Given relatively rare opportunity, there were nonetheless a number of Canadian actors and the rare actor manager of note on the road who advertised their nationality as a drawing card when they arrived in Canadian centres. And some saw real success. The popular McKee Rankin (1844-1914), and Hamilton’s Julia Arthur are just two examples. Plays with Canadian subject matter written by Canadians were fewer, but again some were produced and enjoyed a measure of success, in particular Gilbert Parker’s *The Seats of the Mighty* which opened Her Majesty’s Theatre, and Rankin’s frontier plays. Canadians, resident and writing or producing theatre in Canada during the nineties, were a rarity and the few who did tended to do so for the amateur or educational domains, Merritt being one example. Another is Harold Nelson Shaw, a local playmaker, an actor and director who began in education in Toronto but eventually went on to a professional career in Winnipeg, as elocution instructor and acting teacher, later director and manager. He and his students participated in two of the productions under consideration in this history, *The Marriage Dramas* and *When George the Third was King*.

Shaw had trained as and worked as an actor as a young man but his biographer, Douglas Arrell believes that his family did not approve of his choice of career and so he chose to earn a living in a more respectable and presumably more financially rewarding career in elocution. Arrell reports that Nelson Shaw spent six years studying “‘elocution, oratory, and vocal music in New York and Boston’” (84) and was “strongly influenced by Delsarte through his teacher, Steele MacKaye [(1842-94)]” (84). After receiving a BA from Acadia University, he served as principal of the Conservatory of Music’s School of Elocution between 1892 and 1898. According to Arrell: “During this period
he transformed the School of Elocution from a marginal adjunct of the music school to the first full-fledged acting school in Canada” (85). Dissatisfied with a career that saw him teaching the economically advantaged how to speak, he increasingly introduced drama into his seasons. A production for University College of *Antigone*, performed in Greek at the Academy of Music, was notable.

Although Nelson made his career in Toronto and Winnipeg, his is another case of a native son longing to leave for greener pastures. In the mid-nineties, he left Toronto to begin an opera career in New York but failed only to return to Toronto and his teaching. In 1895 he mounted an all male production of *Macbeth* with St. Michael’s College students. In 1896-7, he introduced acting to his curriculum, “along with Oratory Recitation, Reading, Voice Culture, Delsarte and Swedish Gymnastics, Greek Art, Statue Posing, and Literature” (86-7). He continued to mount productions mostly with university students and increasingly took part in these productions. In 1897, he played Richelieu in Bulwer-Lytton’s play to acclaim but still longed for a full-time career on the boards:

Nelson made a crucial decision. He took a leave of absence from the Conservatory. He persuaded one of the members of his *Richelieu* cast, J. H. Proctor, to invest in the fitting out of a dramatic company; to this he added his own savings, or such as had not already been spent on the lavish costumes used in *Richelieu* or *Romeo and Juliet*. He got together a largely Canadian cast, and after a brief tour in Ontario, he arrived in Winnipeg in September, 1898, to take over the little Grand Opera House as actor-manager of a resident stock company presenting two different plays a week at popular prices. (87)

Nelson’s history demonstrates the difficulty of trying to establish a professional theatre career in Toronto. In the next century, the academic tradition that he played no small measure in contributing to would foster the Hart House Players (1919) which housed a troupe of actors who performed as part of the Little Theatre Movement. Given the practical and social constraints placed on aspirants to the professional stage and on Canadians in particular, the amateur theatre offered a
benign alternative. For the developing playwright Merritt, an amateur career legitimated by Toronto’s professional class seemed a less precarious exercise even if critical approval might not be forthcoming.

5.3.1 *When George the Third was King*: “The Fundamental Ideal.”

When Merritt performed *When George the Third was King* in 1897, colleague George Sterling Ryerson (1854-1925) was actively petitioning Britain to establish a Loyalist badge and insignia as part of Queen Victoria’s diamond jubilee celebrations, with little success. Knowles recalls how:

> [w]hile in England [...] Ryerson attempted to meet with the British Prime Minister, Joseph Chamberlain, to discuss the proposed insignia. Ryerson recalled that he was able to secure a meeting only with the prime minister’s under-secretary ‘who had never heard of the Loyalists and could not see any reason why the state should acknowledge our existence. The Colonial Office contacted the governor-general, Lord Aberdeen, to determine Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier’s views on the subject. Sensitive to anti-imperialist sentiment in his native Quebec, Laurier felt that any action on the matter would have to wait until ‘a more propitious season.’ (153)

While the insignia was not awarded, Merritt’s dramatic tribute to Loyalist roots remained part of Jubilee celebrations in the city of Toronto.

Word of Merritt’s production in Toronto came with an unusual visit to the offices of a local daily newspaper:

> Yesterday afternoon for a period of time estimated at from one to three minutes, Jim the well-known and popular elevator operator of the Mail and Empire was of the opinion that Toronto was in possession of a band of Indian braves. He was standing at the door of the pride of his heart, the elevator aforesaid thinking of nothing in particular when a body of men marched bravely into the building and demanded to be conveyed to the editorial flat. He complied with the request with alacrity. For eight of the men were full-blooded stalwart Indians. Several of them wore their hair hanging over their shoulders and all looked like what they are - brave men. Jim eyed the party in silent wonder, but it was only when it was discovered that they were on a peaceful mission that he became affable and ventured on a mild joke. (“Indian Warriors Here.” *Mail and Empire* [Toronto]. 17 Jun. 1897:10)
The report goes on to report how the visitors requested permission to tour the building and “watch the work necessary in the production of the newspaper” (10). The paper reports that the intrepid Jim soon learned that these visitors were “from the Brantford reserve, who have come to the city to take part of the historical drama ‘When George the Third was King. [...] They are] “Chief George Key, of the Senecas; Chief Isaac Hill, of the Onondagas, and Warriors William Captain Bill, George Smoke, Charles Silversmith, William Milten, John and James Bean” (10). They were accompanied by Mr. William Reef of the Six Nations Indians and Mr. Hamilton Merritt, Catherine’s brother who was an adopted chief of the Cayugas.

The paper discloses that these visitors were far from being the savages of Jim’s imagination:

> All the Indians have travelled extensively on the continent, and most of them have visited European countries with Wild West and other shows. Each owns his own farm, and all are noted for being industrious and worthy men. All are Pagans, but it is an old saying among the reserve, ‘A Pagan Indian’s word is as good as a white man’s note.’ They are all numbered among the great orators of their race, and, speaking to their people in their native tongue, can hold the attention of an audience for hours. Some of them speak English fairly well. They will give a war dance and in other ways take a prominent part in the drama questioned. (“Indian Warriors Here.” Mail and Empire [Toronto] 17 Jun. 1897:3)

Although she has changed the family name from Merritt to Fordyce, Merritt’s play chronicles the narrative of her ancestor’s escape from a violent and anarchist America to the loyal and regulated harmony of British Upper Canada. A small portion of the play, only the third act, actually takes place in Canada. The historical drama borrows heavily from the conventions of the American commercial melodrama in particular. For example the narrative includes stock villains, in this case uncouth American rebels, virtuous women, wronged heroes, and two foolish but loyal black face characters who provide comic relief. The use of such characters as scenic icebreakers can be found in performance as contrasting as the minstrel shows of the variety stage, the grand Southern dramas
of David Belasco and the popular romantic theatre of Dion Bouicault’s *The Octoroon*. In the final act, Merritt literally transplants these stereotypes to Canadian soil where they join with Loyalist settlers, Scottish pipebands and First Nations war dances providing a bewildering construction of Canadian unity.

A number of references to the untrustworthy French are provided, not so much to provide a Canadian context, as to show this rival group of founding peoples as a threat to Canadian peace and security, a threat not represented by the Loyalist settlers:

ELIZABETH Within the past year. I have received but one letter, three months since. By the hand of our friend, Mr. Secord, in which you told me that war was over and the peace with England signed.

FORDYCE Ay! And it never would have been signed so soon if Congress had not feared the French were desirous of retaking Canada.’ Twas signed with the knowledge of the King of France!

ELIZABETH Father, think you that the rebels could have conquered without the aid of France?

FORDYCE Nay! Margaret! They could not, ’tis sure! They never would have sought protection from their late foes if they had not greatly feared their own weakness. But now, ’tis over, they must learn to stand alone. (178)

The threat of the French removed from Upper Canada, the final act, and the shortest, finds the Fordyces living in Upper Canada living alongside their sympathetic neighbors, the renowned Loyalist family the Secords, Scots faithful to the British cause and “Brant’s natives.”

As can be expected Merritt’s drama is a celebration of English Canada and Loyalist settlers. The final moments of the play feature a patriotic tableau of a Canada united under a British flag and by a life of service to British tradition. Elizabeth Fordyce, played by Merritt herself, offers this vision of Canada’s future:

ELIZABETH Ay! This good old flag doth speak a language of its own that every nation understands. It speaks of peace, of mercy, and of justice wrought to suffering men. But, husband, children! What is this I see before me rise? A vision of a hundred
years from now! This little hut hath multiplied a thousand-fold, it is the prototype of
builtings made of brick and stone. These trees have changed in aspect, as I look, and
some are lofty chimneys, some are spires, and in the streets I see the busy men, a
steadfast, loyal, law-abiding race. I see the women, and their little ones, and all their
faces shine with happy smiles. Within an open space I see a staff, and on it floats the
Union Jack. And now the people gather round its base, and there with clasped hands,
as if in prayer, they cry with one great voice, ‘God bless the noble men who
sacrificed their wealth, their homes, their friends, their all, to save the good old flag,
and plant it safe upon Canadian soil, where underneath its folds we may enjoy liberty
and peace.’ (181)

The final act ends with the First Nations performers welcome to the new settlers, a War Dance. Then
all pledge allegiance to King George and the Union Jack and Scottish troops enter playing God Save
the King on bagpipes.

5.3.2 Opening Night: June 17 1897.

Merritt’s production opened in the heat of June. The limited press for this event anticipated
a select but sympathetic audience:

“When George III Was King”/ The historical drama will be presented on Thursday,
Friday, and Saturday of this week at the Grand Opera House. Dealing, as it does, with
the history of the Loyalists, it is sure to find an appreciative audience in Toronto. The
incidents treat of the early history of the refugees.[...]Not the least attractive feature
of the performance is the massed bugle bands of the Body Guard, Royal Grenadiers,
and 48th Highlanders, whose martial strains emphasize the patriotic spirit of the

As it turned out, the audience was described as “fashionable, but not large.” There is no way of
knowing whether this was because of the heat in the theatre or because there was a degree of apathy
and distrust for the agenda that led to the performance of the Loyalist propaganda. It may simply be
that the audience was not familiar with the playwright and was reluctant to attend an amateur work
by a young woman from St. Catharines.

In their review, the Star like the Mail and Empire earlier in the week once more focused on
the contribution of the First Nation’s performers and found the war dance in the finale to be of
special interest:

The war-dance as performed by the braves of the Seneca and Cayuga Indians has proved interesting beyond all expectation. Tonight they will add to the excitement by introducing a novel scene, ancient and unique in character, and bestow upon Miss Catherine Merritt, the honor of adopting her as a member of the tribe. Some customs will be introduced which are as old as the tribe itself, and will add another charm to the patriotic Jubilee entertainment. (“When George the Third was King.” *Daily Star* [Toronto] 19 Jun. 1897:2)

Merritt’s adopted Indian name was Kariwenhawe (Chadwick 102).

The little criticism the performance received was mixed in nature with characteristic anti-amateur bias from the critical press:

The play and the performance proved an interesting study from many points of view [...] The authoress suffers somewhat in her work from a lack of familiarity with the artifices of stagecraft, but the piece appeals to a healthy Canadian and Imperial sentiment and the fundamental ideal is happily conceived. The amateurs who, under the stage management of Mr Harry Rich, impersonated the characters acquitted themselves in a manner that elicited frequent applause from the audience. One naturally shrinks from making comparisons where amateurs are concerned....Miss Merritt as Miss Elizabeth Fordyce gave an appreciably(?) rendering of her own lines. [...] A patriotic prologue to the play was given by Mr H. N. Shaw, B.A. with great elocutionary ability. (“Music and Drama.”/Miss Merritt’s U.E. Loyalist ... *Mail and Empire* [Toronto]. 18 Jun. 1897.)

And so, while Merritt’s drama lacked professional polish it had according to this critic achieved its primary goal. It had persuaded its small audience that their place in English Canada’s cultural heritage should take precedence in a social landscape that was increasingly uncertain. It is less certain how it contributed to Merritt’s reputation and prestige as a local actor and playwright.

