BARKERVILLE THEATRE IN CONTEXT

A Case Study in Our Theatrical Past

by

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ABSTRACT

In approaching the subject of theatrical activity in Barkerville, the problems were how to account for its connections with the gold rush that produced the town, for its emergence several years after the rush was over, for its nature, which was utterly different from the usual views of gold mining towns. Moreover, involvement with the material revealed that not only the theatre, but many other elements of the social, cultural, even economic and political life of Cariboo contradicted the common stereotypes of the place and its people during the 1860's. Precisely the prevalence of those usual views made it necessary, in seeking to understand the theatre in context, to create that context within this study, with the object that Barkerville society and theatre would each shed some light on the other. In keeping with the case study approach and the proposition that theatre history is only meaningful when understood in the widest and deepest possible context, the methods of the inquiry are accordingly eclectic and empirical.

Because the motivations of the gold seekers have been least understood and most often distorted, it was decided to begin with the context of those motive forces: what common impulses lay behind the search for gold and the Cariboo experience; what they had in common with theatre as such; and what changes occurred in them that would have impelled the people to create a theatre of their own. In these motive forces are discernible strong currents of the popular mythology of modern, economic man. These secularized myths, called into being by an era of unprecedented material change, released tremendous energies and also channelled them into relevant contemporary forms, of which gold was a powerful example, but which also comprised a
variety of socio-cultural impulses, activities and institutions. The gold seekers' living out of the wider modes of their competing myths within the harsh realities of the Cariboo environment, evolved a strong social ethos and provided the impetus and the framework for the development of a community life in which theatre could play an important part; indeed both the deep-seated, archetypal impulses behind the myths and the historical particulars through which they were realized created a positive need for theatre, by virtue of its unique dimensions and capacities.

Next, early theatrical entertainments are considered within the context of that developing community, the tensions and obstacles that hindered it, and the emerging values and goals that animated it and gave it cohesion and coherence. Early attempts to found a permanent theatre are discussed in relation to the influences of that context and the theatrical expressions of them. Then the emphasis is shifted, the theatre takes centre stage and society is viewed in its context. The third chapter includes the establishment of the first Theatre Royal by the Cariboo Dramatic Association, their early activities, the impact of touring performers, the building of a new theatre as part of the community response to the Barkerville fire, and the opening night performances as significant occasions.

In two central chapters the Dramatic Association's popular repertory and its organizational and performance practices show that Caribooites selected, adapted and perceived elements characteristic of theatre's essential and unique capacities and its currently available forms and contents in ways that gave expression to their myths, ethos, societal concerns and personal and collective aspirations, within the context of a significant and effective theatrical ritual, shaped and shared in by a democratic and progressive community. Finally there is a discussion of subsequent theatrical developments, which paralleled, reflected and helped to effect the continuing social, economic and political growth of Barkerville, both of
which, in spite of worsening obstacles and threats to their existence, reached their apex in 1871, the year of Confederation, almost a decade after the rush.

An epilogue sketches the decline of Barkerville and its theatre as a result of the vulnerability of their isolated position and single industry basis to the larger political and economic forces that have since shaped British Columbia. The conclusions are that the initial hypotheses were correct: Barkerville's theatre was a vital part of—and played a vital part in—the growth of a mature community and embryonic, democratic culture out of the gold rush but also far beyond it; and theatre history and theatre itself are only meaningful and valuable in context—the context of what is most meaningful and valuable for the people involved.
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PROLOGUE

Could I grasp Nature's mysteries
I could write histories--
Hidden, undreamed,
Unlike what they seemed.

R. N. Campbell, "Questions?"
Horsefly, B. C.,
August 7, 1926.
In the spring of 1862 a ragged army of adventurers from many lands marched hundreds of weary and dangerous miles through the wilderness that was then British Columbia, their destination a still more trackless and forbidding mountain region known as Cariboo, and all because of a single irresistible word: gold. In the spring of 1868 a formal theatre opening took place, with two polite English farces presented by a local community dramatic association to a respectable and well-dressed audience. What has the one event to do with the other? That theatre opened in Barkerville, Williams Creek, Cariboo, centre of the gold rush that occurred six years earlier. Though many had left and some others had arrived since 1862, the performers and the audience were mainly drawn from the same people who had joined the original scramble to get rich quick, but were they the same?

Here is the crux of what initially mystified yet intrigued this would-be theatre historian in encountering the subject of theatrical activity in Barkerville, and it immediately raised some perplexing questions: what connections did the theatre have with the gold rush? Since the rush had ended four years earlier, why was a permanent theatre only established at this time, long after the period of maximum population and gold production? What separated it from the gold rush and what new or altered social tendencies did it belong to? And since the theatre was the creation of the local populace this brings us back to the question, what was the same and yet not the same about them? In asking why this particular kind of theatre emerged when and as it did, it is necessary to understand both what had brought those people at the time and what had caused them to remain that would also have created the need and will to establish a theatre by their own agency. And what could this "chaste and refined" theatre have had to do with a gold mining town, as such places are usually portrayed?

Indeed, here the problems were complicated for the most part, rather than being clarified, by looking at accounts of Barkerville and Cariboo. In
the first place, historians have tended to write only of "gold fever," the "craze for gold," the "lure," "lust," and "thirst" for gold, blissfully ignoring the question of what initially motivated thousands of people to suddenly uproot themselves in search of it, not to mention what had changed in those motives that some of them should have remained and built so strong an emblem of settled commitment as a civic theatre. One contemporary historian disparages the group of them as "flotsam and jetsam," which is at least an improvement on earlier descriptions of them as "the scum of the earth." All this is the more bewildering in view of the facts that most historians readily acknowledge that the gold rush is British Columbia's most decisive formative experience as a social and political entity and view it as having been hardly less influential in the creation of a Canada from sea to sea. Moreover, its participants included people who later attained unquestioned individual stature: several M. P.s, Senators and M. L. A.s, three provincial premiers, a Vancouver alderman, successful businessmen, government officials, even our first Superintendent of Education.

Aside from the morally and clinically pejorative connotations such blanket generalizations as "gold fever" entail, they are utterly, ludicrously incongruous with either the historical significance of the gold seekers as a group or the prominence of individuals among them. It seems an unfair and thoughtless way to treat our founding fathers, or even to treat ourselves who should wish to both honour and understand them. Perhaps it is eloquent of Canadians' fractured sense of identity (even a cause of it) and of the complacent reduction of our potentially treasured and meaningful past to something mean and contemptible (so in contrast to the Americans' often equally misguided idealization of theirs), which may be bound up with our oft-mentioned "national inferiority complex." The truth, surely, would be more likely to be found somewhere between the Canadian and American extremes, and by digging a little deeper and working a little harder at it, like the
gold seekers learned to do.

Even when shorn of their abnormal associations, if that is possible, gold fever and its ilk would still be complete blanks, shedding no light whatever on the forces that animated those people in the first instance or that continued to do so after the excitement of the rush and the visions of easy fortunes had subsided; indeed they could not aid our understanding, for the terms were actually coined during the nineteenth century and express many people's utter incomprehension, and Victorian disapproval, in the face of the unprecedented, unsettling and disruptive immediacy of the whole gold rush phenomenon. Professional historians' blithe, unexamined use of them a hundred years after the fact does not exactly inspire confidence in any of their other observations about the gold seekers and their society.

Nor does the question of why the theatre emerged when it did and not before receive any illumination from those quarters. In fact most historians see the area as having been in steady decline after the end of the rush in 1864. Yet in that year Barkerville was not even the dominant centre of business, population or mining, while an established theatre was not founded until the winter of 1867-1868. Nor was that theatre an isolated development: a number of other institutions were founded about the same time, and the theatre was but a part of a continuing process of social and cultural growth that went on for several years after. Isabel Bescoby, in a thesis that merits publication far more than most other writings on Cariboo, has usefully and perceptively discerned much of this process, though she is at a loss to account for it or adequately define it, and she, too, sees Barkerville as declining from 1865 on.

But in fact the theatre and the other institutions and activities did not develop in isolation from the fortunes of the miners—how could they in an isolated region where gold mining was the only economic base? In actuality it was not until just prior to the first Theatre Royal that Barkerville
became the central community in Cariboo, and by 1867–1868 the town was booming as never before; and so, of course, was mining activity, with the 1867 season considered the most generally profitable to date and with prospects never brighter. Clearly historians have had a rather narrow definition even of what constitutes—or should be held to constitute—economic decline, not to mention of what makes a vital society. This is merely to consider the why and the when of the theatre's emergence; the conventional views of Barkerville do even less to explain the nature of the theatre, so different from those usually associated with mining towns, or what it meant to the people involved and what purposes it may have had in the community.

To be fair, it should be acknowledged that the mining historians, Rickard and Morrell, have written with considerable sensitivity and insight about gold miners in general, humanizing them, seeing them as pioneers of civilization in the west. Like Bescoby they have been most helpful in suggesting the approach of the present study. The same may be said for F. W. Howay, unquestionably the finest historian B. C. has produced, who has written of the "energy, courage and perseverance" (operative words as we shall see) of those "pioneers. . . . We have builded upon their foundations. But have we caught their spirit." He has thus suggested the logically prior question to be considered here in relation to the theatre and its society: what was their spirit? He has also implied part of the answer.

It has been felt necessary, then, to examine the theatre in its social and economic context, and in this case that means providing such a context in the first part of the study, in order to arrive at some understanding of the forces that shaped the existence and essence of the theatre and what it expressed and communicated for its audience. Hopefully theatre and context will each shed some light on the other. In fact, considering how little is really known of the origins of theatre as such, a frontier theatre provides
a kind of surrogate origin, a new beginning (a phrase that also implies much about the particular theatre and community of Barkerville), and it is quite literally the beginning of theatre for a society as new as British Columbia. Therefore the subject presents a potentially valuable test case for assessing what has been most decisive in determining the emergence and development of theatre in a given Canadian community, its basic relations to that society, and the human wants and needs it has fulfilled; not only through its contents or its forms, but more fundamentally by the form and content inherent in the theatrical medium itself, by what theatre uniquely, irreducibly, is and does. Indeed, because theatre's essential, defining elements and capacities are trans-historical, archetypally human, and because the democratic assumptions, economic entitlements, individual aspirations, and social values that underlay pioneer culture are still commonly held among Canadians, the subject should have contemporary as well as historical relevance.

Thus it should tell something about the nature of a community that does actively want and need such an entity as a theatre as a fixed part of its collective, institutional life. That the given community was a frontier one makes the undertaking especially useful, for when people build literally from the ground up, with only their own resources and under every obstacle, nothing they produce should be simply taken for granted, and that in itself would be a salutary exercise for a society such as ours. That it was a pioneer society suggests that while we may not find anything absolutely new, we may re-discover some things of value, just as the Cariboo pioneers did not discover gold as such, but discovered it anew, found it in unexpected places. As this study will attempt to show, they did that with many other elements, less material but no less valuable.

By the same token this work claims no originality except in the original sense of that much-abused word as going to the source. In keeping with the case study approach and the representative nature and manageable scope
of the object of inquiry, it will seek, in the manner of a humanist's lab
experiment, to test some prevalent assumptions and hypotheses about theatre,
and in particular its relation to society. Most basic of these is simply
that theatre is important to people's lives and essential to the well being
of society, which its very existence in the stripped down society of the
frontier already indicates. What seems to be most important and essential
about it, and what ought to be in a society that considers itself democratic,
will be another area of concern.

Other, related ideas include the notions that theatre is a social
mirror; that it allows a society to experience its identity and jointly
recognize, reaffirm or enhance the basis of it, the individual to experience
himself as a part of it; that it therefore does not exist, and cannot be
understood, hermetically, but rather its time-presence-action characteristics
bring it the closest of all the arts to life itself, and its communal,
cooperative and ceremonial aspects make it the most dependent on society;
that it can only be understood, currently or historically, in its societal
context; and that as a medium, in the late Marshall McLuhan's sense of human
extensions, the theatre itself and the ways it is used constitute its most
important message, regardless of content. One assumption that will hope­
fully be found wanting is that espoused by some sociologists of the theatre
that it can only affect has no effect or issue beyond the performance.

A central working hypothesis that will attempt to provide a fundamental
and comprehensive context in which to examine theatre in Barkerville is that
theatre articulates and elaborates in the most immediate and concrete forms
the myths and ethos that define and orient a social group and its members
within it. Theatre's relationship to myth and ritual is not merely assumed
as prehistoric and causally formative, but also considered as continuous
and analogical, even symbiotic. With the increasing secularization of modern
society the ritual enactment of its most widely held and compelling myths
was assumed by the theatre—an increasingly popular theatre in consequence. American scholars seem to have been most responsive in this area to the accumulating evidence to support the insight of Cassirer and others, that the myth-making faculty in man is constant and compulsive . . . and while there is an understandable reticence on the part of scholars to seek out the myths of contemporary society in the same dispassionate manner in which they have studied the ethnic mythologies of ancient cultures, yet the truth lies merely around the corner. 5

No doubt this is because American culture has been particularly fertile ground for the propagation of both secular mythology and popular art; hence they have begun to take the latter seriously in terms of the former. Yet Canada has, after all, had the leadership of Northrop Frye in pointing out the extent to which the coherence and cohesion of any society and of the forms of its cultural and artistic expression derive from, and reflect and extend, such myths.

Accordingly, the first chapter will attempt to discern the common elements in the motivations of the gold seekers in terms of two compelling myths and their elaboration, under the impact of environment and shared experiences, into a common set of values, or ethos. Since myth-making is a compulsive activity, and since the rationalist temper of modern man has tended to hide the true nature of his ideologies and their "primitive" of unconscious influences, these popular myths were not named as such; in this essay names, that seem to evoke their crucial concerns have therefore been devised to render them capable of subsequent, easy reference. It should be noted in passing that the term "protean man" has also been used by the American sociologist and psycho-historian Robert Jay Lifton, but this has only been brought to attention following the completion of this study, which arrived at the conception independently; but this very coincidence of thought would seem to enhance the validity and applications of the notion, which is also employed here in a rather different sense than that in which Lifton apparently uses it, and he does not explicitly apply it to nineteenth century
secular mythology.

These myths and the ethos that evolved from the attempts to realize their goals and values within the particulars of the Cariboo environment, together with the effects of those experiences on the people who remained, provide the conceptual framework for understanding something of their spirit, its typical and unique features, and ultimately the connections between the gold rush, the community and the theatre. The second chapter will carry forward that framework in relation to early theatrical entertainment in the context of the development of Cariboo society and community identity, through the collective enlargement of the terms of their myths and ethos. The widest possible definition of theatre should be borne in mind throughout.

Subsequent chapters will discuss the circumstances in which the two successive theatre buildings were established; the mythic and local significance of their popular dramatic repertory; the nature of the main performing group, its relationship to the community, and the ritual meaning and functions of its performances. The latter themes will be further applied in the final chapter to other theatrical developments, as part of the continued social and cultural growth of Barkerville, all of which reach their apex in the summer of 1871, ten years after the beginnings of the Cariboo gold rush. Indeed the basic thesis of this essay is: that the phrase "gold rush theatre," applied by Michael Booth in the only published account of the subject, is a complete misnomer; that theatre in Barkerville grew out of the gold rush but also grew well beyond it; that it was a central, meaningful, purposeful part of an integral process by which the people of Cariboo strove to found a permanent and progressive community; and that the theatre played a crucial role in furthering that vital process. All of this will become clear in context.
CHAPTER ONE

COMMON MOTIVE FORCES FOR THE GOLD RUSH AND THE THEATRE

Far, far from home we miners roam,
We feel its joys no more;
These we have sold for shining gold
On Fraser River's shore.

W. H. D.
"Miners' Song on Fraser River,"
1859.

It was truer perhaps to say of these men
that they were seeking their fortune than
that they were seeking gold: for when they
found gold their custom was not to keep it
but to seek their fortune further.

W. P. Morrell
The Gold Rushes.
To say that those who joined the rush to Cariboo in 1862 were motivated by the desire for gold is to say precious little: of course they desired it, but why? Man had sought gold since before recorded history, but never had thousands of individuals freely done so on three separate continents. "The gold rush is a modern phenomenon," and belongs essentially to the latter half of the nineteenth century, specifically to the Victorian Age. Since that age was literally and spiritually the formative period of our young nationhood, and since the gold rush events of '58 and '62 and many of those involved in them brought civilizing, democratizing, nationalistic impulses to the feudal "Hudson's Bayocracy" of British Columbia, decisively willing its Confederation with Canada, it is understandable that such crucial occurrences should still capture the imagination. It is also important that we should continue to wonder and to ask "why?" Since the gold seekers also first established the theatre in Western Canada, it is equally important to ask it in relation to that theatre in order to appreciate its meaning and value for them and us.

While the common references to gold rush participants as "argonauts" imply a mythic link with Jason, the first legendary seeker of gold, and hint at archetypal components in their motivations, yet the sudden mass embarkings on such quests indicate the prompting also of newly awakened energies in them and the effects of recent historical developments. If it is said that they were "all on fire to make or mend their fortunes," that would seem more evocative and more accurate, both mythically and historically. Gold, after all, was but a means to an end, which is always a distinction worth making. Now, to make, or mend, one's fortune is to make, or mend, one's fate—at least in this world. It is to alter a person's lot in life, his status, his future opportunities. More fundamentally, in the very act of seeking it he establishes a sense of independence and freedom, of the power to determine his own existence, of an individual superiority to his given circumstances.

Thereby he seeks a new start in life; one might even say "a new life,"
for the suggestion of rebirth in secular terms is highly appropriate to a materialistic age in which banks were built like temples. It is, in any case, a common aspiration and wish fulfillment, then and now. Though imaginative and quasi-religious yearnings are quite discernible, the gold rush also addressed very concrete concerns, even desperate needs; its people were not just idle dreamers but participants in epochal events, involved in practical doings with practical results. That the gold rush appealed to the whole man is the crucial point; a more sound and complete, more integral experience of being was precisely the object of the exercise; like most quests it was a voyage as much internal as external, and above all a search for the self.

The discovery of hidden worth in the ground, material worth of a universal and absolute kind, held out the possibility of affirming the individual's own hidden worth—that sense of a larger self within, which he feels is insufficiently recognized, of a greater potential that has been allowed too little scope for realization. This is a vital clue to the connections between the gold rush and the social and theatrical activity that followed it.

Thus, while the specifics vary with the individual's social background, occupation, and personal life, the bulk of contemporary references reveal the same underlying pattern of motive and aspiration, common to all: first, some strong dissatisfaction with their existence, something critically missing, inadequate or confining in it; and, second, the desire to willfully and decisively change their lives, to transform the shape of their existence through the seeking of hidden worth in the form of gold. The one may not always have been fully conscious, the other not always clearly defined (or defined in terms insufficiently wide and balanced for the individual's good), but they were unmistakably operative, as in the following instances.

For the educated and the socially ambitious the vision of the transformed self might be quite grand and elaborate:

Dreams of the magic letters M. L. A. (Member of the Legislative
Assembly, I may inform the uninitiated] appended to my name when my beard had grown a little, capital stock in mining companies, and other happy tricks of fortune, passed before my mental vision in pleasant array. 3

Not a few of the gold seekers were sons of the minor gentry, of the type Bernard Shaw called "downstarts"—younger sons, who did not inherit, were untrained for trade and commerce, and had difficulty obtaining or being content with a place in the social hierarchy. Gold, representing "power, place, and luxury," was a powerful magnet for such displaced persons. Others came to escape some unfortunate change and to mend fortunes and reputations:

 Refugees from bankruptcy, disgrace or family strife, suffered in some other part of the world, are to be met with in Victoria every few yards. But among the unfortunate are some of the most estimable men I have ever seen. 5

There were many from the aspiring middle classes, causing Justice Matthew Begbie to remark that it seemed as if every good family in Britain and the east had sent the best son they possessed for the development of the Cariboo mines.

While the opportunity to "start in poor and go home as a peer" was an exciting stimulus for many, others were content with the hope of more moderately altered circumstances. Wrote one Canadian:

 we thought we might be among the lucky ones who could go to the Cariboo gold fields and be back in a few short years with a competency to live among our friends and have comfortable homes for the time of sickness and old age. 7

A competency referred, as did an "independence" or a "pile," to anything between five and ten thousand dollars, more than a labourer could expect to earn over a lifetime of toil. Thus it did ensure one of material competence, the independence to buy a farm, start a business or purchase an annuity.

Many of the young men were also eager for self-testing, adventure, proving their manhood and enlarging their autonomy, in a sort of informal "rite of passage." They sought independence, too, from the constraints of Victorian society, to which their parents were probably resigned and sought to resign them as well. "Whom do we send to distant parts of the world?"
asked an Anglican Bishop during a meeting of the Columbia Mission Society.

We send the more adventurous; for the most part those who have something of recklessness in their character, those with whom the laws of society and the straitlacedness of the laws at home do not particularly well agree, who long for the opportunity of a little more expansiveness, that is of letting their own character lose something of the stereotyped condition of character at home, and assume for itself what its own natural aptitudes lead it to develop. 8

Enough has been written about the restrictions and repressions of established societies of the time to require no comment here, other than to note that the quotation, whatever was consciously intended, positively drips with connotations of social class stifling moralism. At any rate, such statements do show that personal development and the realization of individual potential were definitely involved from the outset in the motives of gold seekers.