5.3.2 Catherine Nina Merritt - After George the Third.

*When George the Third was King* was not Merritt’s last effort as a playwright, nor her last association with Loyalist causes. In a 1910 production of Mrs. St. Loe Strachey’s *A Masque of Empire* (performed on 18 & 20 Mar. 1909), she appeared as Britannia. A young Dora Mavor
appeared as India “in saffron-coloured veil and draperies” (Sperdakos 36), rare evidence of a tradition from this period to the present. In 1911, she entered one of her own plays, *A Little Leaven* in the Earl Grey Contest. It was the only original play performed at the contest, although another playtext by George W. Pacaud of Montreal submitted for reading by adjudicators won the prize for Best Original Two-Act Play. (“Winners in Earl Grey Contest.” *Star* [Toronto]. 11 Apr. 1910: 2) Like *When George the Third was King*, the subject matter of Merritt’s romantic comedy provided reference to Canadian experience but again borrowed from the formulas of the day. Charlesworth felt it to be “episodical in construction” and:

savor[ing] of conventionality in theme. The first four scenes are laid in the hall of Beauchamp Towers, an English country house and depict the platonic romance of Ernest Falkener and Lady Elenor Mason. The hero, believing that he has fatally wounded Lady Elenor’s husband, goes to Canada and becomes a Gowganda prospector. The fifth scene shows his shack, and Lady Elenor arrives with the important news that her spouse has gone the way of all superfluous husbands in the last act, and as it develops that he had been wounded by his own gun and not by Falkener, the way is clear for the merry wedding chimes. (“Ottawa Orchestra Created Surprise.” *Mail and Empire* [Toronto]. 7 Apr. 1910:8)

This play again features Dora Mavor who has returned from “wintering” in Boston. Parkhurst writes “One has to praise the enunciation of the players and their mental grasp of the possibilities of their roles” (*Globe* [Toronto] 7 Apr. 1910:9).

A final glimpse of Merritt occurs at a banquet commemorating the centenary of the War of 1812. The festivities are organized by Catherine’s brother William and features testimonials and entertainment to honour their ancestor Thomas Merritt and the Niagara Light Dragoons. Merritt’s contribution to the festivities is a version of O Canada, one that hopes for peace and unity and like so many others at the turn-of the century forecasts a bright role for the young nation sometime in the future:
[...] O! Canada, upon thy flag of Peace
Rose, Shamrock, Thistle and the Fleur de Lys;
They are broidered fair on robes you wear,
And they stand for love and strength,
To proclaim aloud Dominion proud
And the reign of Peace at length.

O! Canada, thy destiny is near,
See where thy star shines out in radiance clear
Like a brilliant gem in a diadem,
Thou wilt lend they light and worth
In a crown we see is they destiny
To illuminate the earth.

5.4 “O! Canada, thy destiny is near”.

A year before Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 1897, French Canadian intellectual Wilfred Laurier became Prime Minister. Like his predecessor Macdonald, Laurier recognized the practical merits of aligning the country with British interests, but Laurier was a nationalist first who ushered in a new period of prosperity and optimism for the nation. It is now legend that Laurier in a speech given to the Canadian Club of Ottawa on October 15 1904 proclaimed that “[t]he 19th century was the century of the United States. I think we can claim that it is Canada that shall fill the 20th century.” He continued: “Let me tell you, my fellow country men, that the twentieth century shall be the century of Canada and of the Canadian development. For the next seventy-five years, nay for the next 100 years, Canada shall be the star towards which all men who love progress and freedom shall come” (Morton 158).

Laurier’s is another expression of Canadian exceptionalism that looked to a future ascendancy. By the end of the nineties, even division over the merit of Canada’s role in the Boer War failed to dent the conviction for many Canadians that they were destined for great things, so much
so that one British visitor observed: “‘They have been told so often what a fine country they have, they tell themselves so often what a fine people they are, that any touch of criticism, even amid general admiration, is resented as though it were a studied slight’” (New Canadians 138). And it would seem that while Canada waited for its turn to excel, a native drama was expected to wait also.

Does this mean that the scarcity of locally-produced drama in Toronto during the eighteen nineties can be attributed to this blend of procrastination and chauvinism or to a *habitas* held by many Canadians that they weren’t ready or able to define a cultural identity in its arts? It seems the most reasonable explanation for the remarkable complacency in relation to the construction of a local art during the decade. Given the assurance that great things were to happen in the future and with a theatre practice that suited many at the time, it may be that Torontonians felt no need to develop a counter-practice to the one in place at the time?

This history began with the intent of providing both a description of the social practice that attended a selection of performances that took place in Toronto’s professional theatre while also identifying some of the determinants that may have shaped or mediated the theatre’s practice or a performance’s reception. It has shown an elite form of patronage that favoured music and amateur performance, an aesthetic hegemony that privileged European models, and an economic imperialism in the theatre’s business framework constrained local initiative in the nineties. But none of these examples in themselves explain the dearth of dramatic expression at play in Toronto. In many senses the eighteen nineties in Canada saw just the blend of talents, event and ideological debate that might mark what Arnold called an epoch of concentration and yet a national art was not defined at the time.

Two of the nation’s greatest prime ministers framed the decade and many of the central myths that have shaped this nation’s culture were under construction. Among the more positive are
the myths of a nation of various cultures living in harmony, the promise of a wealthy resource-rich
country of untold wealth and natural beauty. Even the roots of Canadian nationalism that fostered
later arts movements can be seen in the “Canada First” movement and a growing media.

There were many good reasons to build a national drama. Throughout the eighteen nineties,
Toronto was a prosperous nation with an educated theatregoing public. It housed a number of
purpose-built facilities that were run by theatre managers who were open to, and in some cases
actively encouraged, Canadian work. In previous decades Toronto had attempted to establish a local
repertory theatre under the Nickinson family with a degree of success and, as has been shown,
Sheppard and Small looked to establish resident stock companies throughout the decade.
Government officials supported and were willing to promote a Canadian drama even if they believed
one of merit would be a long time in coming.

But the type of Canadian exceptionalism that emerged in the late nineties did not seem to feel
the lack of such cultural expression at the time, or perhaps it is more accurate to suggest that the
ingredients that combined at the time were mixed into a cake that was slow to rise. Eventually,
government patronage led to the establishment of an amateur and school-based tradition that would
foster a national playwriting tradition and performance training programs. Direct government
funding, even slower in coming, fostered the wave of cultural activity that began in the nineteen
seventies.

The facile answer to the reason that theatre did not develop in the nineties is that the touring
theatre served its market in some sense, that dramatic expression was not necessary to the
construction of Canadian identity or, as this dissertation has argued sufficient numbers were willing
to construct cultural identity through a mix of absence and otherness. Certainly for many who felt that amusement was the end of the professional theatre’s function, the representation of Canadian characters on stage was not a prerequisite. Such a mode of viewing is not entirely foreign to the one in which Canadians receive imported film and television today. For those who believed the drama to be a necessary art form, the answer is more complex. The centres of artistic expression were, for the time, elsewhere and such theatre was a rare and valued import. Assured time and a bright future, on days such as January 1\textsuperscript{st} 1900, however, the touring commercial theatre linked to a local pattern of social practice was an all too frequently taken for granted in the pattern of daily existence for Toronto theatregoers.

5.4.1 \textit{January 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1900.}

January 1\textsuperscript{st} 1900, the first day of a new century, is election day in Toronto. Early in the day, newsboys huddle in the cold to sell papers full of reports on the Boer War. The Canadians have only entered the conflict in October and Toronto is anxious to read about the doings of the “boys.” Voters out early the day after the holiday can also read of other news abroad.

The Queen has announced her honor list. Only one Canadian, Lieutenant Governor Daly of Nova Scotia is knighted.

A German Steamer Bundesrath is seized by British man-of-war, but British papers report that: “As relations of the German and British Governments are friendly, it is not likely that serious complications will follow.”

In New York, there is news of the “Irish Haters of England.” The United Irish societies of New York and vicinity held a mass meeting on the 31\textsuperscript{st} at the Academy of Music. They asked all who wished to “express sympathy with the Boers and opposition to England in consequence of the South
African war” to attend. Turnout is not reported.

In town the New Year sales are on. There is a “Big 10 day sale at The Co-operative Store Co., at 524/26 Queen Street West. Rice sells for five cents a pound, twenty-one pounds of the “finest Granulated Sugar” is a dollar; two tins of Horseshoe Salmon are twenty-five cents while Klondike is only nineteen cents. Five pounds of the “Finest English Washing Soda” is five cents, a cent a pound, and a dozen oranges is twenty cents. “Men’s Extra Heavy Box Calf Lace Boots” which regularly sell for two dollars and fifty cents are a steal at a dollar and seventy-five cents. Women’s costumes will go for two dollars and ninety cents. They usually sell at over seven-fifty. W. A. Murray & Co is holding a “White Wear Sale” with night gowns selling at as little as fifty cents.

The evening papers bring news that E. A. Macdonald has beaten the usually popular Ned Clarke as mayor. It is Macdonald’s fourth attempt. Four times lucky. Word has it that Alderman O. B. Sheppard has been ill for a couple of days, and his physician has ordered him not to leave the house to-day. He is not able to get the vote out but is popular enough to be re-elected in Ward Three with 2681 votes. Another popular politician, Lieutenant-Governor Oliver Mowat, holds a reception at Government House.

Morning papers show the theatres busy as they always are in holiday season. Alderman Sheppard offers the Cumming’s Stock Co. in Belasco’s The Wife at the Princess. It is advertised as “a society melodrama” that “tells a story of great moral influence.” At the Grand Round New York in Eighty Minutes plays. Advance press claims that “[t]his city is the only one in Canada played by this company, which consists of over a hundred members, with its mass of beautiful girls, who have caused such sensation in New York”. At the new vaudeville house Shea’s, “America’s foremost acrobatic act, the Nelson family “will be the feature of a big vaudeville bill”. They will play with
Patrice and Co. who will present one of the “daintiest sketches in vaudeville. It is built on the legend that portraits come to life for one hour at midnight on New Year’s Eve”, and a Mlle. Emy “has the only troupe of trained fox terriers on stage”. Kitty Leslie performs new songs and the “Howard Brothers play the sweetest kind of music on the banjo”. Monroe and Mack, the blackface comedians are also on the bill and “Hugh Stanton and Florence Modena, appear in a one-act skit called For Reform: “The woman belongs to all the reform clubs, while the husband is neglected. He uses heroic measures and reforms her”. Manager Robinson’s Bijou features a “special wire” with results of the Maher-McCoy boxing contest and a “reproduction of the Jeffries-Sharkey fight claimed to be the finest moving pictures ever presented to the public”. Usual night prices apply, i.e., 10c, 20c and 30c and smoking is permitted. In fact all theatres offer the results of this fight including the Empire which advertises that The Bijou also offers a “strong vaudeville bill”. In addition to eight speciality acts, it boasts that “[t]he bicycle clubs of the city are invited to attend and witness the marvelous riding of Eva La Velle, the world’s greatest lady cyclist.” The Oddfellows Popular Concert plays in the Hart Massey Music Hall and includes local elocutionist Jessie Alexander “who will recite as only she can,” and Harold Jarvis who recites Kipling’s “Absent Minded Beggar.” Election results are announced from the platform. The Dairy Farm “[e]ndorsed by Clergy” according to the theatre advertisements deals with “plain country folk of Hurley, Ulster County, New York during 1854 and 1836”. This “engagement is one of the most important of Mr Small’s season and the advance sale at the Toronto for the performance on New Year’s Day and the remainder of the week are exceptionally heavy.” Eleanor Merron, formerly the leading lady of Daniel Frohman’s Lyceum Theatre Company, plays the lead. Small advertises the play as “The ONLY HIGH CLASS SHOW IN TOWN”.
In the evening papers comes word that Hamilton’s “Iron” Mike Shea will not join a vaudeville syndicate although he has been approached by some American theatre owners asking him to do so. He explains:

You may as well understand, [...] that shows which might suit the patrons of those houses might not suit my audiences. Theatrical syndicates have a way of saying, ‘You’ll take this show or your won’t get anything.’ That will not do me. No man can tell me what I shall put on my stage, or what I shall keep off it. I can get the best attractions and novelties in the vaudeville business, syndicates or no syndicate. [...]If [competition] can put on a better show than I do, you are welcome to the profits.”

(All quotes in Section 5.4.1 from the Globe [Toronto], the Star [Toronto, and the World [Toronto]. 1 Jan. 1900)

He joins the Vaudeville Managers’ Association shortly after.
6. APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix A: Professional Theatre Productions in Toronto, August 1889 to June 1890.