That at least part of the discontent and aspiration concerned specific and genuine grievances of the socially, politically and economically unenfranchised lower classes is exemplified in an 1862 letter from a member of the British working poor:

Would I advise you to come out. I must pause ere I answer. Are you healthy? Can your system sustain hardships? Are you fond of adventure? Can you brave danger? If so, come. As for me, I would rather brave all the wrath of the elements of creation, and dare all the torments of human invention to acquire an independency than crawl like a worm through the mire of poverty. There are thousands who will perhaps curse the day that brought here in search of gold, while thousands will bless the spirit of enterprise that led them hither. For, my dear Li----, money is power. . . ."9

This was by T. Gwallter Price, called "Cuhelyn" and also a well known bard in his native Wales. The spirit of "make it or break it" and economic "either—or" is but the existential reflection of a time in which money was being increasingly felt to make or break the man, causing many to "crawl on the face of the earth as if they did not belong to it."11

Perhaps we should say: as if it did not belong to them. The bitter protest of the British working classes at feeling dispossessed of a rightful share in the "progress" of Britain and the wealth of Empire, produced or won
by the rank and file, is strongly summed up in a gold miner's poem, subtitled

A Complaint.

A right I claim and not a boon--
'Twill make the future bright--
A portion of the lands they won
For all who claim a right.

So sings the "Sunburnt-Goddess" of the title, and when "the landless one"
goes to seek gold as compensation, she, who symbolizes the spirit of great-
ness in the British people, leaves with him—a rhymer's revenge. The sense
of one's rightful, divinely ordered portion is as old as the Ancient Greek
notion of fate; the new conception of each individual's inalienable right to a
real stake in the country's progress and the insistence that the worker's
worth be recognized and his labours properly rewarded are components of our
frontier myth and ethic, and of the expectations of British Columbians since.
Gold was a great and sudden equalizer.

Economic dependence as a stifling of human rights and potential and
self-respect was not only felt by the growing numbers of the labouring and
artisan classes, but also by the burgeoning clerical and mercantile
employees. Nor is it necessary to turn for examples to the industrializing
urban centres of Britain or the Eastern United States; the following letter
appeared in the Victoria British Colonist in 1863:

I would ask these task masters to close their offices at 12
o'clock on Saturday, and at four in the afternoon on every
other day, so as to allow their victims a breath of Heaven's
pure air and, perhaps, add a few years to their short lives.
Verily there is truth in Gray's beautiful lines:
'Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.'
How many great men may indeed be wasting their precious
lives in the drudging offices of merchants.

There were many "clerks and young men of that stamp" and "shopmen" (shop-
owners too) "with souls above yard measures and tape," for whom gold held
the promise of cultivating that unseen flower.

The sense of seeking one's earthly fate, of making one's fortune as
Seizing control of it, is most eloquently encapsulated by Monsieur B. Deffis, a French professor of languages and veteran of the California Gold Rush who figured largely in the cultural life of Barkerville.

There is no use denying it, gold is all powerful and is the true mistress of destiny.\textsuperscript{16}

This echoes a similar statement by the gold-seeking discoverer of the new world: “Gold is a wonderful thing! Whoever possesses it is master of everything he desires.” As Robert Heilbroner has observed,

The sentiments of Christopher Columbus were the sentiments of an age and hastened the advent of a society oriented toward gain and chance and activated by the chase after money.

Acquisitive man—as distinguished from acquisitive individuals—is specifically modern man; gain "as a ubiquitous characteristic of society is as modern an invention as printing," while the social and moral sanction of it is even more so.\textsuperscript{17}

Well before the time of the gold rushes, then, the economic revolution -- "the most important revolution, from the point of view of shaping modern society, that ever took place"--was complete. The ordering and survival of all previous societies had been centred in either tradition and custom or a chain of authority and command. These were the economy and kept most people unquestioningly in their places; any desire to change one's existence was answered by religion and awaited the next world. That each person not only could but should—indeed must—constantly strive to better his material lot became universal only with the rise of capitalism, with the structuring and continuance of society inhering principally in the general struggle for and lure of gain. Thus the gold seekers' motives were merely an intense awareness of the basic law of modern society and the conditions of the freedom and necessity of modern economic man, to which even a poet like "Cuhelyn" was subject. It was Samuel Butler who said,

Though wisdom cannot be gotten for gold, still less can it be gotten without it.\textsuperscript{19}
For Bernard Shaw, dramatist of protean possibilities, money "is life." 20

It is no wonder, then, that gold seekers spoke of gaining a "competence" or an "independence," for with "the secularization of the sacred, and the sanctification of secular life" inner worth and outward wealth were implicitly equated, as they have been ever since, and explicitly often confused. W. W. Hill (later active in the Barkerville theatre) wrote several times in his mining account book, "To be or not to be..." The gold rushes were not freakish occurrences but supra-typical mass manifestations of the venture spirit of capitalism, just as gold itself, the coin of every realm, was wealth in its purest, most concrete form. And whenever the economic system seems unstable and threatening, as it did then and as it does now, people will strive to possess the precious metal and we are forcibly reminded that we are all gold seekers after our fashion.

In fact, T. A. Rickard, dean of mining historians, views them as the bold inaugurators of subsequent waves of immigration. The gold miner who, once he has staked his claim, "shouts a glad welcome to all who care to follow," was the "scout far ahead of an army of development. Trade follows the flag, it is true, but the flag follows the pick." 23 Rebecca Gibbs, a black woman who joined the rush, sums up the common motive of both the gold seeker and the general immigrant: to change one's life for "something better," given the opportunity.

Something better in the future
Every heart is longing for;
Wishing, longing, ever thinking
Something better may occur. 24

Gold, as a universal standard of worth, the "philosopher's stone" of capitalist alchemy, represented that opportunity most vividly, rousing the bolder, more intelligent and imaginative—as well as the more reckless, foolish and naive—on a quest part romantic, part utilitarian, obscuring the risks and uncertainties with the aid of a flattering press. The difference from the
later land rushes was one of degree more than of kind.

The restless longing for "something better" might stand as a motto for the whole age and its strivings, for what has been called "The Bleak Age" and "The Age of Equipoise" has also been dubbed "The Age of Improvement." The desire of millions to economically transform the shape of their existence was part of a whole climate of self-willed change, a galvanizing force of the common ideology embodied in popular education, social and political reform, personal character-building, and self help. These were active movements which spawned an astonishing range of practical agencies, institutions, programmes and periodicals. Samuel Smiles' Self Help was merely the best selling example of guide books by apostles of the new creed, filled with accounts of "self-made men" from all spheres of life, held out for emulation by all.  

Material improvement was of critical importance, since without it a man was not "his own master," but it was only a means to improvement of all the faculties and to the goal of their integration:

The highest object of life we take to be to form a manly character, and to work out the best development possible, of body and spirit--of mind, conscience, heart and soul. This is the end: all else ought to be regarded as the means. 

It is not just that money was put in its place and its right uses emphasized, while moral and social betterment, self culture and education, were equally extolled, but that a vital, reciprocal relationship between economic and non-material values was sought. Adherence to other values and the faithful application of traditional virtues were felt as important for economic improvement, while the exercise of the former in pursuit of the latter could contribute in turn to mental and socio-moral improvement. There have been many self help and success books since those of Smiles and his contemporaries (and still are) but few, if any, have been as sensitive to the pitfalls of economic man, or have presented as convincing models of psycho-social individuation and personal integrity amid the conditions of post-capitalist society.
That many of the gold seekers, especially at first, were unable to keep gold in perspective or strike a balance between it and other needs and values accounts for the tales of men unhinged by sudden wealth or disappointment. But this too was but symptomatic of problems that we can hardly pretend to have solved. That ultimately a majority attempted to reassert the principle of transforming the whole man helped to produce the society of which the theatre was an important element.

Self help "was a myth. But myths can play an important role in motivating social action. . . " They are also more than simply fairy tales or delusions, a misapprehension that is becoming all too prevalent—and all too revealing. They constitute a form of elemental philosophy, mediating between the psyche and the cosmos, subjective and objective orientation, personal and social integration; they are indispensible for making comprehensible, hence controllable, those forces felt to govern human existence. For the nineteenth century they were forces of unprecedented change, so sweeping in their altering of every area of life, so unpredictable in their consequences, that they seemed as remote and inhuman as cosmic forces; "they were terrifyingly fundamental and aroused men's deepest responses."

Interacting with the decline in religious certitudes and the authority of the Christian mythology, this pervasive material change awakened a myth-making consciousness even among most of the educated, and produced an equally vast network of popular mythology, amounting to a secular religion and reflecting the need for a sense of comprehension and control. The collective myths, such as those concerning democracy, progress, faith in science and technology, the conquest of nature, and lands of opportunity, were interrelated through the common desire for constructively willed change. The gold rush, like emigration generally, was bound up with all of them, and without the very substantial changes in transportation, communication, and political attitudes which validated such myths, those mass movements could hardly have
taken place.

The individual's desire to transform the shape of his existence is the central motif of what we might call the myth of protean man: an optimistic affirmation of the personal will, answering his need to feel some control of the forces of change as they affected his life, rather than feel a victim of them; to hew out and define a congenial place for himself and to achieve a role and identity that recognized his worth, gave life coherence and purpose, in a civilization which no longer sufficiently provided them. The self-transforming impulse of this popular myth was a recurrent historical motif for the archetype of rebirth, a universal phase or pattern of the psychic process of individuation or self realization. Because this process is the most fundamental and deeply inherent in the psyche, engaging all its functions and reaching back into the collective unconscious, and because it was being activated by the most pervasive and imperative socio-economic pressures, tremendous energies, partly or wholly withdrawn from religious symbols, were being liberated within the mass of people and vested in this secular myth.

Monetary success, self help, varieties of personal improvement, social and occupational mobility, and a range of delightful, new, acquired tastes, interests, and qualities, newly accessible prerogatives, participations, and possessions, were among the evolved historical symbols with which the energies were identified and could be harnessed and channelled into available cultural forms and social activities. The hero of this myth was the self made man, protean ideal of a protean age, exhibiting the heroic, self determining capacities of everyman; forging a new identity from that expanded sense of self, seeking his fortune in an expanding universe. Gold represented, in the most compelling contemporary form, the universal "jewel of the self" in the individuation of economic man.

For all their allure, such popular myths are by no means writ in stone, and are even more open to misunderstanding and misapplication than sacred
ones. Fortunately in the case of the gold seekers, the inherent dangers of the materialist bias becoming exclusive, an end justifying the means; of self realization rationalizing mere selfishness, serving a monstrous, ego inflated tin god—or a golden one—were offset, the non-material values and cultural impulses strengthened, by a complementary myth and countervailing motive force common to mass of argonauts. "Home. O Home!" sighed one of them in a letter, and probably spoke for them all at one time or another. Of course the feelings of most were ambivalent, for home contained whatever had aroused their discontent and impulse to escape, as well as much that was pleasant, familiar, comforting, beloved. That the longing for home in some form was the other common motive of the gold seekers is obvious enough on the face of it to require little substantiation.

Home, too, comprised a variety of associations, including the personal home and family, friendships, community, church, and homeland: all that might contribute to a person's sense of belonging. Those aspects most missed and yearned for naturally varied with the individual experience. Most often of course it was the loved ones. For many the enormity of the step they had taken did not "hit home" until they reached the strange new land, when portraits of mothers and sweethearts were brought out from hidden recesses and looked at more often than they had been in many weeks. Usually it was the feminine associations that drew the strongest responses, representing a sense of security in an insecure experience, and, for the predominantly male gold rush participants, keeping alive the gentler, more sensitive elements in themselves. To Robert Harkness homesickness embraced only his wife and children.

I am not properly speaking home-sick; home and friends are as nothing to me compared with my household gods, and but for you and our babes it would cause me no regret if I never again saw Canada, though I should as soon think of settling in the moon as in this country.

Having left because of bankruptcy and debts, his other memories were somewhat
less than pleasant. 33

As the last quotation indicates, Cariboo, with its rough landscape and climate, void of human scale and features, was initially alienating. For "Tal O Eifion," miner and poet, who came with his father and left no immediate family, it was the homeland that was missed: "exiled from thee, fair Wales."

This silent land feels lonely,
No song's born on the breeze,
But morn's wind sighing only
Amongst the tallest trees.
This makes my fancy wander
Along the distant shore,
And memory loves to ponder
Upon the graves of yore. 34

This was especially common among the clannish Welsh and Scots, and in time led them to establish fraternal societies. The yearning for a homeland, a transcendent sense of continuity and belonging, also had a powerful influence on the later Confederation movement.

Others missed the established community and the patterns of social and cultural life which they had once taken for granted. That, and being "at a loss as to how to spend the long winter evenings," could leave "the imaginative youth," bereft of "fond friendships or the proprieties of the debating club," open to temptations. But this cultural homesickness also played a part in spurring them to fill that emptiness and determining the later social development of Barkerville. Though many sought to escape the "demands of Christian life and worship," or at least the excessively imposed ones, some, like John Evans or A. L. Fortune, missed the church, kept the Sabbath, and even held open air services.

To put their yearnings in perspective, it should be emphasized that this motive was also a heightened reflection of society as a whole; homelessness and the longing for home were overwhelming experiences of the age, just as were change and the creed of protean man. Indeed the one interacted with
and influenced the other. Social, economic and industrial change had altered and even wiped out whole ways of life, customary occupations, human bonds and dealings. "The cash nexus," mourned Carlyle, was now the sole determinant of most societal relationships, and he regretted the decline of community life and feeling. Urbanization, the land enclosures, and industrialism had replaced much of the traditional rural and agrarian order. The stability of family life was weakened and threatened by such tensions; it was a "far from settled period and pre-eminently the Age of Emigration." It was also "an age of many skepticisms" and "most of the faiths which we received from the Victorians had already been shaken."

Thus the mid-nineteenth century hovered uncertainly between The Deserted Village and The New Jerusalem. The idealized memories and traditions left over from past homes and the idealistic dreams and expectations of what it might be in the future made up the home that most people carried in their heads, and which we often take to have been the literal reality. These memories and visions and the prevailing sense of homelessness were the soft underbelly of the age and account for the quaintness, nostalgia, and sentimentality perceived in much Victorian culture. They constitute what we shall term the myth of a happy home: a myth in that no home is ever as happy in fact as absence, memory, or expectation would make it appear; and also in that it, too, offered a form of simple philosophy made up of learned and traditional norms and codes, archetypal patterns and their living symbols, together with those received religious truths that still retained some allegiance. It was the opposite side of the experiential coin, offering complementary, and even contradictory, claims to those forces and impulses with which the protean myth was aligned. It clung to the old and the traditionally sanctioned, the repositories of security, stasis and order in a period of intense upheaval.

The present, personalized symbol of the ideal home was that of the
middle class family. With much of the energetic force from the weakened religious symbols attached to the home, this secular ideal had come to be viewed as a "holy institution," an earthly pattern of heaven, rather than the other way round. A poem by a gold miner illustrates the wide currency of this:

Hail, happy home of conquered love
Eden of earth, emblem of that above.

So does another referring to "the sacred soil of home" and Harkness: "household gods," a typically middle class expression which reveals how literally home had become infused with much of the enormous, and potentially dangerous, energy of the God-archetype, the expression of life force in the psyche.

From an ontological point of view, it is through this symbol that the individual may experience his relation to the total life process; and from the psychological point of view it is the symbol that carries the largest sums of concentrated energy in the psyche.

When projected and channelled outward, in the family especially but also in all the symbols associated with home and their personal, interpersonal, societal, and cultural forms, such energies were thereby diffused, safely finding higher common denominators of expression rather than lower ones in the ego or in gold, which already claimed considerable allegiance as it was.

Hence the importance and influence of the multiple dimensions of home in the collective consciousness; its stabilizing effect on otherwise volatile societies; the extent to which it and its constituents were hymned in poetry, song and story, with old houses and their objects treated as holy relics; and the great expansion of divers forms of cultural activity, involving larger numbers of people than ever before in history. The living symbols of home, and their ability to give meaningful, fulfilling expression to the heavy charge of spiritual impulses and deep emotional needs carried by those energies, account for why God was often very much alive for people—including many in Cariboo—for whom any organized religion was a dead letter. For secular man God took on something of a secular existence. Indicative of the shift of
emphasis is the extent to which the church, which had formerly sustained man's earthly home was now sustained by it; this became especially true in Cariboo.

This myth of a happy home interacted with the protean myth in that the middle class home, family and cultural life were symbols of approved success and social mobility, and inculcated the gospel of self help which they also served to exemplify. Yet they also provided a framework of established, applicable moral codes and virtues, in terms of which the pursuit of those goals was warranted and sanctioned. Thus the idealized home, whether "humble" or middle class, was a court of appeal in which to judge or correct the values and actions of men and society in a period of shifting certitudes, an index of those things to be held to. Central to that was the Victorian conviction that "love is best," which offered a transcendent value and a direct experiential link with relevant religious verities, an avenue for their validation and employment in a materialist society. Being sublimated sex, or "conquested love"—socially channelled instinctual energy and emotion—it was undoubtedly the source of much other-directed activity, for, as Kenneth Clark has noted, kindness and philanthropy as generally held values were products of the nineteenth century ("love thy neighbour" secularized), as were the modern notions of service and civic responsibility. As something open to all, that could not be bought or sold, it offered something to live for, endowed life "with meaning and a purpose."

Of course the reality behind the middle class ideal was "often a veritable prison" with prostitution and disease flourishing in the alleys behind it (just as the romanticized "humble home" was often "poverty, hunger and dirt"), it nonetheless exerted an overwhelming pressure for social conformity. It was a well defined, stable and confident part of society—an example to labouring men and aristocrats alike. By the same token, although the gold miners may have sought escape from the confining aspects of the ideals (such externalized "gods" may demand excess—
ive servitude) as well as the unpleasant conditions of the realities, yet the congenial and psychically necessary elements of both ultimately merged and reasserted themselves for the majority; so did their socio-cultural impulses.

For individual miners the myth provided a continuity of codes of right conduct; the memory of lessons and examples, of cherished relationships, ensured a kind of conscience on one's shoulder, often firmly enshrined in the conscious attitude. Wrote one veteran:

I have never yet conducted myself in any place or country I have yet been in that any relation of mine will have cause to blush for my conduct, nor have I acted in any dishonorable dealings with my fellow man that I would not be welcomed back to any place I have ever lived in.  

Another wrote of his sister being his "guiding star by night and day."

When Satan's arts around me roll
A sister saves my shipwrecked soul.

Such intense identifications with learned patterns and fond relations as a means of strengthening the spirit and maintaining self control amid trials, temptations and loneliness was clearly also at work in the order, respectability and propriety that developed in Cariboo life and in the oft mentioned kindness and generosity of gold miners.

That home and conquered love served many of them as a scale of values and consoling truths to set up in opposition to gold and its feverish excitement and gloomy disappointments, is evinced by the large number of poems they wrote, a considerable portion of which were simple musings on just such concerns. The recurring themes are summed up in verses like Gems Gold Cannot Buy:

There is a home gold cannot buy  
Precious, fadeless and eternal;  
Blest mansion of happiness nigh;  
Legacy of love supernal,  
Free from pits and snares infernal.  

and Better Than Gold, which includes, besides family and education,

A heart that can feel for a neighbour's woe  
And share his joys with a genial glow,
With sympathies large enough to enfold
All men as brothers, is better than gold.\textsuperscript{53}

Just as poetry reveals for us the highly-charged mythic imaginations of those people and the conflicts of their inner life, so for them its vocabulary of familiar forms and consecrated images allowed them to meaningfully express imagined realities, work out inner conflicts, and contain and comprehend unfamiliar external ones. The energies and aspirations common to the two myths and the tensions between them both worked to produce widespread artistic impulses among the miners.

They also made the relationship between their goals extremely variable. It was frequently the original aim to return home in triumph, having made their fortunes,

to admiring loving friends and spend the balance of their days in the enjoyment of unalloyed domestic happiness amidst all the luxuries the land affords.\textsuperscript{54}

The happy home thus followed from the self transformation, and some actually accomplished this. Or they might hope to improve or remedy the home they left in the process of mending their personal fortunes. Robert Harkness' intent was to make enough to pay his debts, realize his dream of owning a small newspaper, and heal a troubled marriage.\textsuperscript{55} Others hoped to better their lot so as to make possible a desired home, like the sailor who, because of a small fortune gained as a packer, returned and married the daughter of his former captain.\textsuperscript{56} Some sought "the means and will/To seek the land that suits us best."\textsuperscript{57}

As months became years with no fortune in sight, the two impulses inevitably conflicted, and often homesickness, together with sobering experience, won out and they returned or sought some easier clime. Many of course did not last that long, having been deluded by newspaper reports and their own pipe dreams of gold lying on the ground to be picked up, and being unwilling to confront hard mining realities. Others, leaving after an honest
effort, found that they had undergone a welcome transformation personally if not economically, and at the same time were more reconciled to, or had a new appreciation of, the homes they had left. Harkness, for example, did earn enough to pay most of his debts and found himself more mature and responsible —"older and wiser," and richer in what was "better than gold."

Could gold buy me such love as yours? Could gold buy such children as ours? No, verily. 58

A. L. Fortune described similar improvements in character and health and a new sense of physical and mental competence; at the same time some of his party began to ask, after some fatal accidents, "what are riches to happiness," and spoke of returning home. 59

For the rest, and it is with them that we shall be concerned, the spirit of protean quest prevailed over the desire to return. Perhaps they did not want to go back that badly, the stifling and unpleasant aspects under cold consideration outweighing the positive ones; after all, "absence makes the heart grow fonder" is decidedly double-edged. Besides, given the upheavals and uncertainties of the time, there was often little left to return to. The author of A Scattered Household mourned the effects of death and emigration on home and family:

And all has passed away—except in memory: Long may it live, a pleasing agony. 60

The last words, however, betray a sentimental emotional indulgence, implying that such effusions were penned—if unconsciously—to kill or purge the desire to return. Similarly, Alexander Allan (onetime owner of the Cariboo newspaper and a miner for 16 years) wrote regretfully of the hard fate that prevented me from visiting home before the stroke of death had made such a change in the family circle—I should have been much pleased to have seen my father and my sisters at least once before they were taken away. God grant that I may be permitted to see my old mother once more. 61

And yet the rarity of his letters to her question the strength of that desire (however sincere) when set against the other.
But as the powerful need for some sense of home and the pangs of guilt or isolation produced by their "desertions" could not be stilled, so the relationship between the gold seekers' ruling impulses continued to be problematic. An anonymous poem, *Virtue All Lovely*, compares virtue to gold:

> Memory treasures no sweeter joy;  
> 'Tis the gold of life without alloy.