The following is a list of the productions that were performed in Toronto’s professional theatres between the dates August 26th, 1889 and June 30th, 1900. Provided is a compilation of the personnel, play/production titles and genres as they were provided in the advertisements, columns and reviews of the Toronto press. While this list includes all advertised productions, it is neither comprehensive nor definitive in all categories.

LEGEND
First entry performed at the Grand Opera House
Second entry performed at the Academy of Music
Third entry performed at Jacobs and Sparrows Opera House/Toronto Opera House
nm - no managers listed
na - no author listed
nac - no actors or performers listed
ng - no genre listed

The entries are arranged as follows:

*Play Title* (genre and/or playwright) management and principal performers, “quotations when provided”

THE 1889-90 SEASON

**AUGUST 1889**

Monday, August 26th - Saturday, August 31st

Grand Opera House - dark

*The Boy Tramp* (Drama, na), nm, Madame Neuville and her son, Augustin Neuville.

**SEPTEMBER 1889**

Monday, September 2nd

*A Gold Mine* (Comedy, Brander Matthews and George H. Jessop), nm, Nat C. Goodwin and a comely company.

*Tom Sawyer* (Farcical Comedy from Mark Twain), nm, Will E. Burton.

Tuesday, September 3rd

*A Gold Mine* (Comedy, Brander Matthews and George H. Jessop), nm, Will E. Burton.

*Tom Sawyer* (Farcical Comedy from Mark Twain), nm, Will E. Burton.

Wednesday, September 4th

*A Gold Mine* (Comedy, Brander Matthews and George H. Jessop), nm, Will E. Burton.

*Tom Sawyer* (Farcical Comedy from Mark Twain), nm, Will E. Burton.

Thursday, September 5th

*A Gold Mine* (Comedy, Brander Matthews and George H. Jessop), nm, Will E. Burton.

*Tom Sawyer* (Farcical Comedy from Mark Twain), nm, Will E. Burton.

Friday, September 6th

*A Gold Mine* (Comedy, Brander Matthews and George H. Jessop), nm, Nat C Goodwin and a comely company.

*Tom Sawyer* (Farcical Comedy from Mark Twain), nm, Will E, Burton.
Saturday, September 7\(^{th}\)
* A Gold Mine (Comedy, Brander Matthews and George H. Jessop), nm,
  * Tom Sawyer (Farcical Comedy from Mark Twain), nm, Will E. Burton.

***

Monday, September 9\(^{th}\)
* The New Fantasma (Pantomime) Hanlon Brothers.
  * Lost in New York (Comedy, Leonard Grover) Miles and Barton.

Tuesday, September 10\(^{th}\)
* The New Fantasma (Pantomime) Hanlon Brothers.
  * Lost in New York (Comedy, Leonard Grover) Miles and Barton.

Wednesday, September 11\(^{th}\)
* The New Fantasma (Pantomime) Hanlon Brothers.
  * Lost in New York (Comedy, Leonard Grover) Miles and Barton.

Thursday, September 12\(^{th}\)
* The New Fantasma (Pantomime) Hanlon Brothers.
  * Lost in New York (Comedy, Leonard Grover) Miles and Barton.

Friday, September 13\(^{th}\)
* The New Fantasma (Pantomime) Hanlon Brothers.
  * Lost in New York (Comedy, Leonard Grover) Miles and Barton.

Saturday, September 14\(^{th}\)
* The New Fantasma (Pantomime) Hanlon Brothers.
  * Lost in New York (Comedy, Leonard Grover) Miles and Barton.

***

Monday, September 16\(^{th}\)
* Daddy Nolan (Domestic Irish Comedy Drama, na) nm, Daniel Scully, “The Popular Irish Actor Dan’l Scully”.
  * Under the Lash (Melodrama, na) nm, William S. Sanford.

Tuesday, September 17\(^{th}\)
* Daddy Nolan (Domestic Irish Comedy Drama, na) nm, Daniel Scully
  * Under the Lash (Melodrama, na) nm, William S. Sanford.

Wednesday, September 18\(^{th}\)
* Daddy Nolan (Domestic Irish Comedy Drama, na) nm, Daniel Scully
  * Under the Lash (Melodrama, na) nm, William S. Sanford.

Thursday, September 19\(^{th}\)
* Daddy Nolan (Domestic Irish Comedy Drama, na) nm, Daniel Scully
  * Under the Lash (Melodrama, na) nm, William S. Sanford.

Friday, September 20\(^{th}\)
* Daddy Nolan (Domestic Irish Comedy Drama, na) nm, Daniel Scully.
  * Under the Lash (Melodrama, na) nm, William S. Sanford.

Saturday, September 21\(^{st}\)
* Daddy Nolan (Domestic Irish Comedy Drama, na) nm, Daniel Scully
  * Under the Lash (Melodrama, na) nm, William S. Sanford.

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Monday, September 23\(^{rd}\)
* Starlight (Musical Comedy, na) nm, Veronica Jarbeau.
  * The Fugitive (English Domestic Melodrama, Tom Craven?) nm, Mason Mitchell as Jack Levitt.

Tuesday, September 24\(^{th}\)
* Starlight (Musical Comedy, na) nm, Veronica Jarbeau.
  * The Fugitive (English Domestic Melodrama, Tom Craven?) nm, Mason Mitchell as Jack Levitt.

Wednesday, September 25\(^{th}\)
* Starlight (Musical Comedy, na) nm, Veronica Jarbeau
  * The Fugitive (English Domestic Melodrama, Tom Craven?) nm, Mason Mitchell as Jack Levitt.
Thursday, September 26th
Starlight (Musical Comedy, na) nm, Veronica Jarbeau.
The Fugitive (English Domestic Melodrama, Tom Craven?) nm, Mason Mitchell as Jack Levitt.

Friday, September 27th
Starlight (Musical Comedy, na) nm, Veronica Jarbeau.
The Fugitive (English Domestic Melodrama, Tom Craven?) nm, Mason Mitchell as Jack Levitt.

Saturday, September 28th
Starlight (Musical Comedy, na) nm, Veronica Jarbeau.
The Fugitive (English Domestic Melodrama, Tom Craven?) Mason Mitchell as Jack Levitt.

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Monday, September 30th
The Woman Hater (“Eccentric” Comedy, David D. Lloyd) nm, Roland Reed.
Woman Against Woman (Domestic Melodrama, Frank Harvey) nm, May Wheeler as Rachel Westwood.

OCTOBER 1889

Tuesday, October 1st
The Woman Hater (“Eccentric” Comedy, David D. Lloyd) nm, Roland Reed.
Woman Against Woman (Domestic Melodrama, Frank Harvey) nm, May Wheeler as Rachel Westwood.

Wednesday, October 2nd
The Woman Hater (“Eccentric” Comedy, David D. Lloyd) nm, Roland Reed.
Woman Against Woman (Domestic Melodrama, Frank Harvey) nm, May Wheeler as Rachel Westwood.

Thursday, October 3rd
The Woman Hater (“Eccentric” Comedy, David D. Lloyd) nm, Roland Reed.
Woman Against Woman (Domestic Melodrama, Frank Harvey) nm, May Wheeler as Rachel Westwood.

Friday, October 4th
The Woman Hater (“Eccentric” Comedy, David D. Lloyd) nm, Roland Reed.
Woman Against Woman (Domestic Melodrama, Frank Harvey) nm, May Wheeler as Rachel Westwood.

Saturday, October 5th
The Woman Hater (“Eccentric” Comedy, David D. Lloyd) nm, Roland Reed.
Woman Against Woman (Domestic Melodrama, Frank Harvey) nm, May Wheeler as Rachel Westwood.

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Monday, October 7th
Mary Stuart (History drama from Schiller, Adapted by James Haynes) nm, Mme Janauschek “supported by her own legitimate cast”.

Tuesday, October 8th
Mary Stuart (History drama from Schiller, Adapted by James Haynes) nm, Mme Janauschek “supported by her own legitimate cast”.

Wednesday, October 9th
Mary Stuart - Matinee(History drama from Schiller, Adapted by James Haynes)nm, Mme Janauschek “supported by her own legitimate cast”.
Meg Merrilies (Boucicault) - Evening; (ng, na)nm, Mme Janauschek supported by her own legitimate cast”; “by request”.
My Partner ( Bartley Campbell) nm,“ J. F. Pike, H. A. Clair.
Thursday, October 10th

*The Woman in Red* (ng, Adapted by J. Stirling Coyne) nm, Mme Janauschek “supported by her own legitimate cast”.


Friday, October 11th

*Meg Merrilies* - Matinee (ng, na) nm, Mme Janauschek supported by her own legitimate cast”; “by request”.

*Woman of the People* - Evening (Benjamin Webster?) nm, Mme Janauschek supported by her own legitimate cast”; “by request”.


Saturday, October 12th

*Meg Merrilies* - Matinee (ng, na) nm, Mme Janauschek “supported by her own legitimate cast”;

*Woman of the People* - Evening (Benjamin Webster?) nm, Mme Janauschek supported by her own legitimate cast”; “by request”.


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Monday, October 14th

*The Brigands* (Opera, H.S. Leigh, Jacques Offenbach) Carleton Opera Company, W. T. Carleton; “Casino Success”.

*Mazeppa* (Equestrian Spectacle, Lord Byron) nm, Fanny Louise Buckingham and her celebrated steed James Melville - “a capital variety company supports”.

Tuesday, October 15th

*The Brigands* (Opera, H.S. Leigh, Jacques Offenbach) Carleton Opera Company, W. T. Carleton; “Casino Success”.

*Mazeppa* (Equestrian Spectacle, Lord Byron) nm, Fanny Louise Buckingham and her celebrated steed James Melville.

Wednesday, October 16th

*Nanon* - Matinee (Opera, Richard Genee, Sydney Rosenfeld);

*The Brigands* - Evening (Opera, H.S Leigh, Jacques Offenbach) Carleton Opera Company, W. T. Carleton; “Casino Success”.

*The Brigands* (Opera, H.S. Leigh, Jacques Offenbach) Carleton Opera Company, W. T. Carleton; “Casino Success”.

*Mazeppa* (Equestrian Spectacle, Lord Byron) nm, Fanny Louise Buckingham and her celebrated steed James Melville.

Thursday, October 17th

*The Brigands* (Opera, H.S. Leigh, Jacques Offenbach) Carleton Opera Company, W. T. Carleton; “Casino Success”.

*Mazeppa* (Equestrian Spectacle, Lord Byron) nm, Fanny Louise Buckingham and her celebrated steed James Melville.

Friday, October 18th

*Nanon* (Opera, Richard Genee, Sydney Rosenfeld) nm, Carleton Opera Company, W. T. Carleton; “Casino Success”.

*Mazeppa* (Equestrian Spectacle, Lord Byron) nm, Fanny Louise Buckingham and her celebrated steed James Melville.

Saturday, October 19th

*The Brigands* - Matinee (Opera, H. S Leigh, Jacques Offenbach);

*Nanon* - Evening (Opera, Richard Genee, Sydney Rosenfeld) nm, Carleton Opera Company, W. T. Carleton; “Casino Success”.

*Mazeppa* (Equestrian Spectacle, Lord Byron) nm, Fanny Louise Buckingham and her celebrated steed James Melville.

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Monday, October 21st

*Later On* (Musical Farce, na) nm, Fred Hallen & Joe Hart - “I wouldn’t miss it for nine dollars” Hallen is an “old Toronto boy” (*Empire* 8E).

*Harbor Lights* (Melodrama - G. R. Sims & Henry Pettitt) nm, nac.
Tuesday, October 22nd

Later On (Musical Farce, na) nm, Fred Hallen & Joe Hart.
Harbor Lights (Melodrama - G. R. Sims & Henry Pettitt) nm, nac.

Wednesday, October 23rd

Later On (Musical Farce, na) nm, Fred Hallen & Joe Hart.
Harbor Lights (Melodrama - G. R. Sims & Henry Pettitt) nm, nac.

Thursday, October 24th

Later On (Musical Farce, na) nm, Fred Hallen & Joe Hart.
Harbor Lights (Melodrama - G. R. Sims & Henry Pettitt) nm, nac.

Friday, October 25th

Later On (Musical Farce, na) nm, Fred Hallen & Joe Hart.
Harbor Lights (Melodrama - G. R. Sims & Henry Pettitt) nm, nac.

Saturday, October 26th

Later On (Musical Farce, na) nm, Fred Hallen & Joe Hart.
Harbor Lights (Melodrama - G. R. Sims & Henry Pettitt) nm, nac.

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Monday, October 28th

Monbars (Drama, Louis Nathal) nm, Robert Mantell - “The Eminent Actor”.
The White Slave (Melodrama, Bartley Campbell) nm, H.C. Kennedy’s Company.

Tuesday, October 29th

Monbars (Drama, Louis Nathal) nm, Robert Mantell.
The White Slave (Melodrama, Bartley Campbell) nm, H.C. Kennedy’s Company.

Wednesday, October 30th

Monbars - Matinee (Drama, Louis Nathal);
The Marble Heart or The Sculpter’s Dream - Evening (Romantic Romance, Charles Selby) nm, Robert Mantell.
The White Slave (Melodrama, Bartley Campbell) nm, H.C. Kennedy’s Company.

Thursday, October 31st

Othello (Shakespeare) nm, Robert Mantell.
The White Slave (Melodrama, Bartley Campbell) nm, H.C. Kennedy’s Company.

NOVEMBER 1889

Friday, November 1st

The Marble Heart or The Sculpter’s Dream - Evening (Romantic Romance, Charles Selby) nm, Evening; Robert Mantell.
The White Slave (Melodrama, Bartley Campbell) nm, H.C. Kennedy’s Company.

Saturday, November 2nd

The Marble Heart or The Sculpter’s Dream - Matinee (Romantic Romance, Charles Selby);
Othello - Evening (Shakespeare) nm, Robert Mantell.
The White Slave (Melodrama, Bartley Campbell) nm, H.C. Kennedy’s Company.

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Monday, November 4th

Evangeline (Burlesque, na) Rice, nac.
Arabian Nights (Variety, na) nm, nac.

Tuesday, November 5th

Evangeline (Burlesque, na) Rice, nac.
Arabian Nights (Variety, na) nm, nac.

Wednesday, November 6th

Evangeline (Burlesque, na) Rice, nac.
Arabian Nights (Variety, na) nm, nac.
Opening of the Academy of Music - Concert, Nora Clench, Canadian violinist and Miss. Fannie Bloomfield- Zeisler.
Thursday, November 7th
  Surprises of Divorce (Comedy formerly Lottery of Love, Augustin Daly) Arthur Rehan, nac. 
  Arabian Nights (Variety, na) nm, nac. 
  David Garrick (T.W. Robertson?) nm, Marguerite St John and Geo. M. Wood. 

Friday, November 8th
  Surprises of Divorce (Comedy formerly Lottery of Love, Augustin Daly) Arthur Rehan, nac. 
  Arabian Nights (Variety, na) nm, nac. 
  David Garrick (T.W. Robertson?) nm, Marguerite St John and Geo. M. Wood. 

Saturday, November 9th
  Surprises of Divorce (Comedy formerly Lottery of Love, Augustin Daly) Arthur Rehan, nac. 
  Arabian Nights (Variety, na) nm, nac. 
  David Garrick (T.W. Robertson?) nm, Marguerite St John and Geo. M. Wood.

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Monday, November 11th
  Nadjy (Comic Opera, na) Nathaniel Roth, Rudolph Aronson Comic Opera Company. 
  Arcadia (Burlesque “with plot”, na) Jenny Campbell, Corinne. 
  Concert - “Monster Concert by Jules Levy, “the greatest of all cornetists”.

Tuesday, November 12th
  Nadjy (Comic Opera, na) Nathaniel Roth, Rudolph Aronson Comic Opera Company. 
  Arcadia (Burlesque “with plot”, na) Jenny Campbell, Corinne. 
  Bootle’s Baby (Comedy, Hugh Moss adapted from J.S. Winter) Chas A Stevenson and his company of English Players - “Actors secured in London specially for the New York cast.”.

Wednesday, November 13th
  Ermine - Matinee (Comic Opera, na); 
  Nadjy - Evening (Comic Opera, na) Nathaniel Roth, Rudolph Aronson Comic Opera Company. 
  Arcadia (Burlesque “with plot”, na) Jenny Campbell, Corinne. 
  Bootle’s Baby (Comedy, Hugh Moss adapted from J.S. Winter) Chas A Stevenson

Thursday, November 14th
  Nadjy (Comic Opera, na) Nathaniel Roth, Rudolph Aronson Comic Opera Company. 
  Arcadia (Burlesque “with plot”, na) Jenny Campbell, Corinne. 
  Bootle’s Baby (Comedy, Hugh Moss adapted from J.S. Winter) Chas A Stevenson

Friday, November 15th
  Nadjy (Comic Opera, na) Nathaniel Roth, Rudolph Aronson Comic Opera Company. 
  Arcadia (Burlesque “with plot”, na) Jenny Campbell, Corinne. 
  Bootle’s Baby (Comedy, Hugh Moss adapted from J.S. Winter) Chas A Stevenson

Saturday, November 16th
  Nadji - Matinee (Comic Opera, na); 
  Ermine Evening (Comic Opera, na) Nathaniel Roth, Rudolph Aronson Comic Opera Company. 
  Arcadia (Burlesque “with plot”, na) Jenny Campbell, Corinne. 
  Bootle’s Baby (Comedy, Hugh Moss adapted from J.S. Winter) Chas A Stevenson.

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Monday, November 18th
  Sweet Lavender (Comedy, A.W. Pinero) Daniel Frohman, Cyril Scott. 
  True Irish Hearts (Irish Romantic Comedy, Dan McCarthy) Dan McCarthy, Dan McCarthy. 
  The Suspect (Military Drama, Louis Nathal) Nathal and Lee, Henry Lee.

Tuesday, November 19th
  Sweet Lavender (Comedy, A.W. Pinero) Daniel Frohman, Cyril Scott. 
  True Irish Hearts (Irish Romantic Comedy, Dan McCarthy) Dan McCarthy, Dan McCarthy. 
  The Suspect (Military Drama, Louis Nathal) Nathal and Lee, Henry Lee.

Wednesday, November 20th
  Sweet Lavender (Comedy, A.W. Pinero) Daniel Frohman, Cyril Scott. 
  True Irish Hearts (Irish Romantic Comedy, Dan McCarthy) Dan McCarthy, Dan McCarthy. 
  The Suspect (Military Drama, Louis Nathal) Nathal and Lee, Henry Lee.
Thursday, November 21st

**Sweet Lavender** (Comedy, A.W. Pinero) Daniel Frohman, Cyril Scott.

**True Irish Hearts** (Irish Romantic Comedy, Dan McCarthy) Dan McCarthy, Dan McCarthy.

**The Suspect** (Military Drama, Louis Nathal) Nathal and Lee, Henry Lee.

Friday, November 22nd

**Sweet Lavender** (Comedy, A.W. Pinero) Daniel Frohman, Cyril Scott.

**True Irish Hearts** (Irish Romantic Comedy, Dan McCarthy) Dan McCarthy, Dan McCarthy.

**The Suspect** (Military Drama, Louis Nathal) Nathal and Lee, Henry Lee.

Saturday, November 23rd

**Sweet Lavender** (Comedy, A.W. Pinero) Daniel Frohman, Cyril Scott.

**True Irish Hearts** (Irish Romantic Comedy, Dan McCarthy) Dan McCarthy, Dan McCarthy.

**The Suspect** (Military Drama, Louis Nathal) Nathal and Lee, Henry Lee.

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Monday, November 25th

**Ingomar** (Drama, Adapted by Maria Lovell) Arlet Barney, Julia Marlowe, Ian Forbes Robertson-Supported by Eben Plympton.

**Wages of Sin** (ng, Frank Harvey?) nm, Rose Osborne, Frank Rich.

Grand dramatic and musical fete - charity.

Tuesday, November 26th

**As You Like It** (Shakespeare) Arlet Barney, Julia Marlowe, Ian Forbes Robertson - Supported by Eben Plympton.

**Wages of Sin** (ng, Frank Harvey?) nm, Rose Osborne, Frank Rich.

Concert - Henry De Besse.

Wednesday, November 27th

**Twelfth Night** (Shakespeare) Arlet Barney, Julia Marlowe, Ian Forbes Robertson, Supported by Eben Plympton.

**Wages of Sin** (ng, Frank Harvey?) nm, Rose Osborne, Frank Rich.

Thursday, November 28th

**The Hunchback** (Drama, Sheridan Knowles) Arlet Barney, Julia Marlowe, Ian Forbes Robertson, Supported by Eben Plympton.

**Wages of Sin** (ng, Frank Harvey?) nm, Rose Osborne, Frank Rich.


Friday, November 29th

**As You Like It** (Shakespeare) Arlet Barney, Julia Marlowe, Ian Forbes Robertson, Supported by Eben Plympton.

**Wages of Sin** (ng, Frank Harvey?) nm, Rose Osborne, Frank Rich.

**London Assurance** (Comedy, Dion Boucicault) J. M. Hill, “distinguished English actress” Helen Barry, J. M. Hill.

Saturday, November 30th

**Twelfth Night** - Matinee (Shakespeare);

**Pygmalion and Galatea** (Drama, William Schwenck Gilbert) Arlet Barney, Julia Marlowe, Ian Forbes Robertson, Supported by Eben Plympton.

**Wages of Sin** (ng, Frank Harvey?) nm, Rose Osborne, Frank Rich.

**A Woman’s Stratagem (A Belle’s Stratagem?)**- Matinee (ng, na);


DECEMBER 1889

Monday, December 2nd

**Paola** (Opera, Harry Paulton and Jababowski) Duff’s English Opera Company, nac.

**Out In The Streets** (Melodrama, na) nm, N. S. Woods.
Tuesday, December 3rd

Paola (Opera, Harry Paulton and Jababowski) Duff's English Opera Company, nac.
Out In The Streets (Melodrama, na) nm, N. S. Woods.

Wednesday, December 4th

Paola (Opera, Harry Paulton and Jababowski) Duff's English Opera Company, nac.
Out In The Streets (Melodrama, na) nm, N. S. Woods.

Thursday, December 5th

Paola (Opera, Harry Paulton and Jababowski) Duff's English Opera Company, nac.
Out In The Streets (Melodrama, na) nm, N. S. Woods.
Twelfth Night (Shakespeare) nm, Marie Wainwright.

Friday, December 6th

Paola (Opera, Harry Paulton and Jababowski) Duff's English Opera Company, nac.
Out In The Streets (Melodrama, na) nm, N. S. Woods.
Twelfth Night (Shakespeare) nm, Marie Wainwright.

Saturday, December 7th

Paola (Opera, Harry Paulton and Jababowski) Duff's English Opera Company, nac.
Out In The Streets (Melodrama, na) nm, N. S. Woods.
Twelfth Night (Shakespeare) nm, Marie Wainwright.

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Monday, December 9th

Josephine, Empress of the French (History drama, Albert Roland Haven) nm, Mlle Rhea supported by William Harris.
The Blue and the Gray (Civil War Drama, Eliot Barnes?) nm, W. H Murdock.
Captain Swift (ng, R. Haddon Chambers) nm, Arthur Forrest and Rose Etyinge - “last performance together in Toronto.”

Tuesday, December 10th

Josephine, Empress of the French (History drama, Albert Roland Haven) nm, Mlle Rhea supported by William Harris.
The Blue and the Gray (Civil War Drama, Eliot Barnes?) nm, W. H Murdock.
Captain Swift (ng, R. Haddon Chambers) nm, Arthur Forrest and Rose Etyinge

Wednesday, December 11th

Josephine, Empress of the French (History drama, Albert Roland Haven), nm, Mlle Rhea supported by William Harris.
The Blue and the Gray (Civil War Drama, Eliot Barnes?) nm, W. H Murdock.
Captain Swift (ng, R. Haddon Chambers) nm, Arthur Forrest and Rose Etyinge

Thursday, December 12th

The Blue and the Gray (Civil War Drama, Eliot Barnes?) nm, W. H Murdock.
Captain Swift (ng, R. Haddon Chambers) Arthur Forrest and Rose Etyinge

Friday, December 13th

The Muskateers (Comic Opera, na) nm, The Famous Bostonians, Musical Director: S.L. Studley
The Blue and the Gray (Civil War Drama, Eliot Barnes?) nm, W. H Murdock.
Captain Swift (ng, R. Haddon Chambers) Arthur Forrest and Rose Etyinge

Saturday, December 14th

The Muskateers - Matinee (Comic Opera):
Don Quixote - Evening (Comic Opera, na) nm, The Famous Bostonians, Musical Director: S.L. Studley
The Blue and the Gray (Civil War Drama, Eliot Barnes?) nm, W. H Murdock.
Captain Swift (ng, R. Haddon Chambers) Arthur Forrest and Rose Etyinge

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Monday, December 16th

The Paymaster (Military Comedy Drama, Duncan Bradley Harrison) nm, Duncan Bradley Harrison.
Vadis Sisters’ Vaudeville Company (Vaudeville, na) Vadis Sisters. 
Concert - Otto Hegner, boy pianist.