It is "life's treasure ship," "safely homeward bound." Analogies on such themes were common among gold miners, yet the use of analogy contains the shock of simultaneous disparity and a concern with the potential incompatibility and confusion of those values: "Lost in the fogs of self gathering loss/Not guided by the pole star of the cross." 62

Ultimately the two common motive forces, which those symbols represent, are the historical particulars of two universal sets of human imperatives: being as becoming and being as belonging; the demands of the individual and the claims of the group; outward form and inner essence; even matter and spirit; and the difficulties of furthering the one without losing or weakening the other. The urgent need to find some psychological and ethical balance between such compelling forces, to distinguish contrasting values and keep them in proportion, is revealed generally in the social problems among the gold seekers, on the one hand, and social developments on the other.

While it was realized that "Vain are fond hopes built on golden dreams/
They only muddle life's ebbing streams,"

> Yet we will cheer the man of courage  
> Who digs deep to find the golden wedge—  
> Ophir's long-lost plummet of his hope.  
> If, then, Virtue with honor's given scope  
> Find him within these hallowed bounds,  
> Manliest theme, how musical it sounds! 63

Though any complete reconciliation is only possible in that transformed home of the next world, still man must live in this, and the dilemma reach some temporal resolution or working compromise. Since, says the poet, one can afford to be more virtuous with worldly honour than without it, let him seek
both here, in Cariboo.

As with the moral issues, so it was with the socio-cultural particulars of the myths of happy home and protean man. As Matthew Macfie observed,

Multitudes hastened in former years to California and Australia with the intention of simply acquiring a competency, and afterwards returning to their native country. But in most cases their affections gradually loosened from their former homes and entwined around their new abode.

At the same time he pointed out that

The immigrant accustomed to the distinctions of class obtaining in settled populations of the old world, will be struck to observe how completely the social pyramid is inverted in the colonies. Provided that the character of people be respectable, humble origin is felt to be much less a barrier to advancement.

Eventually, with the recognition that the country was "neither a perfect Elysium nor an absolute Sahara," the expectations of changing the shape of one's existence and the yearning for home were capable of being modified accordingly, with a realistic, satisfying compromise sought between the impulses by channelling and living them out in the new land.

It is these common motive forces, then, that provide the fundamental living connection between the gold rush and the development of society in general and the theatre in particular. The popular myths to which those impulses had given rise, when understood and acted upon in the wider dimensions and multiple levels of their symbols and goals, ensured that the gold seekers, in venturing into an unsettled wilderness and the company of strangers, were armed, psychologically, morally, socially and materially, for their survival and well being. Even the areas of tension and conflict between the two myths could, as has been indicated, yield to the thoughtful a beneficial dialectic, each acting as a potential check and balance against the exclusive effect of the other and the development of a "partial system" within the particular or collective consciousness.

For the heavily secularized and materialist faiths and concerns of the
time they held out the possibility of a worldly rebirth and an earthly pattern of heaven; moreover, the full terms of their aspirations and the sanctioned means of attaining them, being derived from those of Christian faith and traditional morality, were not incompatible with them. They set forth a moderate course between success and happiness, the lure of gain and the demands of the good, freedom and responsibility, and other oppositions intensified by the age of economic man, and a goal to aim toward of a psycho-social "salvation" from the temptations of selfish egotism and the devils of determinism. They presented jointly a composite image of external conditions and practical guides for a fuller self realization, for personal integrity—as both wholeness and soundness of being—in positive relation to that of society. Like all collectively believed myths, they provided an informal warrant or charter for establishing and maintaining a well adjusted individuality and community.

Because of their archetypal roots the mythic motive forces galvanized huge sums of psychic energy, which interacts reciprocally with social and cultural development. On the one hand, society and culture only exist to the extent that man has a super-abundance of energy beyond what is needed for survival; on the other, man is a social being and it is only by living in groups that psychic energy is generated from purely biological energy, while the survival and vitality of the human group also require social rules, activities, purposes, cultural forms and rituals, which ensure that such life force is neither weakened nor inadequately or destructively expressed. They are opposite ends of a continuum, but the tensions between them necessitate and produce a system of meaningful symbols, which the human consciousness can recognize, believe in and identify with, in order that energies may move forward confidently and productively in social relations.

With their multiplicity of strong associations the myths of protean man and happy home constituted such a symbol structure, and were the vital trans-
formers in this energy circuit, without which the mutual reinforcement and shaping of energy and society could not have taken place. They were symbols of the nature and functions that Carl Jung terms "analogues," vehicles or mechanisms "by which psychic energy moves from its origin in instinctual energy to some cultural activity. . . . What can then be expressed is not actually psychic energy, however, but specific sums of energy carried in the form of some image or figure that is experienced strongly." They are spontaneous formations in which the shadowy, undifferentiated archetypes of the objective unconscious, distillations of collective, universal human experiences into latent psychic potentialities, are manifested in consciousness; analogues differentiate them and the raw energies they carry into other forms and values that "can pass through and find expression in life." 66

Such symbols are experienced strongly, as concrete, living realities meaningful for large numbers of people, by virtue of their generic source and their particularized relevance for the conditions and needs of a given historical milieu. They also have personal significance because

the archetypes of the collective experience, which are the symbols of the society, must be expressed through individuals; on the other hand, individuals must rely on collective material for the basic content of their personalities. 67

Linking the formation of the group with the development of the individual out of it, through the collective representations of both psyche and society, the analogues that informed the myths were indispensible for the constructive channelling of the energies let loose in the "insane-scramble for wealth" of the gold rush, in which sanity did ultimately prevail. They were the crucial nexus in the chain of events that produced a vital community with a cultural and theatrical life; were the very human forms and materials of which those were made.

Indeed, the action of seeking that which is of value is itself an archetypal motif and "transformer," capable of turning the search in other direc-
Better than gold is a thinking mind
That in the realm of books can find
A treasure surpassing Australian ore,
And live with the great and good of yore.

Art itself, as well as being a result of them ("the muses"), functions as an extension of analogues: externally manifesting and particularizing archetypes, converting energies into meaningful forms, directing them to objects of value. But whereas poetry is a personal medium, theatre is not only a social and cooperative, but a collective one. It requires, says Northrop Frye, a strong element of social cohesion, and does not thrive in highly individualistic societies. Yet the miners were highly individualistic, and the chaotic and uncertain nature of the gold rush, with the egoistic and materialist tendencies it addressed, aggravated this, making them "excitable and unsteady in character, nomadic in habits, impulsive in their feelings and exclusive in their associations."

By way of compensation, the common motive forces, which were initially all that many of them did have in common, constituted what Frye calls myths of concern or belief, comprising what "it most concerns a society to know," and existing "to hold society together." These were their functions in the unsettled parent cultures and were even more critical in a heterogeneous pioneer one. They were an "open" mythology in the pluralism of competing myths, which fostered the fusion of widely divergent people into an open, pluralistic community. They were also open to all, in their tenets and goals, and were democratic and levelling in that they sprang from rising entitlements among the mass of people, and in that the consequence of living them out in the new land of resources and opportunities was to render irrelevant the "social pyramid" of older, relatively closed societies.

Thus the two main myths of concern provided a foundation of continuity with the home culture and its usable models and a progressive blueprint for
happier, more egalitarian human relations: a community of "something better," which pioneer societies, with the chance for a new start in life, generally attempt to move toward. The agreed on values, norms, and social conventions were a source not only of cohesion but of social coherence, a system of meanings with which people could identify and so relate positively to their environment and each other. As such they were the basis for a social consensus essential to the theatrical one required for the working of theatrical conventions. Thus the myths were the fundamental motive forces not just for the gold rush, but for a cohesive, coherent social order necessary to the creation of a theatre, and especially the kind of local, civic theatre that emerged from the people of Cariboo.

If these were necessary for the theatre, why was the theatre itself necessary? Martin Esslin observes that drama, like fiction, answers a real human need by offering the "power to relieve the psychological tensions of large numbers of people." Given a community built literally from the ground up, under adverse conditions, in an isolated wilderness, nothing it laboured to construct should be taken for granted. In asking why a theatre specifically was created in Barkerville it must first be asked what that medium could have done for those people that some other human agency could not just as well have effected.

David Cole, in The Theatrical Event, has cogently discerned both the source of the psychological tensions relieved by theatre and its relationship to important human needs.

We live between two kinds of truth, neither of which satisfies our criteria of what truth should be like, and each of which seems to exclude the other. Imaginative truth satisfies our longing for coherence, but is only an envisioning, cannot be there. Whereas the kind of physical reality that can be there meets our demand that truth should be seeable and graspable, but lacks the coherence of imaginative form. Imaginative truth and present truth each provide what the other lacks but only at the expense of lacking what the other provides.
To refuse either and cling wholly to the other is psychically, emotionally, and socially unhealthy for individuals or community. Non-theatrical media can present imaginative truth but cannot do so as physical presence, cannot resolve the human dilemma; theatre alone can bridge the gap in experience.

Theatre, and theatre alone of human activities, provides an opportunity of experiencing imaginative truth as present truth. In theatre, imaginative events take on for a moment the presentness of physical events; in theatre, physical events take on for a moment the perfection of imaginative form. Especially in the figure of the actor—a role possessed body and an embodied role—imagination and presence come up against each other in a way that allows us to test the strengths of each against the claims of the other.

Jean Duvignaud similarly speaks of a "synthesis of social credibility and the creation of imaginary life," and stresses the role of the audience in bestowing what it lacks and giving it actual meaning. Theatre seems to satisfy a fundamental need for a group to project their credibility, their expectancy into the forms it reproduces.

And this is so whether they recognize themselves and their conflicts, find something complementary to their own identity or are "testing out their own experience in terms of play." It has been said that theatre is a ritual celebration of the health of a society—that is, of its psychic balance.

In terms of such a fundamental need, the connection of the gold rush and the theatre resides in the fact that the gold seekers, by virtue of the imperious claims of their mythic imaginations and the equally pressing present realities of separation, hardship, long struggle and frequent disappointment, lived very intensely "between two kinds of truth." But as one of them mused, mere words or pictures were inadequate to relieve the tensions:

0 Home! that word which has no synonym—
Nor can the poet's pen nor painter's art
Show to the mind what only in the soul
Has real sense or definite response. 78

Only theatre could show such things, could allow people to experience imaginative truth as physical presence; only theatre could provide some resolution, compromise or compensation, there and then, for the disparities between the
aspirations and values of the myths and the physical realities of the present situation.

Concerning the need for the psychic and emotional equilibrium encouraged by theatre's unique capacities, because of the volatile energies released by the mythic drives, the fixation on one object, and the excessive excitements, deprivations, anxieties and regrets endemic to frontier mining life, gold seekers, individually and as a group, were all too susceptible to sudden shifts of extreme and narrow allegiance to one reality or the other, with consequent immoderate swings of mood.

Notwithstanding that the miner is perhaps the most unfortunate of human beings, suffering more privations and hardships than almost any other class of men, a strange infatuation seems to follow him, and he rushes at myth after myth, full of golden hopes that rear airy castles of giddy dimensions; he also 'strains at a gnat and swallows a camel,' and stern experience is buried in oblivion as soon as it is past and gone. 79

Even such self-descriptions were excessive in forgetting that the miner could also be most fortunate, and that his "privations and hardships" were at least freely chosen. Major Downie, veteran miner and road builder, recalls men often abandoning moderately but steadily paying claims, losing sight of their self-interest to rush off on some vague rumour of "bigger things" elsewhere or some boundlessly fomented "excitement"--"I with the rest as a matter of course." 80

By contrast, they were equally liable to lose hope, allowing the physical setbacks, obstacles or separations to overwhelm them, driving some to drink, despair, occasionally even to suicide. The most unfortunate case was that of John Fraser, C. E., gifted son of the explorer, who fell into a depression when his claim had not yet yielded and he simultaneously received letters relating that the mortgage on the impoverished family home had been foreclosed and that his fiancee had broken their engagement; before his friends could stop him he slit his throat. While reactions were rarely so sensational, letters, poems and accounts do reveal that failures frequently
blunted men's efforts or even caused them to give up entirely.

Just as gold rushes appealed to both romantic and utilitarian impulses, successful prospecting and mining required, even on a daily basis, a balanced interplay of human faculties, of imagination and reason, of the ability to accurately perceive and interpret physical signs and to intuitively fill in the gaps and fathom the unseen from those sensible clues. The miner needed to be both visionary and practical doer, to invent pragmatic means and keep a feasible end in view. Therefore there was a strong and basic need for the theatrical medium, to allow them to experience such an equilibrium, to test the relative claims of opposing kinds of truth, to "project their credibility" and to restore and more broadly define these for themselves.

Not surprisingly the theatre came to have distinctly compensatory, analogical and cathartic functions for them.

In respect to the general terms of the two myths of concern, the medium was equipped to fill similar needs. Theatre is quintessentially the protean art form. It deals in the vicarious enjoyment and symbolic affirmation of the transforming power of man to alter his own shape or that of his surroundings. It makes tangible the discovery of hidden human worth and potential, and a wider, richer, more varied range of experience. As a medium it is an extension of integral man, engaging all the faculties of mind, body, senses and emotions, the whole being, of performer and spectator. The drama, the most common form of theatre in Cariboo, deals specifically with man's social transformation: on both an actual and a fictive plane it embodies his ability to play different roles, change his character, alter his status. Theatre was especially suited to make palpably present the broader dimensions of the protean myth, in terms of their relative values and appropriate or sanctioned modes of behaviour and interaction, through the ethos of character and the mythos of plot.

As for the myth of a happy home, theatre was itself a part of the world
of activities and relationships that constituted the societal home; the medium and its forms, genres, and images belonging to its happier associations. As a definably social and communal art it was itself a symbol of home and community, conferring on its audience a sense of belonging through a consensus of beliefs, conventions and unanimity of response. As Cole defines it, what theatre specifically makes present is a mythic "time of origins" to which the performers journey on behalf of the audience and return possessed, as it were, by its archetypal figures. Through the performers' particularization and concretization of them, and the spectators' recognitions and associations, identifications or substitutions, a Cariboo audience could vicariously journey "home" via the theatrical medium.

Since drama not only presents integral man but does so on his "home ground," in the field of his social and familial relations, both there and in its juxtapositions of the changeable and the "eternally subsisting," of flux and form, the theatre could bring together the imagined and the physically present truths within each of the myths of concern and between each of the myths, as well as between them and the realities of frontier mining life, allowing the gold seekers to test "the strengths of each against the claims of the other." This is only to consider reasons for the emergence of theatre as a medium, irrespective of form and content or manner of performance; hopefully it may also help to account for the ubiquitousness of theatre throughout gold mining areas, and perhaps for some of its dominance as a mass art during the nineteenth century generally. Subsequently it will be shown that the ways in which the people of Barkerville used that medium and the popular genres on which they drew were more particularly shaped by and expressive of the motive forces and energies of the popular mythology of the time.

While the foregoing has hopefully dispelled some mischievous, still too current clichés and stereotypes about our forefathers, and their search for hidden worth, and has indicated what in their common motivations could have
made theatre as such important and caused it to take root among them, yet it leaves two basic questions unaddressed. Why did it not do so during the years of maximum excitement, population and gold production, from 1861 to 1863? Why did it later take the form it did, a mainly amateur, community theatre, its performances and audiences not at all in keeping with the usual picture of a frontier mining town? The questions are closely related to, and part of the answers implied by, what has been said about adapting the shared aspirations, values and needs to the realities of the environment, and living out the wider terms of the mythic motives within it.

The Cariboo environment was far more inhospitable and problematic than the scenes of any prior gold rush—except a brief one to Siberia. The overall determining environment was not, however, just a matter of topography and climate, but compounded as well of geology and the resultant unusual nature of the gold deposits, of distance and isolation, of recent history, political controls and cultural influences. The impact of this manifold environment on the human one suddenly assembled in its midst, though certainly decisive, was naturally complex, and positive as well as negative. It was of course the positive responses to its challenges and obstacles that were specifically formative of the community and the theatre, and it is now incumbent to enlarge and clarify the motivational context from which theatrical activity emerged by sketching the related context of environment and human response within which those motives were amended and that theatre gradually shaped.

Cariboo was virtually an unknown region until prospectors, a few hundred of whom had remained after the brief 1858 Fraser River Rush had subsided, slowly moved northward along the Fraser and its tributaries. By the spring of 1860 they had entered the almost trackless wilderness, named from a corruption of "caribou," a translation of the French "char boeuf." By 1861 rich discoveries on Antler Creek had created a fresh excitement and a small ram-
shackle shanty town was hastily improvised some dozen miles from where Barkerville later sprang up. Wildly exaggerated reports were sent abroad by the press and mercantile interests of Victoria and New Westminster, each a "scene of morbid speculation" in real estate and supplies for the mines, that had languished in depression since the "boom" of '58 had turned to "bust." The next two years brought thousands from four continents—including many Chinese from Canton—and reestablished the boom mentality and speculative spirit that became typical of the "lower country" ports.

Of the environmental realities that affected the human tide of the Cariboo rush the first was political. Before the '58 rush had brought 30,000 temporary immigrants, mostly from California, British Columbia itself had been essentially "a gigantic fur preserve" and "had not even a name." The Fraser rush changed all that. Because of the quick decisions of James Douglas, Hudson's Bay Company chief factor and Governor of Vancouver Island, together with the well-founded fears of American annexation entertained by both he and the English Foreign Office, the mainland was soon made a separate crown colony with Douglas as dual governor of it and the island. The Hudson's Bay trading monopoly in British Columbia was subsequently revoked.

British authority was firmly established from the outset and control of mining matters strictly maintained throughout the new colony. English law and order were stringently imposed and rigorously enforced under the judiciary headed by Chief Justice Matthew Begbie, who held regular circuit courts in each district. A company of Royal Army Engineers was stationed in the colony to back up this authority and undertake road building and other public works. Mining and trade licences were also implemented, with a system of mining laws modelled on those evolved by Australian miners and limiting size of claims to 100 feet square, requiring legal registration of them and personal representation on the ground, with absences not to exceed 72 hours during the season. Failure to comply could result in forfeiture or pre-emption by
another. Resident gold commissioners, doubling as stipendiary magistrates for civil disputes and minor lawbreaking, were appointed for each district, with regulations administered in mining and magistrate's courts and enforced by local police constables.

Though most of the "fifty-eighters" had left in disappointment at the supposed poor "diggings" before these measures had been fully put into practice, such historical-political factors had initial and long term influences on the nature of the people attracted by the Cariboo gold rush. The widespread attention the new colony had been receiving brought a population from more diverse areas and backgrounds: French, German, Italian, Mexican, Scandinavian, Chinese, and Americans from the east and the south. Californians, after the Fraser "humbug," generally did not return. At the same time the British colonial status and English laws awakened a sense of proprietary interest and prior claim among British subjects in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Australia, and, most important in the long run, Canada. The political stability and cultural identity of British Columbia also encouraged a noticeably better breed of immigrant than the 1858 excitement. The range of social backgrounds was more varied, with "Oxbridge" graduates, professional men, former army officers, merchants, clerks, artisans and farm people in larger proportion and with literacy and education more in evidence.

Because of the congeniality of English traditions and the feeling of being on British soil, the British subjects naturally became the dominant social, cultural and political force in the colony, and since they felt more "at home"—and less able to retreat to the "old sod"—than Americans, they also tended to remain longer, gradually becoming numerically dominant as well. In the long run they had vitally formative influences on social, political, and theatrical activity in Cariboo. In the short run their example, together with the respect the greater impartiality of English Justice then commanded abroad and the difficulty of malefactors escaping from the wild and isolated
country, created overwhelming support for law and order from the mining population, without which a few constables could hardly have kept the peace. In any case, actual miners everywhere tended to desire strong law and order, and even to make their own where no provisions existed; they had enough problems as it was, and must be distinguished from the doings of the riff-raff that usually followed like jackals in their wake. Thus troublemakers left the lean and regulated land of British Columbia for the most part, along with the equally dangerous fools and idlers, and the rush was largely free of the crime, violence and vigilanteism of the American Frontier. Law-abiding orderliness later became the pride and boast of Cariboo. This in turn freed energies and attention and laid foundations of security that subsequently encouraged and shaped social and theatrical developments. More immediately, it freed them for the struggle with the common enemy: nature.

That struggle began as soon as the immigrant hordes left the steam boat at Yale, head of river navigation. Thereafter "they must depend on themselves, for the country afforded no assistance." Physical adaptations and character transformations were immediately required from the inexperienced and naive majority.

The boy (few of us were much more) was suddenly converted into the man; friendships were cemented and joint plans framed; purses counted, often with rueful eyes. . .

Old fur brigade trails that had served the few veterans who had gone before—though even those had faced considerable dangers and difficulties—were soon tramped into quagmires by the thousands of gold seekers: men fell in and had to be pulled out; horses, mules, and supplies had often to be abandoned. On the narrow paths hugging the mountainsides and canyon walls as if for dear life, a misstep sent the luckless ones hurtling far beyond hopes or cares. Some were attacked by marauding Indian bands, some by bears; others lost their way for days on end; a few drowned in the currents of fast-rushing streams. All were plagued by swarms of mosquitoes and black flies "that
drove horses mad and men nearly so." Hundreds turned back, injured or worn out or simply fed up, bitterly disillusioned of the tales of easy journeys and sure fortunes with which an irresponsible press had lured them. "But the brave and energetic kept on." After a month or so of such epic trials they reached "the land of the great deer." 93

There the real struggle began; there the forces of nature had contrived to make the miner's life more arduous than anything encountered in California or Australia. Located in the watershed of the Fraser and Quesnel River systems, it was more than 450 miles from Yale. The average elevation of the mining region is about 4,000 feet, with summits (spurs of the Rocky Mountain Range) of 6,000 to 7,000. Its topography, the result of both glacial action and upheavals in the earth's crust, is that of a rough and irregular jumble of mountain masses:

Perhaps the image that conveys the most suitable idea of this singular formation is, that of a molten sea: lashed into gigantic billows, which, at the very height of the storm, had been suddenly petrified. 94

Between these lie steep and narrow canyons and gulches, here and there broadening out into small valleys and flatlands, through which flow myriad creeks and streams, draining the mountain snows and rainfalls toward the larger rivers.

Cariboo's climate was harsh and intimidating too, and only years later found to be actually healthful and bracing. Winters usually begin in early November and are long and severe: though usually clear and calm, blizzards can occur and temperatures are extremely variable, almost thawing one week, dropping to 30 degrees F. below zero, or more, the next; snow generally falls in January or February and might drift as deep as 7 to 10 feet. Winter normally lasts till the end of April, though in 1863 snow was still three feet deep on the trails as late as May 30. Summers are consequently short and also extremely changeable: the creeks are in full flood or "freshet" in May.
and September, and often wreaked no little havoc on the works of man; heat waves and droughts could cause water shortages in July and August, while at other times sleet, hail and rain could fall in a single summer's day. It was no place for the fainthearted, the lazy or the inflexible. 95

Even those prepared for hardships and serious mining found it difficult to remain. The uncertain effects of the weather on mining reduced many with insufficient means, who came to work for wages, to penury before they found employment. This was aggravated by the famine prices and frequent short supplies of goods, intensified even by gold rush standards by the great distance and wild terrain and by the many speculative hands through which they passed. Isolation and its consequences would prove continuing problems for Cariboo. In the first years many would have starved except that no one was ever turned away hungry from a Cariboo miner's cabin or campfire 96. The rugged landscape, combined with thick ground cover, dense underbrush, fallen trees, bogs and swamps in the low places, made widespread prospecting initially impossible, confining exploration to less than one tenth of the total area. The long winters restricted operations mostly to the summer months, with claims officially "laid over"--the regulations for representing and working them suspended--from the beginning of November through May 20; during this closed season all but a few left for gentler climes and cheaper, more certain provisions. 97

But what provided the greatest natural obstacles and made of mining and prospecting a treasure hunt of herculean proportions, was the kind of gold deposits that predominated in Cariboo. Seldom had nature more cunningly hidden her wealth from the eye of man. The prospectors who had left the shallow gravels of the Fraser, whose fine gold was easily accessible to pan, shovel and sluice box, had been moved by the theory that the richest concentrations and coarser nuggets would be found in the distant mountain streams that fed the river, and they were right. But the glaciation and geophysical convulsions that had freed the gold from its quartz matrix had concerted to replace
the original landscape with the present tumbled masses and sharply etched ra-
vines and also thoroughly broken up and buried the ancient beds of the gold
bearing streams. In a few places outcroppings of this old bedrock indicated
rich surface deposits in the gravels, clays or sandbars of current streams.
Such rarities greeted the earliest prospectors and were quickly taken up and
worked, as at Antler, for example. More often they lay much deeper, and such
was the case with the legendary William Creek, perhaps the richest seven mile
stretch of placer ground in history.\textsuperscript{98}

Named after its discoverer William Dietz in 1861, William, or Williams
as it is now called, was at first called "Humbug Creek" for its initially low
yields until one day a miner thought of digging deeper--beyond the layer of
blue clay that had been thought to be the bedrock. Piercing through it, he
found the actual old channel and hitherto unsurpassed concentrations of aur-
iferous gravel.\textsuperscript{99} Above the canyon of Williams Creek the new boom town of
Richfield arose as Antler waned. Government offices were established there.

But the creek below the canyon yielded nothing even at depths of 20
feet, and was again thought worthless. The turning point came in the summer
of 1862, when Billy Barker, an English sailor who had jumped ship in Victoria,
and John A. Cameron, a Canadian ex-farmboy, simultaneously prompted by out-
croppings of old rock, followed the adage of digging deeper to an unheard of
extent. Fifty feet down Barker kept on, despite the complaints of his part-
ners and the ridicule of others. Sinking the shaft to a depth of eighty feet,
he struck rich pay, and, a few days later, so did Cameron. Jeers turned to
cheers, claims were staked for several miles along the stream, and two more
rude camps were flung together around each of the heroes' claims, about a
mile apart. Cameron was later estimated to have realized $250,000 for his
share, making him the equivalent of a multi-millionaire.\textsuperscript{100}

Barker and Cameron were fortunate, for most of the deep placer "leads"
that constituted Cariboo's principal gold deposits presented much greater
difficulties. Usually an old underground channel bore little if any relation to the course of the present stream: it might follow it for a short distance, then veer off sharply in another direction, running roughly parallel to or cutting across the line of the surface creek; it might be found close to the latter or relatively far off, running under benches or even hillsides; it might stop suddenly, only to be rediscovered a few feet or some dozen yards later—sometimes under someone else's claim. For these reasons a claim next to one paying a hundred ounces a day might pay only moderately or poorly, or even prove worthless after expenses; such was the fate, ironically, of William Dietz, discoverer of Williams Creek. Surface indications could be helpful, misleading, or simply nonexistent. There was no regular pattern to the placers, just a complex set of variables. The gold deposits could be found anywhere from 20 to 120 feet down, and could be concentrated in pockets of coarse grains and nuggets on the bedrock, embedded in a layer of blue clay above it, or finely scattered through layers of earth or gravel.

Prospecting or testing the ground could therefore only be accurately carried out simultaneously with the sinking of shafts, until "colour," earth tinged with small particles of gold, was detected in samples sent topside and "washed," or until bedrock was reached. Then the direction which the "lead" appeared to take or in which the bedrock seemed to be pitching was followed in lateral tunnels or "drifts," in an effort to find increasingly richer strata of pay dirt. Even underground the signs could be inaccurate, or mistakenly read, and the lead lost. There was nothing to do but drift in another direction or sink an entire new shaft elsewhere on the ground. Because of the varied geology and the large but unpredictable amounts of underground water seepage, diggings were liable to sudden flooding at any point; worse still was to hit a thick mixture of water and mud known as "slum," which swamped many an enterprise, leaving good prospects tantalizingly out of reach.

"Risk," says Rickard, "is the very essence of mining; it is inescapab-
le, and it calls for a corresponding reward. Faint heart never won fair
lady." But though the rewards could be enormous, such physical conditions
made risk appear to play a greater role, the "fair lady" seem more aloof, in
Cariboo than elsewhere. The shaft and tunnel methods could consume thousands
of dollars in capital, and could swallow up men too, the number of youths in­
terred in the cemetery bearing sad witness to the frequency of cave-ins and
other hazards. The investment of time and money was intensified by the short
seasons and the high cost of everything; having sunk his all in a promising
venture, a single mining setback or the inability to pay merchants or secure
more credit could leave a miner "dead broke," no longer able to work his
claim, while paid work was not always to be had. No wonder, then, that
thousands, and not only the fainthearted but experienced Australian and Cal­
ifornian miners, threw up their hands, cursed the place, and left.

Those remaining in that environment tended perforce to be those capable
of personal and collective adaptations to its "many stern realities" more
complete and substantive than the physical ones they had already been making.
Nor was it just a matter of accepting the determining forces of chance and
circumstance, but of summoning inner resources, meeting them with a self-re­
liant spirit of resolve; of actively grappling with them and cultivating that
flexibility in "the extemporaneous adjustment of means to ends" typical of
frontiersmen. While many spoke scornfully or fatally of mining simply
as a lottery and others' success as pure luck, the more intrepid ones, in the
words of James Anderson, Scottish gold miner, poet and performer, "dinna be­
lieve wi' Scylla and wi' Byron that a' depends on fortune and naething upon
ourselves." They did believe that

the circumstances peculiar to localities trained or created men
to meet them. The difficulties of Cariboo would be overcome by
the men of Cariboo, who are homogeneous with the miners of Cal­
ifornia, with the adventurers of the Far West, and with the
natives of the forests of Maine and of Canada.

These were attitudes associated with the popular mythology of the age, and,
validated in the continuities of frontier history everywhere, indicate that they were drawn on and identified with by the men of Cariboo. Indeed a superiority or indifference to the vagaries of fortune, material obstacles, and rough natural surroundings were singled out by one young adventurer as defining the identity of the veteran gold seekers. For the "brave and energetic" the unprecedented "difficulties" of the place provided the necessity and stimulus for living out the warrants of the myths to a greater extent.

In the gold seekers' mythically-charged consciousness the strongly felt interdependence of the object of the search and the invisible element of chance, of the material and immaterial forces felt to govern their existence, was recognized in the use of the undifferentiated word "fortune" as the common frame of reference for these realities. And if gold was "the true mistress of destiny," that destiny was personified, or deified, as "Dame Fortune," the "Fickle Goddess," and like nature (sometimes "Mother Nature"), was invariably referred to as "she." Such pantheistic and supernatural peopling of the miners' world was not simply gratuitous fantasy; on the contrary, it was a conscious mythmaking both pragmatic and necessary, reducing as it did chaotic, potentially overwhelming environmental forces to some degree of order and comprehension and to the same plane of subjective reality as their motivational forces. Thereby was the miner able to distinguish them and their effects, to assess and to make appropriate personal and practical responses to them, to exercise free will and take the initiative.

Thus, while fortune, unlike nature, was not amenable to any direct physical ordering and control, she could at least be wooed if not conquered, her favours earned, the chances of them improved. It was recognized that "she plays some curious freaks," and often bestowed her gifts capriciously, regardless of merit, was "cruel" to the assiduous; yet fortune was not implacable like fate, and decidedly less unyielding than the socio-economic determinism felt elsewhere. Nor was misfortune final: she could be courted
anew, and it was said that "the third time pays for all." As a ruling goddess in the realms of gold her operations and the attitudes they inspired in individuals left considerable room for human agency, and were on the whole much closer to the comic than the tragic sense of life. She stood for a rough equality of opportunity without regard to rank and fostered a common and efficacious moral code; as one man typically expressed it, "if I have not achieved success I have at least tried to deserve it."  

How was that done? Again they drew on, extended and applied, the secular mythology, and a whole creed of right, or "manly," conduct was evolved and extolled over the years. Based on faith in the ultimate efficacy of self help, the work ethic and traditional values, salient applicable virtues were recalled from those sources to meet the exigencies of Cariboo life and mining, and consistently evoked in a number of key words and catch phrases in letters, articles, testimonials, and reminiscences. The most prominent included: "industry" and "hard work," frequently expressed also as energy and enterprise, toil and labour, and implying acquired skills and ingenuity as well as diligent effort; "perseverence," persistence despite obstacles and disappointments, was equally crucial, for one could "persevere even without hoping," but to hope without persevering was a recipe for failure; "patience" was naturally requisite over the long haul and to control the restlessness and impetuosity engendered by gold seeking; so was "pluck," that mixture of spirit, courage and resolve to "meet" circumstances and "overcome" difficulties expressed by "the men of Cariboo" and crucial in all pioneer life.  

These simple conceptions, complementary and overlapping, variable in association and purpose, desirable both as ends in themselves and means to other ends, provided a most significant and useful system of relevant values for the miners. Like all values genuinely believed in and practiced in times of intense struggle and pressing needs, they had very basic survival value. As central articles of the Victorian moral inheritance and faith in character
building, they served for personal and social stability and support "under the bludgeonings of chance" and "in the fell clutch of circumstance." As recognizable, accessible attributes, sanctioned and exemplified at home through past teachings and experiences, they supplied a mutually intelligible continuity with new situations and an unfamiliar environment, helping to define them and to mobilize and focus one's energies in coping with them. As central components of the protean mythology they also had success value, as Smiles and others never tired of demonstrating, and affirmed the individual's freedom in relation to necessity, his capacity to help shape his existence.

It was natural, given the sources of those strategies for living, and the utilitarian outlook of frontier societies generally, that literature, proverbs, and songs were oft quoted to substantiate, impart, or recall them. Longfellow's Psalm of Life, a hymn to the secular religion of self realization and to the active, self-willing virtues, was a frequent example, employed on one occasion to preface a secular "sermon" (another common device) by James Anderson in one of his Gaelic personae:

Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing
Learn to labor and to wait.

.... Aye, ... we maun a' learn to labor an' to wait--an'
tak my word for 't this waitin' is the harder lesson o' the
twa, especially in a minin' kintre.... But I believe that
in the lang run perseverance will be rewarded.

He also quotes the maxim, "God helps those that help themselves," and Robert Burns on having a heart above misfortunes, to which all are liable, concluding that as a rule successful miners "hae been hard workin', perseverin' men
...." Such literary analogies to their situation were extended to adaptations (humorous and serious), including the Bible in "The Miner's Ten Commandments," brought from California and substituting secular, mining, injunctions for religious ones.

Anderson adapted Hood's Song of the Shirt to The Song of the Mine, with
exhortations of "Drift! Drift! Drift!/From the early morn till night." Other Cariboo poets-as-mythmakers borrowed general verse structures and devices for lines like: "We'll man our luck with noble pluck." The borrowing and adapting of familiar forms, contents, and methods was as habitual with them in life as in literature, and carried over, as will be shown, into their use of theatre and drama. 114

Of course the importance of faithfully practising and finding new applications for this creed was sounded with equal vividness in plain prose:

Bad luck is simply a man with hands in his breeches pockets and a pipe in his mouth, looking on to see how it will come out. Good luck is a man of pluck to meet difficulties, his sleeves rolled up working to make it come out right. 115

As the imagery indicates, these were no mere slogans or abstract qualities, but living symbols signifying concrete realities and practical doings. Hard work meant ten or more hours of heavy labour six days a week. Industry and enterprise meant imaginatively refining old methods, continually inventing new ones, and ingeniously adapting the materials at hand. (Hence another source of the profit and delight they found in manipulating artistic media.) Thus pumps were contrived from hollowed logs in the absence of metal, and were powered by variants on the Cornish water wheel; Harry Jones, faced with tunnel supports that sank into the slum, boldly inverted the angle of the timbers and found that they held. Patience and perseverance usually meant investing years of sustained effort and risk: "three seasons elapsed before the richest deposits found in the deep ground of William Creek were fairly developed;" various cases were cited of men sticking to a creek or even a single piece of ground for considerably longer than that, or of others forced to abandon a claim and subsequently returning with fresh capital, unshaken in the conviction of its ultimate value. Invariably they elicited empathy and encouragement, "for so much perseverance under every difficulty deserves to be richly rewarded." 117
Faith in the practical as well as moral efficacy of self-reliant virtues was eloquently validated by local, tangible, results. Cuhelyn wrote of a friend having prospected unprofitably for two years, at last finding a claim that paid $10,000, and expecting $50,000 more the following season. "By this you will see that a fortune is not a certainty, yet while there are spots immensely rich you persevere and hope on." One group actually called themselves "The Perseverence Company;" another was "rewarded for their unwearied patience" by a "wash up" of 311 ounces from a week's worth of pay dirt. That the failure to exercise this miners' work ethic could have economic penalties, and that its constant practice was no easy thing, was regularly exemplified by miners who sold their claims in a weak moment, only to find the lead struck shortly after and their efforts benefitting another. On the other hand, early exemplars of the huge fortunes that could and did reward ingenuity, pluck, and the other attributes, such as Barker, "Cariboo" Cameron, and William Cunningham, had towns and creeks named for them and became local legends.

Such selective tributes were as much for acquiring a virtuous and manly character as for gaining material wealth; indeed, they were rituals authenticating the dual purpose of the myths and values and vindicating the strivings they warranted and guided. The conception of trying to be worthy of fortune's favours was another analogue between the search for outward wealth and inner worth, gold and the good. In 1864, for example, John D. Cameron (no relation to the other one) was honoured publically as "an honest, unassuming and worthy man...one of God's best and noblest works--a good man." A later such testimonial to a prospector was to show you how much we appreciate energy and perseverance, both of which were strongly displayed by you in the discovery of the Mosquito gold diggings...It is for this strength of character that we wish to reward you.

Though fortune was an amoral and irrational force that might just as readily
reward the unworthy, the awareness of this among the majority of miners did
not lead them to surrender their rationality, morality or self-determination,
any more than the brutishness of the environment led them to sink to a
Hobbesian "state of nature." Rather, they responded by affirming their com-
mon humanity through the assertion of a pragmatic ethical system of active
principles and principled actions. Faced with plenty of negative examples of
how fortunes too easily won were most likely to be easily lost, they selected
positive exemplars for emulation, and honoured a complete success that com-
prised the adjustment of morally desirable means to materially desired ends,
a frontier ethic of men improved in substance as well as surface.

Isabel Bescoby, in her thesis on Cariboo, finds it hard to "understand
why so many remained. For mining methods were strenuous and not everyone
'struck rich pay.'" But this practical schema of the common ideology that
had brought them there helped them to become philosophical about "hard luck" and adversity, to realistically amend their initial expectations, to under-
stand and learn from experiences, and to adapt to and exploit their environ-
ment. It was both pragmatic and ideal, for while they came to believe that
"virtue is its own reward," they could also live in reasonable hope that
ultimately it would not be its only reward. Bescoby herself is on the verge of
the other explanation: "Most of the men combined into groups or companies,
finding that a little capital was necessary for the most meagre effort."

Partnerships of two or three were common in all gold regions, but in Cariboo
these were generally insufficient in view of the greater risks, expenses and
physical obstacles, and the small size of allowable claims. Thus they tended
to form larger units or co-partnerships.

Though called into being by local necessity, this cooperative spirit
and enterprise were also derived from the popular mythology of becoming and
belonging and the values common to it; they were also part of the recent her-
itage of the Anglo-American majority. In England "cooperative enterprises
owned and run by the workers themselves" had been a feature since the 1830's, while mutual self help societies had later collectively promoted educational and cultural improvement. Thus they also fostered urban impulses toward new foundations of community living. In the United States with its generations of frontier experience:

For all his individualism, the American was much given to cooperative enterprises and to joining. Nowhere else except in Britain did men associate so readily for common purposes. And perhaps nowhere did they do so more readily than in Cariboo, where cooperation became the pattern and fabric of a developing way of life.

From the outset, then, miners banded together, subsuming partnerships within small joint stock companies that varied from four or five to twenty-five or more members, sharing risks and profits, personal and financial resources, labour and hardships, even food and shelter in many cases. When a likely stretch of ground was decided on, each member registered his allotted 100 foot claim in his own name as one full share in the company. While a venture began with as many interests as there were members, each was free to sell his claim anytime, usually when a strike had been made or good prospects found, and market values rose. Again patience, perseverance and good judgement were necessary; said one wry correspondent concerning miners who sold out too soon only to find the values multiplied a few days later, "such is the luck of miners." Shares when sold could be subdivided into half or quarter interests, increasing the size and accessibility of companies.

Usually they were organized in a more complex and businesslike way than informal partnerships. Larger ones even elected or hired foremen to supervise operations and a secretary to keep account books—several of these survive and exhibit careful records of expenses, regular assessments which the shareholders voted to levy on themselves to meet costs, and dividends taken when the mines were paying profits. Either oral agreements or written constitutions and by-laws defining rights and responsibilities, together with
business meetings according to rules of order, seem to have promoted "general harmony"—a favourite Cariboo phrase. Each man was expected to pull his weight, and dissatisfied members could vote to buy out another's interest. 129

Creating much-needed order, collective discipline and working efficiency by concentrating energies in free and democratic associations, another strength of this adaptation was its pioneer flexibility. It made it possible for men of little means to unite and pool their funds, and while some partners remained to work and represent the ground others could then leave to find employment elsewhere, to keep the enterprise solvent. Often backing could be secured from silent partners outside Cariboo, or have been arranged before leaving the old country. Indeed, Canadians like Dr. Carrall, who either brought capital or stimulated investments from Canada, "liberated the Cariboo gold-fields from American domination," thus creating an economic affiliation that encouraged the subsequent political one. 130

The most detailed record of a mining company was kept by Captain John Evans, who, funded by an English industrialist acquaintance, led a party of 23 Welsh. His account shows vividly how lack of experience and the difficulties of Cariboo limited the effectiveness of even such a large, well capitalized outfit; after two years of unceasing effort and expenditures of $26,000, they were forced by slum and inadequate home-made machinery to give up the rich but initially baffling ground of Lightning Creek. Many of this group remained, however, becoming skilled miners and joining other enterprises. Some, like Evans and Harry Jones (both later M. L. A.'s) stayed permanently.

Cooperative enterprises were also widely beneficial in being labour intensive. Big paying claims like the Cameron Company employed as many as 80 miners in three daily shifts, for in "wet sinking" it was necessary to keep machinery going round the clock. With wages at $10 per day—more for good drifters and carpenters—despite the high cost of living ($5 to $6) those with thrift and sobriety (self help virtues less readily practised by many)
could amass considerable savings. Some even preferred to work for slow but steady gains than to own an interest and be liable for risk and expense: one of these left after two seasons for Canada, with $6,000 and having "never owned a foot of ground." Many others saved their surplus wages to buy into other ventures or prospect on their own. Another incentive for becoming skilled and industrious working miners was that such men were often given shares in companies by less experienced partners or small-scale capitalists. Labour in Cariboo commanded a status and respect, as itself a form of capital, not usual in established societies. Harry Jones and several others enjoyed such a "reward for perseverance" when Lightning Creek finally began to be successfully "bottomed." No doubt, too, because of experiences like that of the Evans Company, men tended to diversify risks and opportunities: a typical Cariboo miner worked for his own or another company while holding shares in one or more different concerns.