Tuesday, December 17th
*The Paymaster* (Military Comedy Drama, Duncan Bradley Harrison) nm, Duncan Bradley Harrison. 
Vadis Sisters’ Vaudeville Company (Vaudeville, na) Vadis Sisters.

Wednesday, December 18th
*The Paymaster* (Military Comedy Drama, Duncan Bradley Harrison) nm, Duncan Bradley Harrison. 
Vadis Sisters’ Vaudeville Company (Vaudeville, na) Vadis Sisters.

Thursday, December 19th
*The Paymaster* (Military Comedy Drama, Duncan Bradley Harrison) nm, Duncan Bradley Harrison. 
Vadis Sisters’ Vaudeville Company (Vaudeville, na) Vadis Sisters.

Friday, December 20th
*The Paymaster* (Military Comedy Drama, Duncan Bradley Harrison) nm, Duncan Bradley Harrison. 
Vadis Sisters’ Vaudeville Company (Vaudeville, na) Vadis Sisters.

Saturday, December 21st
*The Paymaster* (Military Comedy Drama, Duncan Bradley Harrison) nm, Duncan Bradley Harrison. 
Vadis Sisters’ Vaudeville Company (Vaudeville, na) Vadis Sisters.

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Monday, December 23rd
*Forget Me Not* (ng, Herman Merivale and F .C .Grove) nm, Rose Coughlan. 
*In The Ranks* (Melodrama, Henry Pettitt and G .R .Sims) nm, Hamilton Harris as Ned Drayton. 
Keller (Magician) and Edna the Human Orchid, “The Wonder of the Nineteenth Century”.

Tuesday, December 24th
*Jocelyn* (ng, Charles Frances Coughlan)nm, Rose Coughlan. 
*In The Ranks* (Melodrama, Henry Pettitt and G .R .Sims) nm, Hamilton Harris as Ned Drayton. 
Keller (Magician) and Edna the Human Orchid,

Wednesday, December 25th
*Jocelyn* - Matinee (ng, Charles Frances); 
*Peg Woffington* - Evening (History drama, Dion Boucicault) nm, Rose Coughlan. 
*In The Ranks* (Melodrama, Henry Pettitt and G .R .Sims) nm, Hamilton Harris as Ned Drayton. 
Keller (Magician) and Edna the Human Orchid.

Thursday, December 26th
*Peg Woffington* (History drama, Dion Boucicault) nm, Rose Coughlan. 
*In The Ranks* (Melodrama, Henry Pettitt and G .R .Sims) nm, Hamilton Harris as Ned Drayton. 
Keller (Magician) and Edna the Human Orchid.

Friday, December 27th
*Forget Me Not* (ng, Herman Merivale and F .C .Grove) nm, Rose Coughlan. 
*In The Ranks* (Melodrama, Henry Pettitt and G .R .Sims) nm, Hamilton Harris as Ned Drayton. 
Keller (Magician) and Edna the Human Orchid.

Saturday, December 28th
*Peg Woffington* - Matinee (History drama, Dion Boucicault); 
*London Assurance* - Evening (Comedy, Dion Boucicault) nm, Rose Coughlan. 
*In The Ranks* (Melodrama, Henry Pettitt and G .R .Sims) nm, Hamilton Harris as Ned Drayton. 
Keller (Magician) and Edna the Human Orchid.

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Monday, December 30th
*A Scrap of Paper* (Well-Made-Play, From Sardou) William Kendal, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal. 
Austin’s Australians (Variety, na) Austin, nac. 
“Thou Art the Man” (ng, Geo. M Wood) nm, Marguerite St John and Campbell Mowat, “the boy actor”.

. . .
Tuesday, December 31

*A Scrap of Paper* (Well-Made-Play, From Sardou) William Kendal, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal. Austin’s Australians (Variety, na) Austin, nac. “Thou Art the Man” (ng, Geo. M Wood) nm, Marguerite St John and Campbell Mowat, “the boy actor”.

**JANUARY 1890**

Wednesday, January 1st

*A Scrap of Paper* - Matinee (From Sardou); *The Ironmaster* - Evening (Drama, George Ohnet) Mr. and Mrs. Kendal. Austin’s Australians (Variety, na) Austin, nac. “Thou Art the Man” (ng, Geo. M Wood) nm, Marguerite St John and Campbell Mowat, “the boy actor”.

Thursday, January 2nd

*The Ironmaster* (Drama, George Ohnet) Mr. and Mrs. Kendal. Austin’s Australians (Variety, na) Austin, nac. “Thou Art the Man” (ng, Geo. M Wood) nm, Marguerite St John and Campbell Mowat, “the boy actor”.

Friday, January 3rd

*The Queen’s Shilling* (ng, George William Godfrey) Mr. and Mrs. Kendal. Austin’s Australians (Variety, na) Austin, nac. *Private Secretary* (ng, Adapted by Geo. M Wood from Gustav Von Moser) nm, Marguerite St John.

Saturday, January 4th

*The Queen’s Shilling* (ng, George William Godfrey) Mr. and Mrs. Kendal. Austin’s Australians (Variety, na) Austin, nac. *Private Secretary* (ng, Adapted by Geo. M Wood from Gustav Von Moser) nm, Marguerite St John.

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Monday, January, 6th

W. S. Cleveland’s Minstrels (Variety, na) W. S. Cleveland, nac. *Pat’s New Wardrobe* (Comedy, na) nm, Pat Rooney.

Tuesday, January 7th

W. S. Cleveland’s Minstrels (Variety, na) W. S. Cleveland, nac. *Pat’s New Wardrobe* (Comedy, na) nm, Pat Rooney.

Wednesday, January 8th

Grand Opera House - dark

*Pat’s New Wardrobe* (Comedy, na) nm, Pat Rooney.

Thursday, January 9th

*Little Lord Fauntleroy* (Drama from Frances Hodgson’s Burnett) T. H. French, nac. *Pat’s New Wardrobe* (Comedy, na) nm, Pat Rooney. *The Governess* (Domestic Comedy Drama, E. J. Swartz) nm, Effie Ellsler, Frank Weston.

Friday, January 10th


Saturday, January 11th

Monday, January 13th

*The Indian Mail Carrier* (ng, na) nm, Go-Won-Go - “the only Indian actress on the stage”.
*Our Flat* (ng, Mrs. Musgrave) nm, “Daniel Frohman’s original company from Lyceum, NY”.

Tuesday, January 14th

*The Indian Mail Carrier* (ng, na) nm, Go-Won-Go.

Wednesday, January 15th

*Our Flat* (ng, Mrs. Musgrave) nm.

Thursday, January 16th

*King Rene’s Daughter*, (Poetic idyll from Danish by Henrik Herz)/ False Charms (“a brilliant comedy”, na) Mr. Gustave Frohman, Marie Hubert Frohman.
*The Indian Mail Carrier* (ng, na) nm, Go-Won-Go.

Friday, January 17th

*King Rene’s Daughter*, (Poetic idyll from Danish by Henrik Herz)/ False Charms (“a brilliant comedy”, na) Mr. Gustave Frohman, Marie Hubert Frohman.
*Our Flat* (ng, Mrs. Musgrave) nm.

Saturday, January 18th

*Crocodile Tears* (Comedy, na) nm, *My Milliner’s Bill/The Rough Diamond* (Comedy, J. B. Buckstone) nm, Rosina Vokes supported by Felix Morris and her London company.

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Monday, January 20th

*Paul Kavar* (Drama, Steele Mackaye) Mr. E.G. Stone “announces” Joseph Haworth.
*Barred Out* (Romantic Irish Drama, na) nm, Edwin Arden.

Tuesday, January 21st

*Paul Kavar* (Drama, Steele Mackaye) Mr. E.G. Stone “announces” Joseph Haworth.
*Barred Out* (Romantic Irish Drama, na) nm, Edwin Arden.

Wednesday, January 22nd

*Paul Kavar* (Drama, Steele Mackaye) Mr. E.G. Stone “announces” Joseph Haworth.
*Barred Out* (Romantic Irish Drama, na) nm, Edwin Arden.

Thursday, January 23rd

*Wig and Gown* (Comedietta, F.W. Sydney): *The Old Musician* (Comedy, Feliz Morris); *My Lord in Livery* (Farce, Rosina Vokes) nm, Rosina Vokes supported by Felix Morris and her London company.
*Barred Out* (Romantic Irish Drama, na) nm, Edwin Arden.

Friday, January 24th

*Wig and Gown* (Comedietta, F.W. Sydney): *The Old Musician* (Comedy, Feliz Morris); *My Lord in Livery* (Farce, Rosina Vokes) nm, Rosina Vokes supported by Felix Morris and her London company.
*Barred Out* (Romantic Irish Drama, na) nm, Edwin Arden.

Saturday, January 25th

*Crocodile Tears* (Comedy, na) nm, *My Milliner’s Bill/The Rough Diamond* (Comedy, J. B. Buckstone) nm, Rosina Vokes supported by Felix Morris and her London company.
*Barred Out* (Romantic Irish Drama, na) nm, Edwin Arden.
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Monday, January 27th

*His Natural Life* ("Inigo Tyrell’s great Comedy Drama") nm, Inigo Tyrell.
*Held by the Enemy* (Drama, William Gillette) nm, nac.
Hermann’s Trans-Atlantique Vaudevilles (Vaudeville) nm, nac.

Tuesday, January 28th

*His Natural Life* ("Inigo Tyrell’s great Comedy Drama") nm, Inigo Tyrell.
*Held by the Enemy* (Drama, William Gillette) nm, nac.
Hermann’s Trans-Atlantique Vaudevilles (Vaudeville) nm, nac.

Wednesday, January 29th

*His Natural Life* ("Inigo Tyrell’s great Comedy Drama") nm, Inigo Tyrell.
*Held by the Enemy* (Drama, William Gillette) nm, nac.
Hermann’s Trans-Atlantique Vaudevilles (Vaudeville) nm, nac.

Thursday, January 30th

*His Natural Life* ("Inigo Tyrell’s great Comedy Drama") nm, Inigo Tyrell.
*Held by the Enemy* (Drama, William Gillette) nm, nac.
Hermann’s Trans-Atlantique Vaudevilles (Vaudeville) nm, nac.

Friday, January 31st

*His Natural Life* ("Inigo Tyrell’s great Comedy Drama") nm, Inigo Tyrell.
*Held by the Enemy* (Drama, William Gillette) nm, nac.
Hermann’s Trans-Atlantique Vaudevilles (Vaudeville) nm, nac.

**FEBRUARY 1890**

Saturday, February 1st

*His Natural Life* ("Inigo Tyrell’s great Comedy Drama") nm, Inigo Tyrell.
*Held by the Enemy* (Drama, William Gillette) nm, nac.
Hermann’s Trans-Atlantique Vaudevilles (Vaudeville) nm, nac.

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Monday, February 3rd

*Featherbrain* (Comedy, Translated by James Albery) Arthur Miller, Minnie Maddern Fiske.
*On the Frontier*, (Melodrama, na) nm, James M. Hardie, Sara Van Leer.

Tuesday February 4th

*Featherbrain* (Comedy, Translated by James Albery) Arthur Miller, Minnie Maddern Fiske.
*On the Frontier*, (Melodrama, na) nm, James M. Hardie, Sara Van Leer.

Wednesday February 5th

*Featherbrain* (Comedy, Translated by James Albery) Arthur Miller, Minnie Maddern Fiske.
*On the Frontier*, (Melodrama, na) nm, James M. Hardie, Sara Van Leer.

Thursday, February 6th

*In Spite of All* (ng, Steele Mackaye from Sardou)/Arthur Miller, Minnie Maddern Fiske.
*On the Frontier*, (Melodrama, na) nm, James M. Hardie, Sara Van Leer.
*Green Room Fun* (Comedy, Bronson Howard) Webster and Maeder, “Jolly Nellie McHenry and her famous Farce Comedy Company.

Friday, February 7th

*In Spite of All* (ng, Steele Mackaye from Sardou)/Arthur Miller, Minnie Maddern Fiske.
*On the Frontier*, (Melodrama, na) nm, James M. Hardie, Sara Van Leer.
*Green Room Fun* (Comedy, Bronson Howard) Webster and Maeder,

Saturday, February 8th

*In Spite of All* (ng, Steele Mackaye from Sardou)/Arthur Miller, Minnie Maddern Fiske.
*On the Frontier*, (Melodrama, na) nm, James M. Hardie, Sara Van Leer.
*Green Room Fun* (Comedy, Bronson Howard) Webster and Maeder.
Monday, February 10th
The Silent Partner (Comedy, Herbert Hall Winslow) nm, J. B. Polk, “The representative American eccentric comedian”.
Lilly Clay’s Colossal Gaiety Company (Variety, na) nm, Lilly Clay.
Hamilton Minstrels under the patronage of his Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor and Miss Marjorie Campbell.