It was this cooperative capitalism that allowed an economy to develop which could accommodate itself to the variable circumstances of men, mining and environment. But just as it stood in a delicate, mutually interdependent relationship to the work ethic virtues, so it also depended—especially in a gold mining country with a very diverse population—on a basic security and trust in order to function effectively. This was variously expressed in the phrases "honest miner," "rough but honest miner," and "poor but honest miner;" these terms of reference, borrowed from California usage, were applied individually and collectively throughout the history of Cariboo to emphasize the extent to which honesty was not only the best policy, but an essential one in mining matters.

Obviously this was neither a question of naive delusion nor of vain boasting; there were numerous instances in early years of claims jumped, mines salted, credit abused and other deceptions; in later years occasional outbreaks of dump box robberies and cabins burglarized occurred when times
were tough. "Honest miner" was intended not as a literal fact, but as a working generalization and another pragmatic ideal; like the other miners' virtues it was a social convention whereby men agreed to presume each other honest (or industrious, etc.) until actions indicated otherwise, and a basis for entering confidently into the dealings and associations that mining activity required, especially in Cariboo. The "rough but" and "poor but" honest democratically accorded this virtue to all, but at the same time proclaimed a minimum acceptable standard of behaviour, the lack of which was not excusable by background or financial state.

This system of values—the desire to be deserving of fortune and to overcome the forces of nature, the applied work ethic, cooperative enterprise, and the honest miner—with the various external forms, activities and relations in which the practice of it eventuated, were components of the Cariboo ethos, evolved, and evolving, from the common mythology, in the light of the common environment and experiences. That ethos, to which other elements and objects were later added, comprised the accumulated wisdom of the mining population and the characteristic means by which the shared goals of their mythos were deemed to be best achieved for the greatest good of the greatest number—a utilitarian principal that increasingly informed their general outlook. It is this which best accounts for why so many remained and for the nature of the society and the theatre that grew out of it.

Most basically it enabled people to orient themselves and cope with the often unsettling realities of mining existence in a strange and untamed land. Indeed within the limits of such human controls those realities and uncertainties provided the very spice and excitement of the gold miner's life, and a later visitor could appreciate the thrill of "constantly expecting to meet fortune around the next corner of life." It was the heightened sense of life accruing from directly encountering and grappling with nature and destiny, and the intensity of a search that engaged all the faculties in an integral
process, that were the real "fever" and "the glory of the game." Of course the game was worth the candle: the means did not simply become the end, the search obscure the glittering object; but for most gold seekers it was the discovery rather than "the glad possession" that finally constituted the summit of their existence, and caused many successful miners to remain or return.

Certainty too—even that of frequently monotonous toil and loneliness—kept people there, when balanced against that of what most had left behind. Again their literary borrowings reminded them, as in the "Ten Commandments:"

\[ \text{Thou shalt not grow discouraged, not think of going home before thou hast made thy 'pile,' lest in going home thou shalt leave four dollars a day and go to work, ashamed, at fifty cents, and serve thee right, for thou knowest by staying here thou might strike the lead and fifty dollars a day, and keep thy manly self-respect. . . .} \]

In light of such realities and their ethos must all their adaptations and inventions be understood, especially their complaints. Anderson's *Song of the Mine* is in ironic contrast to its original, for unlike Hood's exploited worker, the Cariboo miner freely chose his situation; his burdens and labours were for his own profit, however much he griped at times. He could be both master and man, play the roles of capitalist and worker, and experience the best and the worst of each.

Thus the frontier mining life already satisfied some of their mythic drives and human needs; its ethos enabled people to realize some of the protean aspirations to "manly self-respect," self determination, and an altered existence—more fully individualized, integral, and personally meaningful than had been possible within the constraints of the Victorian family and the established socio-economic structure. The "free miner" was a free man, and having acquired the self reliant virtues and adapted to a harsh yet bounteous land could, at the very worst, always survive independently.

I'm at home in the wild woods, wherever I be—
Tho' dead broke, tho' dead broke--the skedaddler is free--
There is game in the mountains, the rivers yield fish
And for gold--I can prospect--whenever I wish.
Though one man complained that "we live not as we wish but as we can," for others that fact was accepted not in tragic resignation but in a spirit of comic compromise (an outlook that conditioned their preference in dramatic entertainment), and the same writer admitted it was "true that some can live more happily here than others through what the Englishman calls 'Practice makes master.'" Naturally they were the ones who tended to remain; filtered, tested, and reshaped in the crucible of Cariboo experience, the population became gradually more imbued with its evolving spirit, the generalizations became increasingly true.

As the components of this ethos were themselves analogue symbols, channeling energies into external forms of economic and cultural activity, they further enhanced both becoming and belonging, the individuality and the collectivity, personal independence and mutual interdependence, encouraging the search for more constructive relations between the needs and claims of each which is one of the truly important missions and continuing lessons of pioneer communities. Common to both the central myths of the secular ideology, these components inspired and effected by degrees further syntheses and realizations of the complementary impulses of protean man and happy home. They made the mining experience a socially and theatrically formative one.

Because of the shared standards of conduct they implied, the accessibility of the "manly" virtues, and the informal openness of partnerships and joint stock companies, men were judged by their actions according to those meritocratic and egalitarian assumptions. Otherwise they were accepted on their own terms, regardless of social background, family fortunes, educational advantages or nationality. Individuals were never questioned about their past, or even their real names.

In fact many were known mainly or entirely by nick-names, readily chosen by themselves or conferred by others; these were invariably colourful and usually evocative of some personal characteristic, as with "Dutch Bill,"
"Black Jack," "Chipps," "Twelve Foot Davis" (named for the unique size of his claim), and "Roaring Jake." One Englishman dubbed himself "The Duke of York" --a whim that would probably have been censured at home--and was exclusively referred to as such; others, like John Evans, used various military titles, whether formerly held or purely imaginary no one cared. This cheerful "re-christening" perfectly symbolizes the protean appeal and instant social democracy of the mining camp: where men had the opportunity to make of themselves what they could; where one might be down, but was never counted out by his fellows, who were often willing to help him up again; where men lived "on terms of perfect equality." 143

Partnership was just such a socially formative experience born of necessity, often on the way to Cariboo.

Here we had to help and be helped, giving us another lesson of dependence on our neighbours. A journey of this kind helps wonderfully to root conceit out of the traveller. Good will and kindly manners count much in all conditions of life:--and especially when no family helps or connections are near us, and we find strangers filling a brother's place are we reminded of Christ's lesson of the Good Samaritan. 144

The identification of individual self-interest with that of others, a "fierce social democracy," and the generosity and charity later characteristic of Cariboo society are all implicit in descriptions like this. More personally, such partnerships founded on the trail or in Cariboo, out of often desperate circumstances, produced a positive spirit of comradeship in adversity that constituted the Victorians' highest ideal of "conquered love;" 145 lifelong Homeric friendships often developed out of them. Substitutions for domestic, community, and even religious relationships are also implied, and as Bescoby says, the mining partnerships replaced the family as the basic and most common human unit, providing another means by which men were able to "live more happily here" and feel more "at home." In fact it was the camaraderie with men after their own heart, together with the enjoyment of seeking gold, that successful prospectors who had left the mining life most often
pined for, as having given their lives a sense of purpose that could not be equalled.

If partnership was an even more necessary and usual way of life in the conditions of Cariboo, the intense pressures of those same conditions in merging partnerships into the larger cooperative undertakings helped to produce a more highly developed form of community life than usually obtained in mining districts. What Morrell observes of Nevada was true of Cariboo also:

When the situation began to stabilize itself, a community very different from California after the great rush came into existence. In place of the restless independent miner of the California placers, its typical figures were the skilled wage-earning miner—though he was often a speculative investor into the bargain—the speculative stock-market investor, off stage, and the bonanza king. The typical social and economic units were not the mining camp and the mining partnership but the joint stock companies.

In Cariboo the "bonanza king," due to differences in mining laws, mineral deposits, and human influences, was primus inter pares rather than a monopolistic tycoon; was, in fact, a frequent initiator, heavy investor, and even a beneficent donor for further ventures. And speculative stock market investors were generally in chronic short supply among the less bold colonial spirits of British Columbia's coastal towns.

But, shaky and unstable though it often was, Cariboo's mining economy remained a very pure and humanistic form of capitalism, a true free enterprise based on a free association of free individuals, and an industrial democracy such as British Columbia has not known since. As a result Barkerville never became a mere "company town," as so many later single industry communities did. Because it was drawn from a shared schema of myths and values adapted to the realities of Cariboo, and extended into practical activities, this economic system, despite its ultimate vulnerability to forces and conditions from without, was in itself remarkably well adjusted to the development of resources: of the environment, of the British cultural heritage, of the individual, and of the social group.
The larger socio-economic structures of the companies—and later of collaborations of several companies or of the community at large—expanded the field of co-equal associations, fellow feeling, and the sense of common cause. They and all that the miners held in common inspired a growing "solidarity of the group," strong occupational pride as "the bone and sinew of the country," and gradual committment to the place among the men of Cariboo, or "Caribooites" as they soon took to calling themselves. In short, a new and satisfying collective identity developed, embracing, and reciprocal with, the new, evolving, personal identities of its constituent individuals. The whole ethos and its spirit of "practice makes master" fused the initial aggregative unity and democracy of the gold seekers into ultimately constitutive forms, and because it more effectively focused energies and made mining and living easier, its ordering of time, labour and activity created leisure and freed energy for other social purposes.

Cooperative enterprise developed the spirit and will and the joint stock mining company the organizational experience, know-how, and models, for the creation of increasingly numerous and large scale social, cultural and political forms, all of which reflected the warrants of the myths of concern and the ethos of living them out. Indeed the existence of the companies themselves was a major source of socio-economic continuity and stability: as individuals came and went, sold out or bought into them, the organizations with their familiar names—the "Prince of Wales," "Never Sweat," "Caledonian," "Cameron," and others—went right on operating and producing through the years, especially on the seemingly inexhaustible Williams Creek.

If the myths provided the foundations of community cohesion and morality and the blueprints for the establishment of Cariboo society and culture, the ethos that grew from living out the relevant particulars of their symbols in effective actions and adaptations provided the tools and the framework for living social structures and the buildings that housed them. More than that,
since we are dealing with vital institutions rather than "bricks and mortar," they formed not just the skeleton, but the inner life that motivated, animated, shaped and perpetuated the external life of Cariboo, the soul, as it were, of the social body.

Without that the development of Barkerville and its theatre would have been extremely curtailed, if not impossible. It was within the whole context which this chapter has attempted to outline that such developments occurred: because of the peculiar nature, strength and variety of the challenges posed and human responses required by the Cariboo environment, the miners were forced to draw more heavily on their personal resources and more deeply and expansively on their myths of concern, to forge a more extensive and consistently applied ethos from their symbols and values. The living force and credibility and the richly analogous socio-cultural connotations which those had for the gold seekers, coupled with the isolation, monotony, hardships and deprivations of the place, stimulated a fuller living out of their wider dimensions and analogous impulses and led to the gradual transplanting and establishment of forms that fulfilled them. Ultimately this process produced a more unique, progressive and complex community than did other gold mining areas.

Certainly without some sense of this inner life, the mere recounting of the external structures, activities and events—in this case the theatrical ones—must remain largely opaque, yielding little of the raison d'être and significance they had and giving them no continuing meaning for us. And these can only be fully understood in the full context of inward and outward forces, imaginative and physical realities, and their interplay.

This context, then, not only created the social consensus and conventions necessary for the working of theatrical ones, and the societal impulses and needs which a theatre alone could satisfy; it also determined the management, organization and membership of the theatre, and the nature, role and
significance of its performances. That theatre, as will be shown in detail, developed indigenously with and out of the community as a whole, and became indispensible in expressing, elaborating, testing out, even directly affecting its concerns, beliefs and goals. The terms of the myths and ethos that served as warrants for other social forms and rituals did so for the conduct and perceptions of theatrical performances, which, in their turn, analogously enacted and extended them through an equivalent schema of theatrical values. Though all of this was implicit in the context of Cariboo from the earliest years, yet until 1867 such theatrical applications were limited and such developments slow and fitful, for reasons which have also been implied and will become more explicit in the following chapter.
CHAPTER TWO

EARLY THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT

IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Home, Canada, Independence.

W. W. Hill, Diary
June 28, 1863.

Whatever is needed for the mature growth of a community, Barkerville had, and of such quality that anything thereafter might be considered, for many years, to be the lesser.

G. R. Elliott, Quesnel.
In many ways gold seekers everywhere brought theatre with them. As a group they brought the habits of a theatre-going age; the need for theatre inherent in their motives and intensified with the time of separation from home and with the alternate excitements and monotonies of mining life; and, wherever they congregated in sufficient numbers, the basis of a ready made audience. Histrionic propensities were also revealed in their picturesque dress, their colourful slang and mining jargon, their nicknames for themselves and each other, their emotional excitability, and the self-dramatizing, role-playing tendencies accruing from newly assumed identities, circumstances, relationships, social groupings, and the self consciousness of personalities in transition. With the diversity, self improving and fulfilling impulses, and the imaginative cast of mind of those attracted by gold rushes, there was a wide variety of performing aptitudes, skills and experiences among them.

In all this the miners who came to British Columbia were not exceptions. No doubt they too organized skits, concerts and minstrel performances to ease the boredom of long journeys on sailing vessels, providing outlets for cooped up energies and sources of conviviality among strangers flung together. Certainly the prospectors of 1858 had held simple evening entertainments and even written their own song lyrics to old tunes in order to fit their situation, as in Miner's Song on the Fraser River, which treats of both homesickness and the transformed existence of the fortune hunter, before and after success. Of those who remained and discovered the Cariboo diggings, Richard Willoughby, a life long gold seeker who made several fortunes, was always in demand for his abilities as a musician and a ventriloquist. He made his own violin from local wood and entertained at many a cabin or campfire. His ventriloquism had at least one practical application: when he made a large salmon, which an Indian had been reluctant to sell, appear to talk!

Among "The Overlanders," an ad hoc assemblage of Canadians and British who boldly crossed the prairies in ox carts, those who could play musical
instruments took them along, and musical entertainments and dances were held under the stars whenever the exigencies of the journey permitted. At Fort Edmonton they repaid the hospitality of the residents by improvising two minstrel shows, which the lonely inhabitants long after remembered with pleasure. In this large group of adventurers were at least two—John Bowron, a Canadian ex-law student, and W. W. Hill, an English house painter—who would later play important roles in the Barkerville theatre.

Such spontaneous entertainments were also typical in isolated mining camps, where men were mainly thrown back on their own resources between the irregular visits of touring professionals; and, with the absence of mirrors, social or physical, and the keen interest in human as well as mineral resources, people often delighted in displaying them in performance and others in watching them—indeed often preferring them to imported talent. But during the first years of Cariboo resources were heavily strained just in staying alive, in coping with environmental and mining difficulties, and in the general chaos and excitement of a gold rush.

Even basic necessities were scanted: "they lived in tents or primitive shacks, the passion for gold leaving them no time to devote to mere house building." The living out of the social impulses of their common myths did not yet concern them. The work ethic applications and cooperative endeavours were largely restricted among the human environment, which remained mostly in flux; while the few with obviously rich claims laboured manfully, the majority shifted from place to place, led by rumours or looking for work. Cohesion seldom extended beyond individual companies at first, and for some years was hampered by the high incidence of claim jumping and then of litigious disputes, fostering at times suspicious and fractious attitudes among them.

A more positive discouragement to the growth of community was the overall, outright, mistrust that existed between the mining and trading populations, continuing to worsen until 1865. The first group saw the second as
as mere speculators or monopolizers, manipulating supplies and prices of such dire necessities of life and labour as flour, mining tools, and candles; and this was often the case. The latter, forced by the lack of currency and the slow progress of excavations to give considerable credit, were open to abuses by miners who were as yet more rough than honest. There were faults and misunderstandings on both sides.

The effect of isolated camps was also literally produced by the difficult terrain and poor trails, resulting in separate little clusters of humanity on various creeks, or even on the same one. On Williams Creek, scene of the greatest activity after 1861, there were three mining camps straggling its narrow eastern bank and initially there was not even an interest in naming the two below the canyon. Though only about a mile apart, it took a couple of hours to walk between them because of fallen trees, mine shafts, flumes and rough ground, and with the population flowing from one to another with the latest big strikes, there was no single established centre.

But the major impediment to theatrical, and any other, development, was that the practice of the Cariboo ethos, joint undertakings, and learning from experience were sharply curtailed temporally by the short mining season from about the end of May to the end of October. During the first winter only about 90 remained, the rest, taking advantage of the "lay over" of claims, trekking back down the country, mostly to winter in Victoria or San Francisco. Though the settled population rose to a couple of hundred in 1862 and gradually increased thereafter, Cariboo continued to be essentially a summer camp for the vast majority until the later 1860's. It was not only lack of acclimatization and pluck and perseverance, however, that drove them forth. Winter snows made Cariboo's isolation complete, and though merchants could bring in large stocks in anticipation, still there were inevitable shortages and a consequent danger of rising prices, subject to further aggravations by traders "cornering the market." The wagon road which Governor
Douglas had wisely begun from Yale to alleviate the situation was unfortunately not completed to Williams Creek till the end of 1865.

Therefore only those owning, or employed on, already well paying claims could afford to stay the winter, and only a fraction of those initially chose to endure it. And again it was some years before trial and error taught men the means of prospecting or working much of the ground in the freezing weather and the decrease of surface water, and before the climate itself was found more bearable and healthy than at first thought by many unused to its rigours. So the most had to be made of the short mining seasons.

The word here seemed to be work, and nothing else; only round the bar-rooms and the gambling tables were a few loafers and gamblers to be seen. Idling was too expensive a luxury in a place where wages were from two to three pounds per day, and flour sold at six shillings a pound.

The same writer described Williams Creek as a "human ants' nest." Under such conditions there was little leisure, energy, or inclination, to begin with, for local performances. Nor was Cariboo attractive to touring companies that plied the coast, and the only record of one that has been found for the early and mid 1860's is of "Watson and Taylor's Minstrels," who performed at Antler through the summer of 1861, when mining was still confined to the easier shallow diggings. Dan Watson, a black American, was well known along the coast, but he seems to have found it subsequently more profitable to open a saloon on Williams Creek, the "Colonial" in which he probably also performed, and to invest in mining ventures. He stayed until 1865.

If no other itinerant performers did appear during this period, certainly no season of the year offered any stimulus for such a journey and no comparable population centres existed en route to help defray expenses. Besides, there was no need to tour: the fall exodus brought their audiences to them.

As a result of this and of the flow of trade and gold, Victoria enjoyed a modest boom in theatrical entertainment. Here as with everything else about that pseudo-English colonial outpost, it depended on the avails of the
mines, the demands of the miners, and imported rather than local production. A Victoria amateur group gave very occasional performances, but even those were marred by internal bickerings and power struggles. This, too, was quite in keeping with the tenor of political and economic opportunism of the place, the rather class conscious residents it attracted, and the concomitant lack of community cohesion or democratic unity. Thus its Victoria Theatre and later Theatre Royal mainly played host to touring companies, usually second or third rate, but interspersed with a few quality companies, like those of the Chapmans and Lotta Crabtree. The high point occurred in December 1864, when Charles and Ellen Kean played a week's engagement, including seven Shakespearean plays and three melodramas. Melodeons, or saloons-cum-music halls offering variety entertainment, were a popular feature that had also drifted north from California, but like most of Victoria's theatrical life they shut down in the spring when the miners left for Cariboo.

In Cariboo the resultant dearth of visiting companies was the negative counterpart to the positive impulses mentioned earlier, in spurring the year round inhabitants to make their own entertainments and, finally, their own theatre. But even local activity was for a long time sporadic and limited due to the same prevailing conditions. The first signs of any emerging social life date from 1863; in January a dance was held at the saloon of Mrs. Morris in Richfield, where about 70 were wintering, and a man named Martin held another at his establishment. Of the latter an old prospector informed his partners that "it were stag dancin' of course, fur a hundred an' fifty were too many fur three females." A good time was spoiled when "some reg'lar skunk went an' put croton oil in the pastry"—presumably a rival saloon owner. That incident indicates the still rough and divided state of society, as does the poor attendance at a ball held to establish a proper trail on the creek.

That summer over 4,000 returned, some 2500 of them located on Williams Creek, and with the six miles below Richfield undergoing "a spirited search,"
the centre of gravity had shifted to the lower towns, with about 75 buildings in each and cabins on the hillsides. Though there were still many unemployed at least as many were, and supplies and provisions were in excess of demand, with prices correspondingly lower. By July the lower town, with more flat land around it, was becoming the dominant place of business and residence and the location for the beginnings of community development. The need for extending cooperative activity was now being recognized; eight companies with adjacent claims, for example,

agreed to join their flumes, and 2,000 feet of the creek will thus be flumed and afford these several companies an opportunity of working what has hitherto proved the most valuable portion of William Creek.

There were now about ten more women, "who have come up no doubt for reasons best explained in the book of 'common prayer;' and even a single respectable woman in a group of gold seekers was found to have a beneficial influence.

All these factors, together with good prospects in general, would help account for the first surges of sociability, community spirit and cultural life that commenced that season. Reported a correspondent:

There is to be a Freemason's dinner tonight, and a general meeting of the fraternity. We have had several amusing parties on the creek, among which was a band of Cariboo serenaders, organized by Dan Watson, and for a first meeting it went off well. Other amusements are in contemplation.