Tuesday, February 11th
The Silent Partner (Comedy, Herbert Hall Winslow) nm, J. B. Polk.
Lilly Clay’s Colossal Gaiety Company (Variety, na) nm, Lilly Clay.
Hamilton Minstrels under the patronage of his Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor and Miss Marjorie Campbell.

Wednesday, February 12th
The Silent Partner (Comedy, Herbert Hall Winslow) nm, J. B. Polk.
Lilly Clay’s Colossal Gaiety Company (Variety, na) nm, Lilly Clay.
Hamilton Minstrels.

Thursday, February 13th
The Silent Partner (Comedy, Herbert Hall Winslow) nm, J. B. Polk.
Lilly Clay’s Colossal Gaiety Company (Variety, na) nm, Lilly Clay.
Hamilton Minstrels.

Friday, February 14th
The Silent Partner (Comedy, Herbert Hall Winslow) nm, J. B. Polk.
Lilly Clay’s Colossal Gaiety Company (Variety, na) nm, Lilly Clay.
Hamilton Minstrels.

Saturday, February 15th
The Silent Partner (Comedy, Herbert Hall Winslow) nm, J. B. Polk.
Lilly Clay’s Colossal Gaiety Company (Variety, na) nm, Lilly Clay.
Hamilton Minstrels.

Monday, February 17th
Faust Up To Date (Farce, na) George Edward’s Original London Gaiety Co under the direction of Henry E. Abbey and Maurice Grau, nac.
The Bandit King (Border Drama, na) nm, James H Wallick.
The Water Queen (Grand Fairy Spectacle, na) Bolossy Kiralfy

Tuesday, February 18th
Faust Up To Date, (Farce, na) George Edward’s Original London Gaiety Co under the direction of Henry E. Abbey and Maurice Grau, nac.
The Bandit King (Border Drama, na) nm, James H Wallick.
The Water Queen (Grand Fairy Spectacle, na) Bolossy Kiralfy

Wednesday, February 19th
Faust Up To Date, (Farce, na) George Edward’s Original London Gaiety Co under the direction of Henry E. Abbey and Maurice Grau, nac.
The Bandit King (Border Drama, na) nm, James H Wallick.
The Water Queen (Grand Fairy Spectacle, na) Bolossy Kiralfy

Thursday, February 20th
Sam Houston, The Hero of Texas (Historical Military Play, na) nm, James H. Wallick.
The Water Queen (Grand Fairy Spectacle,na) Bolossy Kiralfy

Friday, February 21st
Sam Houston, The Hero of Texas (Historical Military Play, na) nm, James H. Wallick.
The Water Queen (Grand Fairy Spectacle,na) Bolossy Kiralfy

Saturday, February 22nd
Sam Houston, The Hero of Texas (Historical Military Play, na) nm, James H. Wallick.
The Water Queen (Grand Fairy Spectacle,na) Bolossy Kiralfy.
***
Monday, February 24th
Young Liberal Minstrels of London “under the auspices of the Liberals of Toronto”.
Siberia (ng, Bartley Campbell) nm, H. C. Kennedy.

Tuesday, February 25th
Siberia (ng, Bartley Campbell) nm, H. C. Kennedy.

Wednesday, February 26th
Siberia (ng, Bartley Campbell) nm, H. C. Kennedy

Thursday, February 27th
The Wife (ng, Belasco and De Milles) Daniel Frohman, Mrs. Berlau Gibbs.
Siberia (ng, Bartley Campbell) nm, H. C. Kennedy.

Friday, February 28th
The Wife (ng, Belasco and De Milles) Daniel Frohman, Mrs. Berlau Gibbs.
Siberia (ng, Bartley Campbell) nm, H. C. Kennedy.

MARCH 1890
Saturday, March 1st
The Wife (ng, Belasco and De Milles) Daniel Frohman, Mrs. Berlau Gibbs.
Siberia (ng, Bartley Campbell) nm, H. C. Kennedy.

***
Monday, March 3rd
Twelve Temptations (ng, W. J. Gilmore rewritten and revised by Chas H. Yale)nm, nac, The scenery of Getz, Merry Emems and Reid, “GRANDEST MIS EN SCENE EVER CONSTRUCTED PRODUCED AT AN ACTUAL CASH OUTLAY OF $35,000”.
The Old Oaken Bucket (ng, na) nm, Gray and Stephens  “The world-famous acting dogs will appear”.
Mrs. Partington (Comedy, na) Mr. Frank Tucker and his Metropolitan Comedy Company.

Tuesday, March 4th
Twelve Temptations (ng, W. J. Gilmore rewritten and revised by Chas H. Yale)nm, nac, The scenery of Getz, Merry Emems and Reid
The Old Oaken Bucket (ng, na) nm, Gray and Stephens.
Mrs. Partington (Comedy, na) Mr. Frank Tucker and his Metropolitan Comedy Company.

Wednesday, March 5th
Twelve Temptations (ng, W. J. Gilmore rewritten and revised by Chas H. Yale)nm, nac,
The Old Oaken Bucket (ng, na) nm, Gray and Stephens
Mrs. Partington (Comedy, na) Mr. Frank Tucker and his Metropolitan Comedy Company.

Thursday, March 6th
Twelve Temptations (ng, W. J. Gilmore rewritten and revised by Chas H. Yale)nm, nac,
New Saved From the Storm (Melodrama, na) nm, Gray and Stephens.
Mrs. Partington (Comedy, na) Mr. Frank Tucker and his Metropolitan Comedy Company.

Friday, March 7th
Twelve Temptations (ng, W. J. Gilmore rewritten and revised by Chas H. Yale)nm, nac,
New Saved From the Storm (Melodrama, na) nm, Gray and Stephens.
Mrs. Partington (Comedy, na) Mr. Frank Tucker and his Metropolitan Comedy Company.

Saturday, March 8th
Twelve Temptations (ng, W. J. Gilmore rewritten and revised by Chas H. Yale)nm, nac,
New Saved From the Storm (Melodrama, na) nm, Gray and Stephens.
Mrs. Partington (Comedy, na) Mr. Frank Tucker and his Metropolitan Comedy Company.

***
Monday, March 10th
The Private Secretary (Comedy, From Gustav Von Moser, na) E. McDowell, Mr. and Mrs. McDowell and company.
The Red Spider (Western, na) nm, Joseph Dowling and Sadie Hasson.
The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, “The popular German Comedian” James O’Reilly.
Tuesday, March 11th
Our Regiment (Adaptation Henry Hamilton, na) E McDowell, Mr. and Mrs. McDowell and company.
The Red Spider (Western, na) nm, Joseph Dowling and Sadie Hasson.
The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, James O’Reilly.

Wednesday, March 12th
Moths - Matinee (Ouida, Adaptation Henry Hamilton);
The Shaughraun - Evening (Irish romance, Dion Boucicault) E. McDowell, Mr. and Mrs. McDowell and company.
The Red Spider (Western, na) nm, Joseph Dowling and Sadie Hasson
The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, James O’Reilly.

Thursday, March 13th
Bootles’ Baby (Comedy,- Hugh Moss adapted from J.S. Winter) nm, Kate Claxton and Chas Stevenson.
Nobody’s Claim (ng, na) nm, Joseph Dowling and Sadie Hasson.
The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, James O’Reilly.

Friday, March 14th
Bootles’ Baby (Comedy,- Hugh Moss adapted from J.S. Winter) nm, Kate Claxton and Chas Stevenson.
Nobody’s Claim (ng, na) nm, Joseph Dowling and Sadie Hasson.
The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, James O’Reilly.

Saturday, March 15th
Bootles’ Baby (Comedy,- Hugh Moss adapted from J.S. Winter) nm, Kate Claxton and Chas Stevenson.
Nobody’s Claim (ng, na) nm, Joseph Dowling and Sadie Hasson.
The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, James O’Reilly.

***
Monday, March 17th
Jim the Penman (ng, Charles Young) A.M. Palmers, nac.
London Speciality Company, (Variety, na) nm, Lester & Williams.
The Runaway Wife (Society Drama, McKee Rankin) McKee Rankin supported by Mis Mabel Bert and his own company.

Tuesday, March 18th
Jim the Penman (ng, Charles Young) A.M. Palmers, nac.
London Speciality Company, (Variety, na) nm, Lester & Williams.
The Runaway Wife (Society Drama, McKee Rankin) McKee Rankin supported by Mis Mabel Bert and his own company.

Wednesday, March 19th
Jim the Penman (ng, Charles Young) A.M. Palmers, nac.
London Speciality Company, (Variety, na) nm, Lester & Williams.
The Runaway Wife (Society Drama, McKee Rankin) McKee Rankin supported by Mis Mabel Bert and his own company.

Thursday, March 20th
Richelieu (History drama, Edward Bulwar-Lytton) Mr. Ariel Barney presents Thos W. Keene supported by George Leacock and his own capable company.
The Canuck (Drama, McKee Rankin) McKee Rankin supported by Mis Mabel Bert and his own company.

Friday, March 21st
Louis XI (History drama, Adaptation by Dion Boucicault) Mr. Ariel Barney presents Thos W. Keene supported by George Leacock and his own capable company.
The Canuck (Drama, McKee Rankin) McKee Rankin supported by Mis Mabel Bert and his own company.
Saturday, March 22nd

Shylock - Matinee (The Merchant of Venice, Shakespeare);
Richard III - Evening (Shakespeare) Mr. Ariel Barney presents Thos W. Keene supported by George Leacock and his own capable company.
London Specialty Company,(Variety, na) Lester & Williams.
The Canuck (Drama, McKee Rankin), McKee Rankin supported by Mis Mabel Bert and his own company.

***

Monday, March 24th

Myles Aroon (Irish Comedy, Jessop and Townsend) Augustus Pitou, W. J. Scanlon, “(Peek-a-boo) the representative Irish comedian”.
Across the Continent (ng, James McCluskey?) nm, Oliver Byron “A play that has run for 17 years”. Herndon Opera Company cancels.

Tuesday, March 25th

Myles Aroon (Irish Comedy, Jessop and Townsend) Augustus Pitou, W. J. Scanlon.
Across the Continent (ng, James McCluskey?) nm, Oliver Byron.

Wednesday, March 26th

Myles Aroon (Irish Comedy, Jessop and Townsend) Augustus Pitou, W. J. Scanlon.
Across the Continent (ng, James McCluskey?) nm, Oliver Byron.

Thursday, March 27th

The King’s Fool (Opera, Adoph Muller) Conreid’s English Comic Opera Company. “Beautiful Lady Fencers”.
Across the Continent (ng, James McCluskey?) nm, Oliver Byron.

Friday, March 28th

The King’s Fool (Opera, Adoph Muller) Conreid’s English Comic Opera Company.
Across the Continent (ng, James McCluskey?) nm, Oliver Byron.

Saturday, March 29th

The Gypsy Baron (Opera, Johann Strauss) Conreid’s English Comic Opera Company.
Across the Continent (ng, James McCluskey?) nm, Oliver Byron.

***

Monday, March 31st

Shaun Rhue (Irish Romance, Fred Marsden) nm, Joseph Murphy and Mis Belle Melville.
The Two Johns (Comedy, na) nm, John Hart, E. B. Fity.
Nordeck (ng, Elisabeth Büstenbinder, Adapted by Frank Mayo and John C Wilson, Music by August Stoeppe) nm, Frank Mayo “America’s representative romantic actor”.

APRIL 1890

Tuesday, April 1st

Shaun Rhue (Irish Romance, Fred Marsden) nm, Joseph Murphy and Mis Belle Melville.
The Two Johns (Comedy, na) nm, John Hart, E. B. Fity.
Nordeck (ng, Elisabeth Büstenbinder, Adapted by Frank Mayo and John C Wilson, Music by August Stoeppe) nm, Frank Mayo.

Wednesday, April 2nd

The Donagh (Irish Romance, George Rowe?) nm, Joseph Murphy and Mis Belle Melville.
The Two Johns (Comedy, na) nm, John Hart, E. B. Fity.
Nordeck (ng, Elisabeth Büstenbinder, Adapted by Frank Mayo and John C Wilson, Music by August Stoeppe) nm, Frank Mayo.

Thursday, April 3rd

The Donagh - Matinee The Donagh (Irish Romance, George Rowe?);
Kerry Gow - Evening (Irish Romance) nm, Joseph Murphy and Mis Belle Melville.
The Two Johns (Comedy, na) nm, John Hart, E. B. Fity.
Nordeck (ng, Elisabeth Büstenbinder, Adapted by Frank Mayo and John C Wilson, Music by August Stoeppel) nm, Frank Mayo.

Friday, April 4th
Kerry Gow (Irish Romance) nm, Joseph Murphy and Mis Belle Melville.
The Two Johns (Comedy, na) nm, John Hart, E. B. Fity.
Davy Crockett, An Idyll of the Backwoods (Frontier drama, ng) nm, Frank Mayo.

Saturday, April 5th
Kerry Gow (Irish Romance) nm, Joseph Murphy and Mis Belle Melville.
The Two Johns (Comedy, na) nm, John Hart, E. B. Fity.
Nordeck - Matinee (ng, Elisabeth Büstenbinder, Adapted by Frank Mayo and John C Wilson, Music by August Stoeppel):
Davy Crockett, An Idyll of the Backwoods - Evening (Frontier drama, ng) nm, Frank Mayo.

***

Monday, April 7th
Norma (Opera, Bellini) Grand English Opera Co., Emma Abbott - “only successful English Opera Company in America”.
DOT, The Avengers Oath (Western, na) Emma Franks Co, Florence Bindley.

Tuesday, April 8th
Bohemian Girl (Opera, Michael Balfe) Grand English Opera Co., Emma Abbott.
DOT, The Avengers Oath (Western, na) Emma Franks Co, Florence Bindley.

Wednesday, April 9th
Rose of Castile - Matinee (Opera, na);
Chimes of Normandy - Evening (Opera, Michael Balfe) Grand English Opera Co., Emma Abbott
DOT, The Avengers Oath (Western, na) Emma Franks Co, Florence Bindley.

Thursday, April 10th
Norma (Opera, Bellini) Grand English Opera Co., Emma Abbott.
DOT, The Avengers Oath (Western, na) Emma Franks Co, Florence Bindley.
Fern Cliffe (pagent, William Haworth) “Under the patronage of Lieut-Col Otter D.A.L. and officers of the Royal School of Infantry”.

Friday, April 11th
Il Travatore (Opera, Verdi) Grand English Opera Co., Emma Abbott.
DOT, The Avengers Oath (Western, na) Emma Franks Co, Florence Bindley. Mrs. Franks is “only manageress on the road” “Mrs. Emma Frank, the only lady who has succeeded in being a permanent success as a manager”.
Fern Cliffe (pagent, William Haworth).

Saturday, April 12th
Martha - Matinee (Opera, Friedrich Wilhem Riese, Freidric von Foltow);
Faust - Evening (Opera, Gounod) Grand English Opera Co., Emma Abbott.
DOT, The Avengers Oath (Western, na) Emma Franks Co, Florence Bindley.
Fern Cliffe (pagent, William Haworth).

***

Monday, April 14th
Still Alarm (ng, Joseph Arthur) nm, Harry Lacy.
Uncle Tom’s Cabin (From Harriet Beecher Stowe) nm, Harry Mitchell as Uncle Tom
The Little Nugget (ng, na) nm, Herbert and Joe Cawthorne.

Tuesday, April 15th
Still Alarm (ng, Joseph Arthur) nm, Harry Lacy.
Uncle Tom’s Cabin (From Harriet Beecher Stowe) nm, Harry Mitchell as Uncle Tom
The Little Nugget (ng, na) nm, Herbert and Joe Cawthorne.

Wednesday, April 16th
Still Alarm (ng, Joseph Arthur) nm, Harry Lacy.
Uncle Tom’s Cabin (From Harriet Beecher Stowe) nm, Harry Mitchell as Uncle Tom
The Little Nugget (ng, na) nm, Herbert and Joe Cawthorne.
Thursday, April 17th

Still Alarm (ng, Joseph Arthur) nm, Harry Lacy.
Uncle Tom’s Cabin (From Harriet Beecher Stowe) nm, Harry Mitchell as Uncle Tom
The Little Nugget (ng, na) nm, Herbert and Joe Cawthorne.

Friday, April 18th

Still Alarm (ng, Joseph Arthur) nm, Harry Lacy.
Uncle Tom’s Cabin (From Harriet Beecher Stowe) nm, Harry Mitchell as Uncle Tom
The Little Nugget (ng, na) nm, Herbert and Joe Cawthorne.

Saturday, April 19th

Still Alarm (ng, Joseph Arthur) nm, Harry Lacy.
Uncle Tom’s Cabin (From Harriet Beecher Stowe) nm, Harry Mitchell as Uncle Tom
The Little Nugget (ng, na) nm, Herbert and Joe Cawthorne.

***

Monday, April 21st

Faust (Opera, Gounod) Charles E. Locke, Emma Juch Grand English Opera Company.
Gus Hill’s World of Novelties (Variety, na) nm, nac.
Blackville Parlor Rehearsal (Minstrel show, na) nm, S. B. Hyers Colored Musical Comedy Company
“genuine colored company”.

Tuesday, April 22nd

William Tell (Opera, Rossini) Charles E. Locke, Emma Juch Grand English Opera Company.
Gus Hill’s World of Novelties (Variety, na) nm, nac.
Blackville Parlor Rehearsal (Minstrel show, na) nm, S. B. Hyers Colored Musical Comedy Company.

Wednesday, April 23rd

The Freischutz – Matinee, (Opera, Weber);
Carmen – Evening (Opera, Bizet); Charles E. Locke, Emma Juch Grand English Opera Company.
Gus Hill’s World of Novelties (Variety, na) nm, nac.
Blackville Parlor Rehearsal (Minstrel show, na) nm, S. B. Hyers Colored Musical Comedy Company.

Thursday, April 24th

A Poor Relation (Comedy, Edward E. Kidder) nm, Sol Smith Russell, O. B. Sheppard’s Benefit.
Gus Hill’s World of Novelties (Variety, na) nm, nac.
Blackville Parlor Rehearsal (Minstrel show, na) nm, S. B. Hyers Colored Musical Comedy Company.

Friday, April 25th

A Poor Relation (Comedy, Edward E. Kidder) nm, Sol Smith Russell,
Gus Hill’s World of Novelties (Variety, na) nm, nac.
Blackville Parlor Rehearsal (Minstrel show, na) nm, S. B. Hyers Colored Musical Comedy Company.

Saturday, April 26th

A Poor Relation (Comedy, Edward E. Kidder) nm, Sol Smith Russell,
Gus Hill’s World of Novelties (Variety, na) nm, nac.
Blackville Parlor Rehearsal (Minstrel show, na) nm, S. B. Hyers Colored Musical Comedy Company.

***

Monday, April 28th

The Emigrant (ng, na) nm, Peter Barker.
Othello (Shakespeare) nm, Louis James.

Tuesday, April 29th

La Traviata (Opera, Verdi) nm, Mme Albani.
The Emigrant (ng, na) nm, Peter Barker.
Virginius (Drama, J. Sheridan Knowles) nm, Louis James, Benefit for Manager P. Greene, “a Toronto boy”.
Wednesday, April 30th

*The Emigrant* (ng, na) nm, Peter Barker.

*Ingomar* - Matinee (Drama, Adapted by Maria Lovell).

*Othello* - Evening (Shakespeare) nm, Louis James.

**MAY 1890**

Thursday, May 1st

*Lucia*, (Grand English Opera, Donizetti) nm, The Boston Ideals.

*Chris and Leno*, (ng, na) nm, Peter Barker.

*Hamlet* (Shakespeare) nm, Louis James - “The Eminent Tragedian”.

Friday, May 2nd

*Rigoletto*, (Grand English Opera, Verdi) nm, The Boston Ideals.

*Chris and Leno*, (ng, na) nm, Peter Barker.

*Ingomar* (Adapted by Maria Lovell) nm, Louis James.

Saturday, May 3rd

*Bohemian Girl* - Matinee (Opera);

*Trovatore* - Evening (Grand English Opera) nm, The Boston Ideals.

*Chris and Leno*, (ng, na) nm, Peter Barker.

*Virginius* (J. Sheridan Knowles) nm, Louis James.

***

Monday, May 5th

*Reilly and Woods Magnificent Vaudeville Company*, (Variety, na) nm, “Composed entirely of European novelties. Pat Reilly and many other first class artists”.

*One of the Finest* (Comedy Drama, Joseph Bradford?) Edward J. Hassan, Ed Ryan, Marian Gray.

*The Old Homestead* (Rural Romance, Denman Thompson) nm, Denman Thompson.

Tuesday, May 6th

*Reilly and Woods Magnificent Vaudeville Company*, (Variety, na) nm.

*One of the Finest* (Comedy Drama, Joseph Bradford?) Edward J. Hassan, Ed Ryan, Marian Gray.

*The Old Homestead* (Rural Romance, Denman Thompson) nm, Denman Thompson.

Wednesday, May 7th

*Reilly and Woods Magnificent Vaudeville Company*, (Variety, na) nm.

*One of the Finest* (Comedy Drama, Joseph Bradford?) Edward J. Hassan, Ed Ryan, Marian Gray.

*The Old Homestead* (Rural Romance, Denman Thompson) nm, Denman Thompson.

Thursday, May 8th

*Reilly and Woods Magnificent Vaudeville Company*, (Variety, na) nm.

*One of the Finest* (Comedy Drama, Joseph Bradford?) Edward J. Hassan, Ed Ryan, Marian Gray.

*The Old Homestead* (Rural Romance, Denman Thompson) nm, Denman Thompson.

Friday, May 9th

*Reilly and Woods Magnificent Vaudeville Company*, (Variety, na) nm.

*One of the Finest* (Comedy Drama, Joseph Bradford?) Edward J. Hassan, Ed Ryan, Marian Gray.

*The Old Homestead* (Rural Romance, Denman Thompson) nm, Denman Thompson.

Saturday, May 10th

*Reilly and Woods Magnificent Vaudeville Company*, (Variety, na) nm.

*One of the Finest* (Comedy Drama, Joseph Bradford?) Edward J. Hassan, Ed Ryan, Marian Gray.

*The Old Homestead* (Rural Romance, Denman Thompson) nm, Denman Thompson.

***

Monday, May 12th

*Life in A Troopship* (Military pageant, na) Queen’s Own Rifles.

*The World Against Her* (ng, Frank Harvey) nm, Kate Claxton.

*The Two Sisters* (“A companion play to The Old Homestead”, Denman Thompson, Geo. W. Ryer) nm, Denman Thompson.
Tuesday, May 13th

*Trial by Jury, Turn Him Out, A Night in Camp*, (Military pageant, na) nm, Royal Grenadiers.

*The World Against Her* (ng, Frank Harvey) nm, Kate Claxton.

*The Two Sisters* (“A companion play to The Old Homestead”, Denman Thompson, Geo. W. Ryer) nm, Denman Thompson.

Wednesday, May 14th

*Trial by Jury, Turn Him Out, A Night in Camp*, (Military pageant, na) nm, Royal Grenadiers.

*The World Against Her* (ng, Frank Harvey) nm, Kate Claxton.

*The Two Sisters* (“A companion play to The Old Homestead”, Denman Thompson, Geo. W. Ryer) nm, Denman Thompson.

Thursday, May 15th

*Impulse* (Drama, Benjamin Charles Stephenson) W. Kendal, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal.

*The World Against Her* (ng, Frank Harvey) nm, Kate Claxton.

*The Two Sisters* (“A companion play to The Old Homestead”, Denman Thompson, Geo. W. Ryer) nm, Denman Thompson.

Friday, May 16th

*The Ironmaster* (Drama, George Ohnet) W. Kendal, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal.

*The World Against Her* (ng, Frank Harvey) nm, Kate Claxton.

*The Two Sisters* (“A companion play to The Old Homestead”, Denman Thompson, Geo. W. Ryer) nm, Denman Thompson.

Saturday, May 17th

*A Scrap of Paper* - Matinee, (Well-made-play, Sardou);

*The Queen’s Shilling* - Evening, (ng, Geroge William Godfrey) W. Kendal, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal.

*The World Against Her* (ng, Frank Harvey) nm, Kate Claxton.

*The Two Sisters* (“A companion play to The Old Homestead”, Denman Thompson, Geo. W. Ryer) nm, Denman Thompson.

***

Monday, May 19th

*Rosedale* (Edward Bruce Hamley, Adapted by John Lester Wallack) E.A. McDowell, E.A. McDowell Comedy Co.

*Queen of the Plains* (ng, Leonard Glover) nm, Kate Purrssell.

Tuesday, May 20th

*Rosedale* (Edward Bruce Hamley, Adapted by John Lester Wallack) E.A. McDowell Comedy Co.

*Queen of the Plains* (ng, Leonard Glover) nm, Kate Purrssell.

Wednesday, May 21st

*Rosedale* - Matinee, (Edward Bruce Hamley, Adapted by John Lester Wallack);

*The Black Flag* - Evening (ng, Henry Pettitt) E. McDowell, E.A. McDowell Comedy Co.