It was at the dinner that "the men of Cariboo" and the resolve to "overcome" their environment were first defined, the basis of the Cariboo ethos and identity. "The Cariboo Minstrels" formed by Watson were apparently of short duration, but the name was subsequently applied to another such local group.

The first entertainment specifically referred to exhibits a tendency of all later theatrical activity to connect performances to actual events and concerns in the life of Cariboo. The first performance was a benefit by the minstrels for a violinist named Curzoni, who presumably played in a saloon and had fallen ill, to "enable the poor fellow to return to Victoria...."
the object for which it was intended was accomplished." Such socially pur-
pasive performances typified the general utilitarian outlook of frontier soci-
eties that art should be of some use, teach a lesson, or set an example. On
Saturday, July 19 a step toward civic consciousness was taken when the lower
town was officially named "Cameronton" in an outdoor ceremony. Cariboo
Cameron himself returned the gesture by holding a banquet with champagne and
solid refreshments. After various speeches the town was christened.

Three cheers were given for Her Majesty and also cheers for
their host and other gentlemen present, after which some sacred
music was sung, followed by several sentimental songs by Mrs.
F. Richards, Mrs. Seymour and others.

The women were already making their presence felt. Sometime later Barkerville
(formerly "Middle Town") was also named for its founder.

More tangible social patterns and institutional efforts began at the
same time. Religious life made a false start when the Anglican Columbia
Mission sent three ministers as summer missionaries and the Bishop too paid a
visit. Initial support was strong, and by July, with the help of the miners,
Richfield Church and Library was well under construction. The library opened
with a quantity of books, including "Shakespeare, Scott, Moore, Swift, Pope,
etc.," supplied by the clergy. Eagerly patronized, it prompted more substantial and lasting efforts in that direction. The church held about 250, with
congregations "on the whole better" than on previous visits to the miners.

It is wonderful the regularity with which some attend, of whom
one would least expect it. We have amongst those who attend
few of our own Church, but some of all possible persuasions
and opinions: Wesleyans, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, and
Socinians; Jews and Deists, Tom Painsists, Phrenological
Materialists, Atheists.

Yet relations between the clergy and the Caribooites continued to be difficult
and compounded of increased misunderstanding and resentment.

Unlike more homogeneous communities, there was diversity not only in
the nature of beliefs but in degree, ranging from hypermoralistic religious
fundamentalists like John Evans and other Welsh and Scotsmen, to others who appeared "reckless and ungodly." The clergy were also offended by merchants and miners who worked on Sundays; the occasional brawls; the coarse slang and swearing; the drinking, gambling and whoring; the men "living in sin" with white or Indian women. Their charges are certainly borne out by other accounts of the time. From the Caribooites' point of view, although they built three churches during the next two years--Anglican, Roman Catholic and Methodist--until 1868 only one clergyman remained through a winter, when the growing population felt most in need of one--and he was actually a Presbyterian, Rev. Duff, whose congregations "were large and steady, and his ministrations...highly esteemed by the miners generally." James Anderson, a religious man, bitterly mocked the clergymen:

They canna live a year up here,
But gang below for winter cheer;
But maybe this is just as weel
When they're awa' so is the deil.

Others ridiculed the Anglican Church for its real estate speculations in Victoria; even religious men rejected any of the lack of sincerity, empty dogma, and repressive moralism that were causing churches to lose ground elsewhere. Indeed, two of the ministers honestly admitted failure, even while castigating the miners, and the need for clergy of no ordinary talents, "earnest and devoted indeed." Caribooites judged ministers by the same standards of honesty, patience, perseverance and manly fortitude they applied to each other.

Actually, besides the gold rush and frontier aggravations of the general problems of the church in modern, materialistic and pluralistic, societies, much of the failure of the clergy (and of historians who quote them too exclusively) seems to have stemmed from not explicitly distinguishing (as they implicitly did in particular cases) between relative morals, which could be rather lax, and ethics, which were commonly very strong and absolute among Caribooites. Loose morals, which appeared to the clergy to be openly flaunt-
ed even by fellow university and professional men, were, after all, inevitably less disguised or segregated in a physically confined yet frank and open pioneer society, heightened by the number of predominantly youthful males away from home, initially "sowing their wild oats," overreacting against repressions, confusing freedom with licence in their hunger for experience, and always vulnerable to temptations. Most of them gradually "grew up" and addressed themselves to avenues of moral improvement and activities to counter those temptations; to reviving applicable older norms and proprieties or finding looser, moderate ones appropriate to the less formal and restrictive societal circumstances and relations and to the need for a balance between licence and constraint.

Increasingly neglected by a church that evaded the challenges, problems and opportunities of a pioneer society in an age of changing and uncertain morality, they extended the goals and values of their secular mythology and ethos to the mastery of human nature, ministering to themselves and each other. It was a secular socio-morality that evolved, based on moral improvement, moderation and respectability; it both shaped their theatrical and other social activities and was developed, tested, disseminated by them. It ultimately left the majority independent of, even indifferent to, organized religion, and also conditioned the largely cultural and theatrical roles played by the clergy, when they finally did become resident.

Ironically, it is the reports of ministers that bear strongest witness to the miners' preponderantly, fundamentally, ethical dispositions and conduct, which were communally demonstrated that same summer in the founding of the Royal Cariboo Hospital. Their very conception of fortune and vulnerability to it led them not to social Darwinism, but, through joint ventures, risks and rewards, and shared values and goals, to generosity, charity, hospitality and kindness. Though careless of themselves at times and despite evident venial sins, conscience and home influences reasserted themselves man to man,
when it really mattered.

Successful claim owners never simply bought drinks for themselves: "it was always for the crowd." But "more praiseworthy was the philanthropic spirit throughout the community." Men frequently made loans, with no questions asked or interest charged, to struggling colleagues, and those who were dead broke were regularly helped out by the luckier "pawns of fortune... knowing not when her capricious smile may turn away and compel them to seek aid." Said Rev. Macfie:

Among the roughest of professional miners exhibitions of kindness occur fitted to shame many of more moral pretensions. As a class they are not avaricious. He explains the apparent paradox here by reference to their delight in the finding rather than the possession of gold. The Anglican Bishop wrote that

A good feature of this class is their generosity. A gold seeker will always divide his last meal with you if you are in distress. After telling of miners collecting fifty pounds and hiring an attendant for a man who fell ill on the trail, he adds: "Many cases of this sort I could tell you to show the generosity of character...". In fact, there are so many that to do so would read like a sentimental novel, and indeed sentimentality had much to do with it, and with the moral purpose of their theatre.

It was natural, then, that the first public institution and expression of community spirit was a hospital, itself formative of subsequent social organizations and with a reciprocal relationship to theatrical activity. Though sick miners had formerly been tended by their comrades "with all the care and kindness they could have received in the bosom of their own families," by 1863 typhoid outbreaks, cases of frostbite and mining accidents were rendering untrained help inadequate. There was much discussion about the need for a hospital, the grand jury (the only local input into their government) made recommendations, meetings were held, and the upshot was the first collective channelling of energies into a community institution, which in
frontier societies did not—indeed could not—wait upon church, state or corporation. Funded and built by the miners themselves (promised government help not materializing) it opened that fall near Cameronton; with a physician and attendant, maintained by local subscriptions and fund raisings, no sick or injured party had to pay; it was a sort of pioneer medicare into which they paid when they could. It was considered conducive, therefore, not only to the physical, but to the moral and spiritual health of Cariboo.

That feeling which we call sympathy for a fellow being, whose physical frame is being wracked by pain or disease, is all prevalent in the human bosom . . . . it is a part and parcel of human nature itself, and forms an ingredient in the character everywhere; and just as we find it forming the larger part of the character, so do we find the possessor of that character sure and upright and elevated. In a community the existence of this feeling generally and abundantly is the best possible mark of the most enlightened civilization.

The hospital's influence was felt to continue, teaching "without language and without ostentation . . . Divine truths . . . Indeed all its quiet precepts tend to raise and elevate and fully develop the purity and goodness of the natural man." 33

With these assumptions of man's innate goodness (which it is his purpose to develop), of empathy and compassion ("a heart that can feel for a neighbour's woe") as the source of ethical behaviour, and of the utilitarian faith in his infinite educability and improvability, it is entirely fitting that the hospital was the birthplace of an organization for the mental well being and cultural betterment of the infant community. In the winter of 1863--1864 the residents on the creek increased to about 600, including 37 women and several children, and

a large number of miners . . . being at a loss how to spend the long winter evenings, agreed to meet once a week at the hospital buildings and there debate some social, historical, philosophical or any other important question--each to contribute his stock of knowledge for the benefit of all. Having assisted at several of the debates I was most agreeably surprised to find so much practical information and knowledge among those whom people are often inclined to look upon as rough miners.
The seeking and discovering of hidden human worth had begun in good earnest, though the cooperative sharing of knowledge had already been noted as mutually improving on less formal terms. The Bishop of Columbia had been as impressed with the aggregate intelligence of the miners as with their ethical qualities, observing that while all laboured "upon an equality" among them were educated men who have travelled all over the world. All have come here by the force of the energy of their characters; and acting one upon the other, they present to you an amount of intelligence that is not to be found in any other labouring class—an intelligence of a sort not perhaps to be excelled in any society. We found books among them such as Macaulay, Gibbon, Plutarch's Lives, and Shakespeare.

Another cleric noted that they were generally "fond of deeper literature" and that "their conversation, tone of feeling and practical achievements testify to familiarity with their contents."  

Enthusiastic support for the weekly meetings grew quickly, swelling the attendance from forty to eighty and more, overcrowding the little hospital building. An example of the debates was one that was conducted with much ability, and would not have disgraced many of the old societies at home, the subject being whether the works of nature or of art inspire the most admiration and which the judge decided, I believe entirely from the force of arguments brought forward, in favour of the latter. Another concerned whether the American Civil War, then raging, was justifiable. Historical lectures included two by J. S. Thompson, a self educated accountant turned miner and later a prominent local actor and politician. A weekly manuscript paper, The Caribooite, was issued at the meetings; edited by James Anderson and John McLaren—a Canadian former teacher universally respected as a leader among the miners—it continued at least through 1866. It featured prose articles on self improvement and the moderation of drinking and gambling; humourous pieces and literary burlesques, like "Chronicles of Cariboo" in mock biblical language; and verses by Cariboo bards—Anderson's oft quoted Sawney's Letters, giving poetic perspectives on mining life in the
comic form of fictional correspondences, was probably first printed in it.

This emergence of community feeling and collective enterprise in more complex organizations was paralleled on the mining front. Two massive projects were launched that winter: The Williams Creek Bed Rock Flume and Bed Rock Drain Companies were established, with 4,000 shares in each taken by the miners and some local and outside capitalists, and providing employment for a couple of hundred men. The former involved turning the creek water out of its bed into a large trough or "flume," partly constructed of wood and partly hewn out of surface rock; this enabled the ground beneath the creek to be worked, decreased seepage into shafts and tunnels, and could be tapped by smaller flumes to provide water for individual claims along its route. Company profits were to accrue from rates paid for water supply and from rights to any creek-borne gold that collected in the riffles of its flume.

While the flume started at the canyon above Barkerville, the drain consisted of a tunnel beginning on the flats below Cameronton and running up the creek on the old bedrock beneath it. Tapping into each mine shaft and tunnel and draining off underground water, its company also charged claim owners for the service and retrieved accumulated pay dirt. This was overcoming nature with a vengeance, and these developments, with their unprecedented capitalization and requiring government ordinances and charters to permit and constitute them, were crucial in the history of Cariboo, heralding the end of the gold rush and the transition from it to a settled mining industry, and from mining camp to mining community. But just as the flume and drain proved unexpectedly long and difficult of accomplishment, so did the transition.

In the light of such increased social and economic investments in Cariboo, it is not surprising that the beginning of 1864 saw the first attempt to establish a regular theatre on Williams Creek. It was formed at Cameronton under the direction of a Mr. Freeman, perhaps a one-time professional:

the decorations are creditable to him, and I hope it will prove
to be successful; I am in favor of every institution which "castigat rigendo mores." 38

A large building owned by Monsieur Deffis had been "taken and fitted up," and by February 17 it was tersely reported: "There have been three performances--well attended--acting good." 39 Probably the enjoyment of the debates had whetted an appetite for drama, though just what plays were produced or who acted in them is not known. A fourth performance was "given to a crowded house; the proceeds went to aid the sick now in the hospital"--inaugurating a close relationship between the theatre and other community institutions that endured over the years. This theatre, however, did not endure. Only a month later a correspondent regretted that after the hospital benefit "the theatre has not been patronized, and . . . the efforts of Mr. Freeman have not been rewarded." It apparently closed soon afterwards, for no further mention was made of it.

Even on the face of it there are ample explanations for its rapid demise. There was still no road or decent trail on Williams Creek, with the population still spread among the three towns. Though the largest portion of the 600 to 700 inhabitants now resided at Camerronton, this was hardly a sufficient public to sustain a theatre or from which to derive performing talent. Then, too, the forces of divisiveness within the populace persisted. Moreover, the theatre's closure roughly coincided with the approach of the spring thaw and preparations for the mining season, which still tended, understandably, to rather singlemindedly absorb energy and attention.

Money was also said to be rather scarce at the time. This may seem an anomaly in a gold mining area, but it must first be remembered that Cariboo mining required much initial outlay with profits indefinitely deferred, while even currently paying claims yielded nothing during the winter as a rule. Another cause of the recurrent cash shortages was the lack of hard currency in British Columbia. Following the practice of other gold mining areas,
Douglas had set up a mint at New Westminster; but after a handful of gold coins were minted he closed it, partly because of a silly power struggle with the B. C. Colonial Treasurer, partly because of the old fur trader's misunderstanding of money supply. It was his biggest mistake, and though he imported American coin which offered some amelioration, the situation, together with the unreliable and gouging operations of the colonial banks and the overdependence of the coastal towns on import trade, encouraged the very outflow of gold that Douglas had wanted to decrease; it drained British Columbia and Cariboo in particular of circulating and investment capital, hampering economic stability and development for many years. Thus the theatre like everything else in Cariboo was always highly vulnerable to immediate fluctuations in the yield of the mines, and, by consequence, in the size, mood, and outlook of the population. From the beginning its history is a faithful mirror of that of Cariboo as a whole, and its absence is often as eloquent as its presence.

Caribooites' interest in and need for theatrical performances did not simply disappear with the failure of the first theatre, but continued in the shape of individual, spontaneously organized events. As occasional in both senses of that word, they could be given at those times when money and community spirit were flowing freely, and for good measure were usually linked, like the hospital benefit, with some unifying institution, human cause, or other public concern. Without the overhead and inflexibility of an institutional structure theatre continued to thrive, if rather intermittently. In fact, for St. Patrick's Day 1864 the Pioneer Brass Band, apparently a group of miners who wintered in Victoria and had arrived in advance of the mining season, had given an outdoor concert, after an indoor one the evening before.

In April the debating group, now called the Cariboo Literary Institute, having outgrown the hospital, were seeking to establish a public reading and meeting room. Subscriptions of $1,000 had already been received in money and
labour with more expected from returning miners.

A code of by-laws was drawn up in the meantime, and it was agreed that some useful books and newspapers should be bought for the benefit and instruction of every individual who would subscribe a small sum monthly to defray expenses.44

At the end of April the Institute, to augment its funds, organized a "grand entertainment," with some unexpected results. It was held in the saloon of Miss Jeanette Morris, a new building but not large enough for the occasion and not calculated to support the weight of 250 solid miners. About 200 others . . . could not be received. Mr Wattie, President of the society, opened the soiree by a grand and elaborate address which he delivered in a meaty and praise-like manner. After him came the pioneer brass band, who rendered some of the best pieces of their repertory. We were listening to them with all our ears when a great crash was heard coming from the centre of the room; the floor had partly given way and those who were sitting down comfortably were then obliged to stand up. But the entertainment was so attractive that nobody, not even the fair ones (and they were in pretty fair number) would abandon their position, and amid the crash of benches and floor which were breaking under their ponderous weight they listened delightedly to the different recitations, songs and melodies, and, although some had been scared, everyone says that if Mr. Wattie will be kind enough to give us another soiree he is sure to have a large attendance.45

Whether Miss Morris was equally amused is not recorded, but obviously the concert was a help to the literary institute, and their building was opened to the public on June 7.

Besides the reading room for literary, social and musical evenings and its stock of good newspapers and magazines from the old country (including the prestigious Blackwood's and Cornhill Reviews) for leisurely perusal, it also contained a circulating library. Not only had individuals donated books, but Florence Wilson, who had closed her stationary store in Victoria to follow the birds of passage to Cariboo, had brought with her a load of volumes, presumably by prior arrangement with friends of the literary institute. Wilson, later to become Cariboo's leading actress, now became its first librarian; apparently the first woman librarian in British Columbia.46

Starting with about 300 volumes and sustained by local means, the lib-
ibrary was well patronized and continued to grow over the years. In addition to works by the authors mentioned in connection with the previous short lived effort, there were such intellectual books such as Butler's *Analogy* and two editions of the complete works of Rousseau (appropriate for their situation and concerns) in English and in French. Other writers (quoted by them as well) included Dickens, Goldsmith, Swift, Mill, and their favourite Robert Burns. There were also books on science, geology, and political economy, and histories of England and America, while for simpler tastes there were popular novels, and for those less educated but aspiring, primers and such reference works as a pronouncing gazetter and an illustrated dictionary.

Based on the intimate societies and mechanics' institutes of the old countries, with their efforts at mutual improvement and community living, the Cariboo Literary Institute expressed, like the hospital and all subsequent socio-cultural institutions, the Caribooites' common myths and developing ethos. The rooms were constantly being enlarged and made more comfortable and attractive, and in addition to the scheduled events men could go there anytime to read the news from home, meet and talk without the distractions of saloons, play chess or checkers, and relax with a warm stove and a pipe. Especially in the early years before proper cabins or boarding houses, it preserved some of the social patterns and associations of home, serving as a common parlour.

The sharing of knowledge was a social extension of the cooperative mining companies, whose organizational structures were reflected in its democratic membership and executive, and its joint stock financing. Its monthly (later quarterly) subscription fee was kept low enough that "rich and poor might be able to go and take their moral food." The idea that culture was not just a confection or a luxury and the prerogative of a favoured few, but rather as necessary to human sustenance and health as physical nourishment, and which all men should be (and could be) encouraged to enjoy, were
protean ideals whose recognition and practice were strengthened by the physical and human environment of Cariboo. Monsieur Deffis later wrote that "nothing tends so much to elevate the morals of a mining community as the reading of good books" and that the "bud has become a tree which bears good fruit," echoing Mill's view of culture as human cultivation.

No further performances seem to have been given, however, during the 1864 mining season, which definitely marks the zenith and the end of the gold rush period, and the beginning of what was later called "the winter of our discontent." Not only was there the annual exodus of miners at the end of the season, but many were leaving for good. Though the season itself attracted the largest population and produced the largest amount of gold--nearly $4 million worth officially and estimated to have been twice as much--yet most of it was concentrated in the hands of relatively few, who had already invested much time and capital or had been just plain lucky. For most of the roughly 4,000 fortune hunters it was keenly disappointing and even ruinous. Not only was an Artesian Mining Company, employing a drill in the meadows, or flats, below Cameronton to counter the slum, defeated by massive boulders, but all those sinking conventional shafts were drowned out. The same thing occurred on Lightning Creek where the boom town of Van Winkle was soon almost deserted.

The Flume and Drain Companies, which had raised excessive and premature expectations, were hampered by mistakes in the grade and unanticipated obstacles of solid rock and cave-ins, and were now realized to be the work of years rather than months. The two outfits had to pay employees in vague promissory notes and many claim owners depending on their completion had to "learn to labor and to wait" or try to sell out. Still, wiser or experienced heads recognized that only by such "united enterprises could the riches of Cariboo be unlocked," that "prudence must enter more largely into our future operations," and that "like the expensive mineral districts of California and
Australia, it was the place for combinations of labour and capital, not the individual miner. And enough had been seen of its potential wealth to encourage those who could or would to bide their time.

It was not only the physical environment that was discouraging many: the political one was worsening steadily since Douglas' retirement at the end of 1863. His successor, Governor Seymour, ruled British Columbia separately while another, equally unpopular, ruled Vancouver Island. A privileged Foreign Office appointee, as woefully inept as a Gilbert and Sullivan character, Seymour was easily manipulated by the sectionalist New Westminster cliques of colonial officials and property owners who quickly "persuaded His Excellency that New Westminster is British Columbia." Despite a visit to Cariboo in the summer of '64, his receipt of miners' petitions, their attempts to familiarize him with their vital needs and problems, and his extravagant, but ultimately empty, promises to them, it was the lower country interests that had effectively gained his ear, and retained it.

Admittedly Douglas' reign, by no means as unmixed a blessing as it is often portrayed, had bequeathed some of the problems. Though he had valued the efforts of the miners and sought to encourage them, he had also made crucial errors, as with the mint. It was another to have created two separate colonial realms in the first place, burdening a few thousand colonists with two redundant and expensive regimes to support and two rival capitals and ports, both of them pipes through which wealth flowed rather than centres of production. The rivalry for the inland trade quickly developed into bitter, lasting hostility between the British elite that dominated Victoria's political and economic life and the mainly Canadian business and mercantile population of New Westminster, whose "mercenary attitude" and "avid ambition" had repelled Governor Douglas.