*Queen of the Plains* (ng, Leonard Glover) nm, Kate Purrssell.

Thursday, May 22nd

*The Black Flag* (Henry Pettitt) E.A. McDowell Comedy Co.

*Queen of the Plains* (ng, Leonard Glover) nm, Kate Purrssell.

Friday, May 23rd

*The Private Secretary* (Comedy, Gustav Von Moser, Adapted by Charles Hawtrey or William Gillette) E McDowell, E.A. McDowell Comedy Co.

*Queen of the Plains* (ng, Leonard Glover) nm, Kate Purrssell.

Saturday, May 24th

*The Private Secretary* (Comedy, Gustav Von Moser, Adapted by Charles Hawtrey or William Gillette) E McDowell, E.A. McDowell Comedy Co.

*Queen of the Plains* (ng, Leonard Glover) nm, Kate Purrssell.

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Monday, May 26th

Grand Opera House and Academy of Music - closed for the season.

*Across the Atlantic* (ng, na) nm, Ransone and Radcliffe.
Tuesday, May 27\textsuperscript{th}

*Across the Atlantic*, (ng, na) nm, Ransone and Radcliffe.

Wednesday, May 28\textsuperscript{th}

*Across the Atlantic*, (ng, na) nm, Ransone and Radcliffe.

Thursday, May 29\textsuperscript{th}

*Across the Atlantic*, (ng, na) nm, Ransone and Radcliffe.

Friday, May 30\textsuperscript{th}

*Across the Atlantic*, (ng, na) nm, Ransone and Radcliffe.

Saturday, May 31\textsuperscript{st}

*Across the Atlantic*, (ng, na) nm, Ransone and Radcliffe.

**June 1890**

Monday, June 2\textsuperscript{nd}

Grand Opera House and Academy of Music - closed for the season.

*The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad*, (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, “The popular German Comedian” James O’Reilly. “Jacobs and Sparrow’s Opera House - The Only Theatre open in the city”.

Tuesday, June 3\textsuperscript{rd}

*The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad*, (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, James O’Reilly.

Wednesday, June 4\textsuperscript{th}

*The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad*, (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, James O’Reilly.

Thursday, June 5\textsuperscript{th}

*The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad*, (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, James O’Reilly.

Friday, June 6\textsuperscript{th}

*The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad*, (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, James O’Reilly.

Saturday, June 7\textsuperscript{th}

*The Broom-Maker of Carlsbad*, (Musical Comedy Drama, na) nm, James O’Reilly.

***

Monday, June 9\textsuperscript{th}

Grand Opera House and Academy of Music - closed for the season.

*Struck Gas*, (Melodrama, na) nm, nac.

Tuesday, June 10\textsuperscript{th}

*Struck Gas*, (Melodrama, na) nm, nac.

Wednesday, June 11\textsuperscript{th}

*Struck Gas*, (Melodrama, na) nm, nac.

Thursday, June 12\textsuperscript{th}

*The Dark Side of a Great City*, (Melodrama, na) nm, nac.

Friday, June 13\textsuperscript{th}

*The Dark Side of a Great City*, (Melodrama, na) nm, nac.

Saturday, June 14\textsuperscript{th}

*The Dark Side of a Great City*, (Melodrama, na) nm, nac.

***

Monday, June 15\textsuperscript{th}

Grand Opera House and Academy of Music - closed for the season.

Marco and Reid’s European Vaudevilles (Variety).

Tuesday, June 16\textsuperscript{th}, 17\textsuperscript{th}, 18\textsuperscript{th}, 19\textsuperscript{th}, 20\textsuperscript{th}.

Marco and Reid’s European Vaudevilles (Variety).

**End of 1889/90 Theatre Season**
### 6.2 Appendix B: Theatre Management in Toronto Theatres between September 1889 and June 1900.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theatre Season</th>
<th>Academy of Music/Princess Theatre</th>
<th>Toronto Opera House</th>
<th>Grand Opera House</th>
<th>Others <em>(Dime Museums, Shea’s, Massey Hall, Auditorium)</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1889-90</strong></td>
<td><strong>Owner:</strong> Hon. J. Enoch Thomson (and stock holders?)&lt;br&gt;<strong>Manager:</strong> Percival T. Greene&lt;br&gt;<em>C. J. Whitney of Detroit signs ten year lease on the Academy in March.</em></td>
<td><strong>Owner:</strong> Thomas Pells&lt;br&gt;<strong>Lessee:</strong> H. R Jacobs and J. R. Sparrow&lt;br&gt;<strong>Manager:</strong> J. A. Toole (until Feb 1890)&lt;br&gt;(after Feb 1890) Joseph Frank&lt;br&gt;<strong>Treasurer:</strong> Ambrose J. Small</td>
<td><strong>Owner:</strong> Alexander Manning&lt;br&gt;<strong>Manager:</strong> O. B Sheppard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1890-91</strong></td>
<td><strong>Owner:</strong> Hon. J. Enoch Thomson&lt;br&gt;<strong>Manager:</strong> Percival T Greene <em>(also manages of Brantford Opera House for Whitney)</em></td>
<td><strong>Owner:</strong> Thomas Pells&lt;br&gt;<strong>Lessee:</strong> H. R Jacobs and J. R. Sparrow&lt;br&gt;<strong>Manager:</strong> Joseph Frank</td>
<td><strong>Owner:</strong> Alexander Manning&lt;br&gt;<strong>Manager:</strong> O. B Sheppard</td>
<td><strong>Robinson’s Musee Theatre</strong> opens Dec. 1890.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Owner/Manager:</strong> M. S. Robinson&lt;br&gt;Moore buys Musee in July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1891-92</strong></td>
<td><strong>Owner:</strong> Hon. J. Enoch Thomson&lt;br&gt;<strong>Lessee:</strong> C. J. Whitney&lt;br&gt;<strong>Circuit Manager:</strong> C. H. Garwood&lt;br&gt;<strong>Manager:</strong> Frank Kirchmer&lt;br&gt;<em>Kirchmer buys part interest in Academy business.</em></td>
<td><strong>Owner:</strong> Thomas Pells or Samuel Perrin&lt;br&gt;<strong>Lessee:</strong> H. R. Jacobs and J. R. Sparrow&lt;br&gt;<strong>Manager:</strong> Joseph Frank</td>
<td><strong>Owner:</strong> Alexander Manning&lt;br&gt;<strong>Manager:</strong> O. B Sheppard</td>
<td><strong>Moore’s Museum</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Owner/Manager:</strong> James H. Moore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2 Appendix B: Theatre Management in Toronto Theatres between September 1889 and June 1900.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1892-93</th>
<th>Owner: Hon. J. Enoch Thomson</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lessee:</td>
<td>C. J. Whitney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circuit Manager:</td>
<td>C. H. Garwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager:</td>
<td>Frank Kirchmer from London is replaced by Thomas Reche of Hamilton’s Grand Opera House on Dec 17, 1892 and Fred C. Whitney on Dec 30, 1892.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October In Detroit, C. H. Garwood leaves due to ill health. He is replaced by E. D. Stair.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1892-93</th>
<th>Owner: Samuel Perrin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lessee:</td>
<td>H. R Jacobs and J. R. Sparrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager:</td>
<td>B. H. Cohen is replaced by J. B. Morris on October 1, 1892.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(May be the same person, see Charlesworth, p. 245) Jacobs signs lease that will take his management of the Toronto Opera House to 1899. 24 Sept 1892:13.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1893-94</th>
<th>Owner: Alexander Manning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lessee:</td>
<td>C. J. Whitney until end of season when he is replaced by M. S. Robinson in Aug, 1894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager:</td>
<td>O. B Sheppard until he is replaced by J. C. Connor (formerly manager of Royal Theatre) in Dec 1893. (Connor goes to Hanlon’s Point Theatre in summer.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. B. Morris manages summer concerts “at popular prices” that fail financially or are discontinued because of internal dissent. Ambrose Small is appointed Manager of Toronto Opera House in August 1894. (4 Aug 1894)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1893-94</th>
<th>Owner: Alexander Manning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lessee:</td>
<td>C. J. Whitney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manager:</td>
<td>O. B Sheppard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moore’s Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Owner/Manager:</td>
<td>James H. Moore</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 6.2 Appendix B: Theatre Management in Toronto Theatres between September 1889 and June 1900.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Lessee</th>
<th>Manager</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1894-95</td>
<td>Hon. J. Enoch Thomson</td>
<td>M. S. Robinson replaced by Frank Connolly on the condition he provides first-class attractions. Theatre is to be renovated and called Princess. (20 April 1895) Authorities prevent Lilly Clay co from presenting lithographs. “results in excellent business” (2 March, 1895: 14)</td>
<td>F. W. Stair</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Manning to make improvements at the Grand. Suggests Whitney is no longer lessee. (20 July 1895.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Samuel Perrin</td>
<td>H. R. Jacobs and J. R. Sparrow</td>
<td>Ambrose J. Small</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alexander Manning</td>
<td>C. J. Whitney</td>
<td>O. B Sheppard</td>
<td>Eden Musee and Crystal Theatre</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Music Hall</td>
<td>Manager: I. E. Suckling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6.2 Appendix B: Theatre Management in Toronto Theatres between September 1889 and June 1900.

| --- | --- | --- | --- |
### 1896-97

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner:</th>
<th>Owner:</th>
<th>Owner:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hon. J. Enoch</td>
<td>Samuel Perrin</td>
<td>Alexander Manning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomson</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lessee:</td>
<td>C. J. Whitney</td>
<td>C. J. Whitney</td>
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<td></td>
<td>H. R. Jacobs and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>J. R. Sparrow</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager:</td>
<td>O. B. Sheppard</td>
<td>O. B. Sheppard</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ambrose J. Small</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer:</td>
<td>W. Graham</td>
<td>Herbert Sheppard</td>
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<td>(son)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Robinson returns to lease Musee, He closes the curio hall and renames theatre as **Bijou**. He will present “entirely first class vaudeville at popular prices” (28 Nov 1896:10). He closes museum at end of season to convert to a theatre that seats 1,800. (30 Jan 1897).

Manager: F. F. Lampkin

Dramatic Mirror reports that Americans are to lease Auditorium to provide “low price entertainment” (29 Aug 1896:7).

Manager: ? Pepper is replaced by W. Teller in Sept. 1896 and by John Carter in Jan. 1897

Hart Massey Music Hall

Manager: I.E. Suckling
### 1897-98

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Owner:</th>
<th>Lessee:</th>
<th>Manager:</th>
<th>Proprietors:</th>
<th>Auditorium</th>
<th>Manager:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hon. J. Enoch</td>
<td>C. J. Whitney</td>
<td>O. B. Sheppard</td>
<td>Hayman, Klaw and Erlanger - Cummings Stock Company</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thomson</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sheppard engages the Cummings Stock Company in October 1897 and signs company to stay until April 1898. Robert Cummings arranges for stock opera company managed by him to follow in April.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Owner:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Samuel Perrin</td>
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<td>Lessee:</td>
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<td>H. R Jacobs and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>J. R. Sparrow</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Manager:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ambrose J. Small</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Treasurer:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Herbert Sheppard</td>
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<td>(son)</td>
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### 1898-99

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Owner:</th>
<th>Lessee:</th>
<th>Manager:</th>
<th>Proprietors:</th>
<th>Auditorium</th>
<th>Manager:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hon. J. Enoch</td>
<td>C. J. Whitney</td>
<td>O. B. Sheppard</td>
<td>Hayman, Klaw and Erlanger - Cummings Stock Company</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Samuel Perrin</td>
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<td>Lessee:</td>
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<td>J. R. Sparrow</td>
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<td>Manager:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ambrose J. Small</td>
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<td>Treasurer:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Herbert Sheppard</td>
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**Shea’s Theatre opens Sept 4th.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Owner:</th>
<th>Manager:</th>
<th>Lessee:</th>
<th>Auditorium</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1899-1900</td>
<td>Hon. J Enoch Thomson</td>
<td>O. B. Sheppard</td>
<td>C. J. Whitney</td>
<td>Bijou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Samuel Perrin</td>
<td>Ambrose J. Small</td>
<td>J. R. Sparrow</td>
<td>M. S. Robinson</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alexander Manning</td>
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<td>F. F. Lampkin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hayman, Klaw and Erlanger - Cummings Stock Company</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hart Massey</td>
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<td>Music Hall</td>
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<td>I.E. Suckling</td>
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<td>Shea’s Theatre</td>
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<td>opens Sept 4th.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>John Shea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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—, 29 Apr. 1890:8.
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