While Victoria had remained a free port and benefitted greatly thereby, the New Westminsterites had insisted on excessively high tariffs being placed
on all goods landed in British Columbia and levied at the port of shipment—
not to protect local industries, which remained virtually nonexistent, but to
cripple Victoria's trading advantage and garner revenues which were dispro-
portionately spent on official salaries and improvements to the capital
"city." They did injure Victoria's interests, but also their own, those of
British Columbia generally, and especially those of Cariboo on which all else
depended. In this, and the added charges to all mining supplies, the price
was passed on to the Cariboo miners and merchants. In order to pay for the
construction of the wagon road the collection of road tolls was granted to
the private contractor who built each section, but though they benefitted
equally from it, New Westminster, Yale and the other trading centres paid no
taxes; the whole burden was again unfairly placed on Caribooites. It would
have been better, in any case, as was later observed, to have let posterity
help pay for the road.  

But, as the author of "Chronicles of Cariboo" remarked of Seymour, "my
forerunner made your yoke heavy but I will add to your yoke . . . " Ignoring
Douglas' wish that British Columbia now be given a legislature with a major-
ity of democratically elected representatives, the Legislative Council that
was formed in 1864 was a mere kangaroo parliament, two-thirds of its members
colonial officials who voted their own salaries and controlled both it and
the higher Executive Council. This suited the New Westminster establishment
with whom the officials went hand-in-glove, but left Cariboo, with the bulk
of the population and paying almost all the revenue, with but two represent-
atives, as isolated politically as it was geographically. This mockery of
English institutions was enough to enrage even the British subjects and to
drive many of the Americans out of the colony altogether. More concretely
injurious, the first sitting of the "legislature" began by raising import
duties to between 12½ and 15%, again even on mining necessities that there
was no intention of producing in the colony.
But the supremely vicious act of the Seymour regime was the imposing of an export tax on gold, which Douglas, to his credit, had consistently opposed. The fruit of a combined ignorance of the realities of Cariboo mining and envy of the gross yields of the richest claims, this measure ignored the fact that because of high living and mining costs, the imponderables connected with the deposits, and the other revenues exacted, the net profits of most operations were far below the total yield, from which the export duty was deducted at the banks (who also took advantage of it to lower the already low price they paid for gold) or at the place of shipment. Thus the miners were taxed on their expenses and even on their risks and losses. Since they already paid mining and recording fees and duties and tolls on all commodity expenditures, they were being hit coming and going, taxed on top of taxes. To add insult to injury, the real estate speculators to the south paid no taxes on property, income or profits. In addition to the further drain on their capital and the real hardship placed on owners of marginal claims, the injustice of this act was the last straw for many miners and investors, especially Americans, who resolved to leave at the first opportunity; and many did over the next year.

Would-be farmers, too, suffered: colonial misrule, both on the mainland and the island. In addition to the excessive prices set on crown lands discouraging settlement, prospective farmers showing interest in an area were often delayed while an official "communicated with certain of his land speculating friends," and were subsequently informed that the property had already been bought; they then found the prices considerably higher or the land held "on spec." Said Macfie, a well informed and moral judge of the times:

To saddle with an incubus of taxation adventurous pioneers, intrepid explorers, and enterprising traders, who were staking their all in developing a country bristling with formidable difficulties of access, evinced a degree of governmental inexperience and mismanagement without parallel in the history of British colonization. The most liberal encouragement ought to have been extended to those hardy and industrious immigrants...

He concludes that "the blunders of the local executive .... which hindered
the development of the mines, proved equally mischievous in preventing the settlement of the agricultural districts," which also injured Cariboo (while boosting the import trade) by keeping prices high. Those Caribooites who remained agreed, later observing that the American colonies had revolted with less cause.

The final major cause of Cariboo's continuing economic and social instability lay in the fact that it had much competition as a gold region. The whole Pacific slope was enlivened with mineral discoveries, swelled and borne on the winds of rumour and the hot air of self-serving reports from below. While many were leaving in disgust for the gold fields of Idaho and Montana during 1864 and 1865, very small finds at Wild Horse Creek in the Kootenies and at Sooke on Vancouver Island were inflated into rich and easy diggings by the New Westminster and Victoria press—in order to create new fields of exploitation for the worthy burghers of those flim-flam capitals, in the wake of the slackening Cariboo boom and another drop in the demand and prices for import commodities and in local property values. As early as January of '64 the more discouraged miners, less experienced newcomers, and those financially embarrassed, easily manipulated by their occupational tendency to excessive flights of fancy or at least the hope of making a stake in "poor man's diggings," had begun leaving for such greener pastures. The stream swelled to a flood after the unfortunate mining season and new legislative acts.

In fact, the meagre amounts of placer gold actually found in those other localities, added to their victimization by the price gouging of traders, caused more miners to leave the colony. Over-speculation and over-trading, as well as government policy, left the southern areas in a state of chronic recession for the next several years. Cariboo correspondents regularly took the press and merchants to task for these misguided efforts to enrich themselves at others' expense, and, blindly, to their own ultimate cost.

There are a class of people who are of the opinion that the best
mode of getting the country prospected is to raise excitement, but this is a very poor way of managing matters. My fourteen years' experience has fully convinced me that to 'wild excitement' succeeds general depression.

But the only response of the press was to worry about grabbing a share of the traffic of each potential rush from the rival port and protecting its narrow, short term interests: "What will our houses and town lots be worth?" In trying to dig themselves out of each slump in this manner they just dug themselves in deeper for the next. But just as the conviction that a country's resources—human and material—should be systematically developed was slowly beginning to form and evolve as part of the practical ethos of Caribooites, so in the coastal towns the impulse merely to exploit them for immediate profit was becoming ingrained in the collective psychology. They alternately cried that Cariboo was "played out" when pushing a rush to somewhere else, and exaggerated its yields when the latest excitement had fallen through.

As a result of the mining difficulties, political despotism and baseless mining excitements, the population of Cariboo, rather than increasing as in former years, actually declined for the winter of 1864—1865 to about 400, while the following summer's mining force was reckoned at less than half that of 1864. With the small number of settled residents it was becoming hard to support the hospital by subscriptions alone, and a small grant promised by Seymour had not materialized; very small shares of the revenues garnered from Cariboo were ever expended on it, and even when allocations were voted it was often a struggle to secure them from a most protective officialdom.

But the threat of the hospital being closed in the middle of winter was removed by the rallying of support and by a benefit concert, organized by James Wattie, one of the most philanthropic of the big claim owners. The saloon, one with a sturdier floor than the scene of the previous concert, was crowded on the night of November 3. The performance consisted of a prologue written for the occasion by John Fraser, followed by a programme of glee's,
ballads, and comic and literary recitations, and concluding in a dance and refreshments; and cheered by the presence of a larger number of ladies who were braving the winter.

It is worth quoting some of the prologue as it illustrates the social context of performances at this point. Having resolved to "let the cause for which we've met in poetry be known," it begins with an affirmation of the common concerns, values and humanity which had brought them to Cariboo, kept them there, and brought them together as a social group for such occasions.

We've met, my friends, in Cariboo from countries far and wide, 
In hopes to catch the glorious breeze that wafts to fortune's tide; 
That breeze around these mountain peaks, each eagerly pursues it, 
The lucky few may find it fair, but most are sure to lose it. 
Here human nature may be seen, without a rag to cover it, 
And 'honesty,' like splendid pay 'tis seldom we discover it; 
Here Jews and Gentiles, Spaniards, French and Canny Scots unite 
To constitute the motley throng, yet most attractive sight; 
Here 'Unionist' and 'Federate' in amity combine, 
To sink a mighty contest in the deep and shining mine. . . .

Here are evoked the strongly felt analogy of seeking hidden worth in man and in nature, the mining life as a test of human character, and the material importance of the cooperative spirit and the social value of the fellowship, group identity and unity of purpose that were beginning to result from it.

After asserting the need for maintaining "faith in Cariboo's resources," and the danger of finding it "too soon, alas! was shaken," the prologue also acknowledges that fortune "reigns supreme" and "wields at once a Wand of Gold and heavy iron rod."

And when the toiling miner, out of luck and out of health, 
Beholds how great the distance is 'tween him and shining wealth, 
When thoughts of home and little ones his manly bosom rend, 
Alas! in moments such as these where is the miner's friend? 
Does he find him in the merchant, to whom he owes a debt, 
Who long for his prospective gains has laid a wily net? 
Alas! for hide and tallow would that merchant skin a louse 
And send its bones, for 'balance due,' to yonder Skookum House! *

If a performance, as an adult form of play, tends to draw a "magic circle" round the audience as participants, and, as a social ritual of underlying

*Chinook term for hospital.
serious import, to define who belongs to the community and shares in its affirmed values and codes, then it is obvious that the miners were ritually experiencing their own community identity and consensus while pointedly excluding the merchant population, with comic means but serious intent. Apparently the merchants had not helped to establish or maintain the hospital, certainly prices were still rising with the winter snows, and only "a few" of them had taken part in the vital flume and drain projects.

While the context of this performance, therefore, reflects the elements of cohesion and consensus that gave rise to such entertainments and, eventually, to a community theatre, it also indicates the still fragile and incomplete nature of those conditions even among the small winter population, which restricted social and theatrical development. It also shows the strong relationship between empathy and sympathy, affect and effect, which they felt in these early entertainments and later in their regular theatre. Not only did the benefit concert serve

That cause to every bosom dear, where kindly feelings dwell,
    The cause of true born Charity, which all here aid so well;

it also concretely strengthened the conviction that "A Hospital on William Creek is a necessity." Finally it countered the moral function of negative examples (the merchants) with positive models for emulation and identification, a practice which would later be embodied fictively as well as actually. James Wattie, instrumental in creating both the hospital and the literary institute, was singled out for honours, "for what he seems is he . . . the miner for the times."

Long has this 'Nature's Nobleman, without the leave of Court
    Been to the Hospital, at once, foundation and support;
    And by his side another 'Nature's Nobleman' has stood
    Whose trade it is to cut and slash and bathe in human blood;
the latter being "the splendid Doctor Chipp." In keeping with this ritual element, cheers were called for and bestowed on each of those local heroes.

Another entertainment given at the beginning of December was expressive
in its whole content of a local concern, and in its form and style of other formative influences on later theatrical activity. Held at the Parlor Saloon in Barkerville, it was called Judicial Frolics: "the great Goldbuckle case was tried . . . the Judge concurring in every particular with the decision of his learned and worthy friend Mr. Justice Cox." The latter person being the real—and very popular—Gold Commissioner for Cariboo, it must have been an actual mining suit that was being treated to the broad parody and burlesque of which Caribooites were especially fond, whether on the stage or the page.

As time, energy, and money were increasingly being wasted, and ill feelings generated, in such litigation—usually over rights to limited water supply or priorities or inaccuracies in claim registrations, and often resulting from vagaries in the mining laws—there was a serious general problem behind the particulars of the performance, and a threat to the stability and well being of a mining community which already had enough problems, drains on its capital and sources of discontent. While the ridicule would seem intended to expose the absurdity and reduce the tensions and anxieties surrounding such proceedings, a comic moral would also appear to have been implied in the format: that miners would have been better off to have submitted such disagreements to compromise among themselves or to the judgement of a panel of their peers. In later years this was seriously suggested and sometimes employed.

Judicial trappings and pomptudes were caricatured by the performers: the judge and advocates were riged in sheepskin wigs, huge tin spectacles and gowns, the Judge with a night shirt; the questions, answers, speeches, and display of wit were first rate, and with the exception of the Judge, who enjoyed it rather too much, the boys kept countenance surprisingly, with the idea, doubtless, of affording all the amusement possible to the inhabitants of Barkerville. Judge, jury, lawyers, witnesses and all marched in procession from the dressing room to the Court, a distance of 150 yards, each bearing a lighted candle, their physogs adorned as they were with the sheepskin and spectacles, their costumes and the general absurdity of the procession was sufficient to bring a grin to a more sage face than miners usually wear.
Consistent with the spontaneous and improvisational nature of the performance, the audience was included in it, in the role of spectators at the "trial," and the saloon was apparently arranged like a courtroom--an early, simple form of audience participation and "environmental" theatre would seem to have been the result. Even some disruptive persons were handled "in character:"

several gents were fined the 'drinks' for all hands for contempt of court, having smoked cigars and called out '[illegible]' frequently during the business of the Court; with this exception the whole arrangements were admirable and amusing.

Cariboo residents had already begun to miss having a theatre and especially the drama.

The Victorians must excuse what may appear to them the Cariboo-ites' very ridiculous taste for amusement, for as the child that has discarded its two-and-sixpenny kettle drum will, after having been for a time deprived of any toy at all, find heaps of fun in a penny tin whistle, so with them who have lived in the mountains for a few years. Scenes that may be supposed to produce enjoyment for the illiterate and vulgar only, in a more civilized and formal community, afford piles of amusement for very intelligent folks in Cariboo.

Fortunately others were not so embarrassed as the Colonist correspondent by their childlike sense of play, and this essential quality of theatre was happily retained in later more "formal" efforts.67

In the meantime, the little cluster of humanity, though diminished in numbers, showed an enhanced craving for sociability and capacity for entertaining themselves. A ball was organized a few nights later in aid of Mrs. Clunes and her five children, "her husband being ill and unable to work." The Christmas and New Year's season was for the first time given an air of public festivity with "a large programme of balls, concerts, etc." The proceeds of those were "devoted to the support of the Hospital and the Reading Room;" these were subsequently reported free of debt, but though a small government grant was finally secured for the hospital both institutions continued to be dependent on such local means for assistance.68

Besides carrying on its other activities and adding a chess club and
annual tournament, the literary institute also gave rise that winter to "a choral association," the Cariboo Glee Club, who "spend their evenings singing and making merry." Though it later participated in several concerts, it seems mostly to have functioned as an informal activity for its own sake. A purely British form of popular part singing, the glee club had been in the eighteenth century a prerogative of the elegant and genteel, indulged in by men only and laced with drinks and occasionally smutty lyrics; in the nineteenth, the glee became both more democratized and more refined by the rising middle classes. As such, and as the essence of musical mirth and male camaraderie, it was a particularly suitable form of expression in Cariboo, where male companionship and harmony were necessities as well as desiderata, where opportunities for mirth were always welcome, and where middle class aspirations were common.

As the location of Judicial Frolics suggests, the centre of gravity was shifting back upstream from Cameronton toward Barkerville and Richfield. The initial failure of the drain tunnel had rendered most of the claims below Cameronton unworkable. Though it too would require several years to complete, the Bed Rock Flume, starting above Barkerville, had made better progress and at least helped many of the claims in the vicinity of the finished section. More work was done on it during the winter, enabling a large number of miners in the spring to "sluice away the whole dirt in the bed of the creek along its course." Furthermore, successful experiments with snowshoeing and sledding, together with the advancement of the wagon road as far as Quesnel, were making it possible to bring some supplies in through the winter. Barkerville's proximity to this route also helped make its position more suitable for receiving and distributing goods.

An important event that both indicates and furthered the growing ascendancy of Barkerville as a centre of activity was the location there in the summer of 1865 of a Cariboo newspaper. George Wallace, formerly of the
Evening Express in Victoria, moved his press to Barkerville and opened the Cariboo Sentinel on June 6. Though a business concern in the first place, stimulated in part by Victoria's economic slump, yet Wallace's earlier paper had been the most sympathetic to the miners and the Sentinel was commenced in part because the mining population had grievances which it sought to redress and could not by existing vehicles. Cariboo lacked sufficient religious guidance, its social condition had been falsely reported and the government had oppressed it.... Its object was a work of reform.72

The first editorial stated its objects and principles. Not only social but, more important, mining conditions had been falsely reported; the "ignorant or designing propagators" having injured both individual and general interests, we long since formed a determination to establish a newspaper on the first opportunity in the very centre of the mining district, to send forth reports collected from authentic sources upon which the adventurous spirits of this and other countries might...form something like proper and correct views of what they had to expect. Though originally it was to be "exclusively devoted" to mining news, the editor had been made aware of the necessity in British Columbia as a whole for a "thoroughly independent journal, with wider and more extensive aims."73

Chief among those was "the eradication of every official abuse," singing out for special "odium" "the monstrous and iniquitous Gold Export Tax Bill" and the "shameful waste of the revenue"--$250,000 of it--"in keeping up a standing army of official drones in a depopulated country." It was demanded that "those who have a power to wield do so for the public advantage." "All measures," it concluded, "calculated to benefit the country, aid in its settlement, or to develop its vast resources in mineral wealth will receive our most cordial support," and promised to be open to the admission of correspondence on public questions" and to "know no distinction of persons."74

This programme was followed to the satisfaction of most Caribooites and expanded in the succeeding decade of the paper's existence. Its basic format changed little in the course of it: it consisted of four closely printed pages, the first of which was given over to some local advertisements and
augmented with reprinted articles, foreign news items, correspondents' reports, and occasional accounts of political meetings in Cariboo or elsewhere. Page two carried the editorial and letters to the editor, with about half of it taken up by local ads; page three was devoted to mostly Cariboo news, dominated by the latest mining intelligence, but also giving coverage to social matters, market prices, announcements of coming events, new businesses and organizations, reminders of meetings and various other items of interest, as well as brief telegraphic despatches which the Sentinel was the first mainland paper to receive, and, of course, theatrical reviews. Sometimes items from the third spilled over onto the final page, which normally contained a column featuring humorous stories and articles, jokes, or locally written poetry and songs, with the rest of the page taken up by many small ads of lower country businesses. With its small, closely spaced type the Sentinel contained more actual information than either the Colonist or the Columbian, and was remarkably well written. It was published twice weekly in the summer season and weekly in the winter, except when suspended during the latter.

What makes the Sentinel the most valuable and reliable source of information for the historian is that it was truly the authentic voice of Cariboo, both within and without. Wallace's reference to "the opportunity" to start a paper there suggests that he was financially backed by some Caribooites; in any case, he left after the '65 season, and the paper was published until 1868 by Alexander Allan and Warren Lambert and then by Robert Holloway, all Cariboo miners. It was apparently kept up as much for community as for business purposes, for even at $1.00 a copy it never made much profit due to high costs. The editorship changed hands regularly—as often as twice a year—and was also filled by Caribooites like John McLaren, Henry Havelock, and J. S. Thompson; taking their cue from the name, they called this "the changing of the guard" and McLaren gave the role a motto from Aeschylus: "Watchman, what of the night? Tell us what the signs of promise are."
In fact the Sentinel watched over not only Cariboo's interests, but also those of settlers throughout British Columbia. In Cariboo itself it guarded all aspects of the public good, social, cultural and moral as well as economic, and did not hesitate to chastize individuals, groups, or even the citizenry at large for neglecting or thwarting it. Frequent letters, supporting or taking issue with the editor or each other, and local articles added to the continuity and multiplicity of viewpoints, making the paper a forum of Cariboo voices, which its circulation carried throughout the colonies and beyond. It "deliberately molded contemporary public opinion on all vital matters," and both closely followed and actively promoted Cariboo's development of a mature community, cultural and theatrical life. Much of the rest of this account is based on a careful perusal of it.

Significantly the very first issue carried a theatrical advertisement, and this new facility of communication undoubtedly had great influence on the unprecedented amount of performance activity that season, and later on the emergence of the theatre as a fixed institution. The first announcement was for a charitable benefit for the children of William Winnard, a blacksmith, whose wife had died during the winter. Programmes were issued, for the paper also maintained a "job printing office." Although the concert was not reviewed, its goal of raising money to send the children to a Catholic school in Victoria was achieved.

A second advertisement was not actually for a performance, but was a bit of sly local satire. It purported to announce a concert for the "Benefit of the Monopolisers" to enable them to buy "champagne" and other delicacies! It was in deliberately ironic contrast to the genuine, unmerited, distress of the recipients of the real benefit concerts, and it bitterly mocked the deserved misfortune of a number of Cariboo merchants who had overstocked the previous summer and been caught short by the dull business and later mass exodus. That winter they had secretly combined to buy up all available nece-
ssities in order to force up prices and recoup their losses, but an honest merchant they approached had "spilled the beans." The miners held meetings and organized into groups to order "their summer's grub direct from below," and with the unexpectedly early arrival of pack trains the market had been flooded and prices dropped drastically. Some of the schemers were utterly ruined; others suffered huge losses and, together with the innocent ones, now ran frantic newspaper ads proclaiming "No Monopoly" or "Live and Let Live." A lengthy source of discord had reached the breaking point; relations between the mining and merchant communities gradually improved thereafter.

For the majority of miners conditions were already improving. With the ceiling on prices thus dramatically lowered, the nearly completed wagon road kept them from rising substantially again. Except for a gap of several miles over which wagons had to be unloaded and goods packed on mules, the road was continuous from Williams Creek to Yale. Supplies were now replenished twice a month by Barnard's Express, run by F. J. Barnard, a self-made man who had begun by packing in newspapers to sell to miners. Passenger service by saddle and coach made the trip to Yale in just 6½ days, more or less. In conjunction, another man ran a freight express by pack mule to Cunningham, Grouse, Antler, Keithley, and other outlying creeks, to which trails had been roughly blazed by the joint efforts of mining companies. As that suggests, prospecting and mining were beginning to expand outwards again from Williams Creek. On those formerly abandoned, like Grouse and Antler, the methods of deep mining, drifting, flumes and drains had begun to be applied.

Despite the loss of population some 1400 to 1500 miners had returned, and in fact the decreased numbers proved to be beneficial, especially in conjunction with cheaper prices.

Never since Cariboo was first discovered has the time been so favorable for the mining class... men can live for one third the amount expended in former years, whilst wages are almost the same... Heretofore Cariboo has been decried because it was not a 'poor man's' country; this argument is no longer ten-
able for it is essentially the place for a poor man to get along. Diggings that yielded $5 and $6 per day "to the hand" now became worthwhile; bigger companies worked more steadily and paid accordingly. Fewer men were unemployed, observed the _Sentinel_, "and all will get a chance to make money; confidence will then be restored in the country." This was a little premature but the trend was there: the gold was beginning to be "more generally diffused among the miners," and though "big strikes" were still made, there was an absence of excitement about them and the majority were "well satisfied with the present state of things." More prospecting was being done, opening up new possibilities for "this still undeveloped mineral region." 81

In this mood of optimism, with a concentration of miners around Barkerville, and more spendable income among them, the ad for the Parlor Saloon, beginning with the June 17 issue, included the following announcement:

A Harmonic Meeting Held every week
--Judge and Jury.

A THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT
will be given once a week by the
Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association.

This was the first mention of a group that would dominate future theatrical life in Barkerville; it was apparently formed from those who had taken part in earlier performances at the Parlor and other saloons, as some of the same names occur. It is unclear whether the "harmonic meeting" was part of the theatrical entertainment or a separate, impromptu, musical evening held at another time.

The first performance of the Dramatic Association on June 24, 1865, was a benefit for Dan Watson, the former minstrel performer, who had been injured and was "in a bad way;" it was probably to pay his fare to the coast, for he was never mentioned in Cariboo again. It began with a farce, _Poor Pillicoddy_, a blend of mistaken identities and marital jealousies with English humours characters and featuring an excessively doting husband. Perhaps because
of its ridicule of married men's follies, it was a popular play with the largely bachelor public and was revived several times in succeeding years.

... Mr. Ramage took the part of Pillicoddy, and gave evidence of histrionic talent which only requires to be cultivated to place him in the foremost rank of amateur performers. Mr. Thompson personated the character of Capt. O'Scuttle as if he had been a veritable son of the sea. Mr. Wm. Robertson made a graceful Mrs. Pillicoddy. Mr. W. Gladwin, as Mrs. O'Scuttle, rendered the part with considerable ability, and Mr. T. J. Atchison was really inimitable as Sarah Blunt. When the farce was concluded Messrs. Barry, Anderson, and others, sang several songs exceedingly well. Mr. Barry has the sweetest voice we have heard for a long time and makes use of it with rare taste and feeling. Altogether the entertainment was remarkably good, and we hope there may be many such pleasant reunions during the season.

Apparently there were, for the weekly announcements continued throughout the summer months. No more were reviewed, however, until September, when a series of concerts were being given; after September 9 the Dramatic Association advertisement was discontinued.

Probably the Sentinel had neither the time nor the space to review any others, for even with the issuing of supplements items were often being "crowded out" by the "press of other matters;" it was a busy time, especially for a new paper. Thus it is not known what other plays were performed, nor what stage facilities the Parlor had, except that the reference to a "dressing room" the previous winter would indicate that some theatrical arrangements had even then been made; undoubtedly of a very simple kind. Costumes may have been left over from the Cameronton theatre. As for men playing the female roles, this was the rule in amateur theatre of the time; certainly the terms of the review show that they were played in character, not travestied. This expedient might have been the result either of the small female population or of the location of performances in a saloon, though respectable women did attend. Naturally Caribooites preferred actresses, and in the regular theatres women did perform; which was the cause and which the effect is not certain--probably the influence was reciprocal.
Fig. 2. Early Barkerville. Though probably taken about 1867, this view shows the buildings of earlier vintage, looking upstream from the lower, and older, end of town. The group of men are mostly in working attire; later they tended to change to better clothes when in town. The Parlor Saloon, which later became the first Theatre Royal, was located across the street from the Cosmopolitan Restaurant, just out of the frame of the picture, unfortunately. Its exterior was probably similar to that of the Cosmopolitan. This and succeeding photographs are from the Frederick Dally Collection and are used here courtesy of the B. C. Archives.
At the next performance it reviewed, another benefit concert for the literary institute on September 28, the Sentinel was "glad to notice the attendance of so large a number of ladies," though even in a nondramatic entertainment all the performers were men. The first concert to be described in any detail, its programme was probably typical of those that had preceded it.

During the evening the Cariboo Glee Club, which numbered about 15 persons, sang the following pieces: "Away, away, away;" 'Spring's Delights;' 'The Fairies;' 'Glorious Apollo;' 'The Farewell;' 'The German's Father Land.' Nearly all these were given with an effectiveness that reflected great credit on the Club. Mr. T. Barry sang with exquisite taste several Irish Ballads. Mr. G. Eaton and Mr. Frank Richards sang the duet of 'The Larboard Watch' in a manner that called forth great applause. Mr. James Anderson created great enthusiasm by his very artistic rendering of several Scottish Songs; the rapturous encores that followed each of his songs testified how highly they were appreciated by the audience.

The first part was rounded out by William Robertson and T. J. Atchison's performances of comic songs, which produced "roars of laughter," while William Barry "with great feeling sang some choice ballads." After an interval there was a vocal quartet, a duet by Richards and William Barry, and J. S. Thompson "recited two pieces in his usual able manner." There was also an orchestra, presumably a band of professional saloon musicians. It played only two pieces on its own and the reviewer thought it "would have added greatly to the entertainments of the evening had there been more instrumental music." But it must have been a long evening as it was, though apparently enjoyed by the audience, who seem generally to have preferred vocal music.

In its "taste" and propriety of "manner," the predominantly British and middle class origins of the material, the emphasis on the comic and the sentimental, laughter and feeling, this performance was thoroughly consistent with all later concerts, and the significance these had for them will be discussed subsequently. Like the dramatic performance, the concert was "successful in every sense" and "a large amount has been netted as a result."

There was apparently a noticeable increase in quality, for the concert was
hailed as "the most creditable performance ever held in Cariboo." In any event, these performances also reflect important qualitative changes in the nature and functioning of the saloons and, through them, within Cariboo society. 84

No doubt the motives of T. J. Atchison, owner of the Parlor, were economic as well as social in turning his building over to performances; not directly since they were nonprofit, but certainly for the large crowds and attention they drew to his establishment. It was not so much a matter of cutthroat competition with other saloons, for T. Adler and Frank Richards, who participated in the Parlor's entertainments, were also saloonkeepers. Rather it was part of a common awareness by the saloon owners that they had to offer more than just drinks to ensure the miners' patronage—and probably even their continued presence in Cariboo. The saloons were particularly dependent on shifts in population, mood, and the spending of surplus income, since they dealt in luxuries rather than necessities. For this reason, and perhaps because some, like James Loring, had been miners, their relationship with the mining community was much closer and more harmonious than that of most other businessmen, and they were the first to begin staking prospectors and investing in claims.

Their joining forces with miners to produce plays and concerts reflects this natural identity of social and economic interests, and so does their increasing responsiveness generally to the miners' changing needs and demands. Not only were saloons growing in number with the gold being "more generally diffused"—over the next two years eighteen were established in Barkerville alone—but they were constantly being renovated, increased in size and comfort. The wretched little grog shops of the gold rush, dispensing rotgut in crude surroundings, had been giving way to ever more elaborate buildings with ornamental facades, large glass windows, polished wooden floors, stylish wallpaper and imported mahogany bars, and dispensing "the best wines, liquors,
and segars." Large cast iron stoves offered winter warmth; lamps, chandeliers, and decorative mirrors reflected brightness and gaiety. The typical saloon of this period was "a clean well lighted place." The best of them became the finest north of San Francisco.

They provided something of "a home away from home," a crucial, "happy haven" from the rigours of frontier life, the loneliness and spartan environments of the room or cabin, the dirt and toil of the diggings.

There the miner forgot the rough oilskins, and the backaches, and saw only bright clothes, green labelled bottles and 'girls who danced for pay.'

One must agree with Bescoby's designation of them as "popular recreation centres." They were working men's clubs, far from being mere barrooms, where the miner could, and increasingly did, leave his oilskins behind and transform himself for the evening into a well dressed "man about town," enjoying a more elegant, engaging and colourful social existence.

The nature of the "added attractions" varied among the saloons, catering to different clienteles to some extent, but more likely to the differing tastes, moods, and needs within the still restless populace, who missed a variety of elements from home and also desired the variety, alternatives, and novelties that had become the spice of life for economic man. In the spring of 1865 the Fashion Saloon was advertising music and dancing, and "all lovers of the terpsichorean art are invited to call and enjoy themselves." To be more exact, it was the "hurdy gurdy girls" they were invited to enjoy: young German and Dutch women imported by way of San Francisco to supply female company for a community that remained predominantly male, and who now made a most auspicious debut. Soon other saloons followed suit in this most popular form of entertainment. Dances cost $1.00 each, paid for by the customer buying a drink for himself and a sarsaparilla for his partner. Music was supplied by a two or three piece band, featuring piano and/or violin, that had replaced the original instrument after which the girls were named; the band
also played background music between dances. Though the dances seem to have been based on polkas and schottishes, the style and vigour of their rendition, by miners letting off steam, were by all accounts like nothing else on earth.

If you ever saw a ring of bells in motion, you have the exact positions these young ladies are put through during the dance; the more muscular the partner, the nearer the approximation of the ladies' pedal extremities to the ceiling, and the gent who can hoist his 'gal' the highest is considered the best dancer; the poor girls as a general thing earn their money very hardly. Yet it was good money, and at least two of them were not entirely put off by miners, since they each married one and became lifelong Caribooites. Miners were often falling in love with them, even writing poems about individual "hurdies," but except for those with honourable intentions, the girls kept their relations strictly for the dance. Unlike the saloon girls of the American West, they were respectable women, known for their stern moral character and respected as such.

For men who wanted more physical pleasures for their money there were prostitutes—rarely even obliquely alluded to by the very Victorian Sentinel, but they apparently made more money than most of the miners. Medical reports were sadly eloquent of the consequences: as late as 1867 syphilis was described as existing "in full force" in an otherwise healthy population; clearly sublimated sex and socially channelled energies and feelings were necessary for physical well being too. Undoubtedly the chaste embraces of the hurdies fulfilled such an outlet, and provided an illusion of romance, which is all romance is anyway.

Other saloons had quieter pastimes which were equally popular. Several featured billiard tables. Another was called the "Billiard and Bowling Saloon," where men could play ten pins; obviously the saloons were much larger than the versions in the "reconstructed" Barkerville suggest. Some catered to the perennial hunger for news and love of reading by installing reading
rooms with cozy armchairs; the Parlor, in keeping with its name, had a "First Class Reading Room" with

All the latest English, American, Canadian, and Colonial papers taken in.

The Occidental Cigar Store and Saloon included a stock of popular novels as well. Penfold's Saloon later opened "a club room" for social gatherings, while at another:

The private rooms are unsurpassed, being warm and comfortable. Persons wishing to spend a quiet hour, either on business or socially, will find this the proper place to do it.

Mining companies and prospecting ventures were formed and held meetings, community enterprises and charitable activities were organized, concerts and balls for worthy causes and attended by married women and children took place in them. They were as central to social life as are the pubs of England or the bars of Spain. Without the saloons Cariboo society could not have developed and matured as it did.²⁹²

Of course there was drinking, and gambling too, but these "vices" have for the most part been ludicrously overstated by historians who must have led very sheltered lives and never seen a Vancouver pub on a Saturday night. S. D. Clark, for example, props up an obviously a priori thesis that frontier mining camps were all modern versions of Sodom and Gomorrah by seizing on a few isolated incidents and individuals and ignoring all the contrary evidence cited here. But the saloons in themselves were not causes of drinking or gambling; rather their character was shaped by the prevalent attitudes to, means of practicing, those activities. In fact the improved and improving nature of the saloons, discernible by 1865, is the most persuasive demonstration of a growing concern with order, social decorum, and respectability.

Indeed the refined quality of the performances is specifically indicative of the reasserting of proprieties and the cultural channelling of energies among the majority, together with a pressure to conform to them. Judic-
Frolics already contained a lighthearted example of this in the "contempt of court charge." The fall of 1865 evinces actual impatience and censoriousness regarding disruptive and immoderate forms of behaviour. A stable core of settled residents, the serious challenges of Cariboo mining, the beginning of cultural activity, and the larger number of women and families were all showing their influence. At another concert in the Parlor this is unmistakable:

The room or parlor was crowded, about 200 gentlemen and 13 ladies being present, to say nothing of babies, and all seemed to enjoy themselves to their hearts' content. The various performances were rendered in a manner highly creditable to those who took part and I seriously question whether a better thing could be got up in Victoria. To sum up, it was a "grande affair" as the French people would say, which will be long remembered by Caribooites. . . . Although one or two individuals who had indulged rather too freely became somewhat noisy toward the close of the entertainment, causing some annoyance to performers and atractable hearers. I would politely request these worshippers of Bacchus to keep themselves at home on such occasions. 94

Perhaps others requested them as well, for the incident was not repeated.

There are many other instances of this trend. Behaviour that had formerly been accepted with amused tolerance, then with embarrassment and regret, now aroused resentment and even condemnation. The worst drunk in Barkerville was not a miner but an English barrister, Joseph Park, who was no longer funny, but "notorious:" he was rebuked in the paper for his "pernicious habit," out of "public duty," and later an indignant group even petitioned for his arrest. A Welshman named William Williams, whose conduct had declined from rowdiness to violence, was banished by his countrymen paying his way out of the country, "where he was no credit either to them or himself." 95

Such isolated cases and the reactions to them show that they were not symptomatic of Cariboo society in general, but of social problems common enough in all modern communities, and more so in many contemporary ones. That they were viewed by the majority as problems, results of human weaknesses to which the stresses of isolated mining life could make most men
liable at times, but which most men also desired to overcome, show the positive direction in which Cariboo life was moving: toward what was later called "the most orderly mining community in the world." Already it was extremely law abiding: the Sentinel's first issue pointed to the fact that not a single crime had been reported during the preceding year, a boast that was often repeated in subsequent years, and a theft was "a rare thing." To preserve this trend and to discourage occasional drunken brawls, in that same fall of 1865 --the police constable for Williams Creek having resigned because the government had let his salary fall below the cost of living--the inhabitants hired and paid their own nightwatchman. Rev. Garrett in his summer visit was requested by the literary institute to give a lecture on "Temperance," which was listened to attentively by a large audience.

Individual social critics like Tal O Eifion castigated the lesser failings as plagues of evil.

Our moral condition allegorically speaking, is like the thermometer thirty degrees below zero; drinking, swearing, gambling, pugilistic encounters, and drunkenness is the order of the day. But this extreme moralism appears to have been as abhorrent to most Cariboo-ites as its opposite was becoming. Temperance to them clearly meant moderation, self control, and good judgement; the same qualities that were held as essential for successful prospecting, mining and frontier living in general. They were interested in relative societal norms and balanced improvement, not fanatical or puritanical morality. They were the last people to carry moderation too far, or to preach at others; they favoured the means of positive example, good influences, and constructive activities and associations, as has already been evident. Even O Eifion admitted the efficacy of this:

Undoubtedly the miners of Cariboo possess more intelligence and more general information as a body than their equal numbers in any of the old countries we are from. Being continually in contact with one another, the one naturally imparts while the other receives, and thus knowledge is universally distributed.

And therefore he did "not despair of improvement."
Most Caribooites, then, liked to drink and enjoyed gambling within reasonable limits, without indulging "rather too freely," just as many people like to do today. For a community both pluralistic and isolated in a bleak climate, then as now, these activities allowed regular access to sociability and company, and the saloons actually furthered the healthy exercise of these impulses by adding alternative activities. Most of them were already advertising "the best of order observed" and "soda water and sarsaparilla for sale." To John McLaren, who was neither heavy drinker nor teetotaller, and who was a leader of public opinion, liquor in itself was not an evil but a neutral force that could be used for good and ill, like freedom or money.

We have visited the saloons, in which lie bottled the elements of madness and of wisdom and those spirits that disturb us with the joys of elated thought and have seen but order and decorum. Similarly the "gambling" usually amounted to card playing for drinks, or for stakes ranging from 25¢ to $1.00, while at one saloon they played for apples and there was no charge for second hand cards.

Older men played cribbage or euchre, younger ones usually poker. Alexander Allan recalled that it was "practised more as a pastime than for the excitement of staking money." That excitement, though, was analogous enough to gold mining with its element of chance that it could tempt the more impressionable, inexperienced, or immature miners just as alluring rumours of big discoveries elsewhere frequently did. And naturally a too free indulgence in liquor could lead to the same effect in gambling. Here the tempters were the professional gamblers, called "dandies" or "sports," who were by this time restricted to rooms adjoining the public barrooms. There the stakes were much higher, as much as $800, but there was "no gun play and little disorder" and though "money was lost, this seemed to be expected." Only when the abuse of such activities constituted an offense to the community or an injury to others were complaints or charges laid. Only once
was a saloon itself blamed. In September '65 a violent assault in the Lager Beer Saloon was the last straw.

The most disgraceful, brutal, and unruly scenes have been enacted in this house for some time past, and the bad character which Barkerville has obtained has arisen solely from the disgraceful scenes allowed in this house. It should unquestionably be placed under the surveillance of the police.

When the magistrate threatened to withdraw its licence the owner sold out to another and a policy of strict order was instituted. Otherwise moralistic repressions and legal suppressions were part of what most people had sought to leave behind, and minor vices were more often to be sarcastically rebuked or satirically ridiculed as follies than punished as sins, along with snobbery, coarseness, boastfulness, deceit, and other forms of undesired conduct that made one "unfit to move in good society." 103

The protean belief in the alterability of man that had brought them there (and which should guard us against the tendency to fix those people with our own stereotypes) was starting to assert itself constructively and collectively among Caribooites. Order, decorum, moderation, and respectability were being woven into the common ethos. These, and the efforts to find an ever happier balance between freedom and constraint, more healthy outlets for energies, and acceptable standards of conduct for a good society, helped to make Barkerville a truly significant pioneer community over the next few years. These normative tendencies and the desire for societal models and examples of behaviour are visible, and were served by the saloon life and its entertainments; they were providing an impetus also for a regular theatre and were shaping influences on its future form and content.

Cariboo society as a whole was in such a dynamic and evolving state from 1865 through 1867, a period of transition not only from rough mining camp toward a socio-moral order and civic respectability, but also in a series of interrelated areas of concern. It was a transition from a largely transitory and seasonal population to one more stable and year-round; from
fragmented, independent mining ventures toward a more organic economy integrating business and mining interests; from political discontent and community divisiveness to political and civic self consciousness and consensus; from mostly occasional, informal cultural endeavours to mainly institutionalized ones. In short, they were moving toward the wider collective awareness, elaboration, and practice of the myths of concern and common ethos outlined in chapter one. At the end of this transition the theatre emerged.

Just as the saloon entertainments have indicated the beginnings of this process, so nothing better reflects the fits and starts, temporary regressions, sudden realizations, and succeeding leaps forward by which the developments occurred. On October 14, 1865 the final "Dramatic and Musical Entertainment" was held at the Parlor Saloon by "Cariboo Amateur Musical Artists previous to their leaving, the most part of them going down the country."

Cariboo's longest run of theatre to date was over, and the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association did not reappear for two years. Since Atchison sold the Parlor to Mme. Bendixon, who imported more hurdies, its career as a quasi-theatre was at an end. Whether Atchison left because of bankruptcy--there had been much of that--or because he had made sufficient money--which the good attendance at the performances would suggest--cannot be ascertained. Possibly he was following the general drift of the miners, for as the performers' leaving suggests the most part of the whole population went down the country, and the winter faithful remained at about 400 to 500.104

A contributing cause of this was a bad end to an otherwise happy season: because of diversions made in its course, the mining debris that blocked its new channel, and a sudden heavy rainfall, Williams Creek's usual fall "freshet" turned into a raging torrent, sweeping rocks, tailings and timber before it, smashing flumes and wheels like matchsticks, caving in and flooding underground works and causing the partly completed drain tunnel to collapse in places. Though the spirit of cooperation and comradeship in advers-
ity among several mining companies provided a new and much needed example for the whole community, banding together for mutual assistance in "a most praiseworthy manner" and creating a formative experience in the long run, still, the immediate effect was disastrous. It discouraged many who depended on the working of claims for employment, and the loss of circulating capital did the same for prospectors or those whose claims were not yet paying; some merchants could not sustain the losses that resulted for them. It was too late in the year to repair much of the damage and recommence operations. 105

At this low ebb many fell prey to yet another excitement that was currently being fomented in the south--this one to Big Bend on the Columbia River. It prompted or accelerated many departures, and was "expected to be the means of unpeopling Cariboo next year. Who speaks of returning there in the spring? Very few indeed. . . " 106 Most did return in the end, however, for Big Bend turned out to be another big "bust," with tolls, taxes, and manipulations of prices driving more miners out of British Columbia and others back to the much abused Cariboo. In the meantime such conditions proved another check to its development.

For theatrical activity it meant a regression to the purely spontaneous organization and discontinuity of occasional performances. These were solely of an informal variety format, according to available skills and personnel, with no attempts at dramatic entertainment. The plays were replaced by "sparring exhibitions," which dominated live entertainment from the fall of 1865 until that of 1867. There was no mention of such entertainment before and none after this period, and, rather than a typical feature of Cariboo society, early or late, it would seem to have been a fleeting phenomenon, a temporary interest stimulated by the current conditions, feelings and social climate.

The first one had taken place on September 30, after the fall flood, at one of the Parlor's "miscellaneous entertainments" organized by Ned Allen and
Billy Williams, two local amateur boxers.

Several professors of the "manly art" set to on the occasion, and the display of science called forth loud plaudits from the audience. Some well known amateurs sung a number of comic songs during the evening, and Prof. Endt wound up the proceedings with his wonderful legerdemain performance. Altogether the entertainment was most successful and gave the greatest satisfaction to a large audience. 107

The magic acts that shared the bill on this occasion were the only other new feature in theatrical entertainment between the fall of 1865 and that of 1867; the basis for their popularity will be discussed in the following chapter.

Concerning John Endt, he is known to have owned a local cabinet-maker's shop, but he would also appear to have been a former professional magician, for he performed several times for his own profit, which amateurs were not permitted in Cariboo. The following Thursday, in fact, he

gave his magical entertainment in Barry's Saloon, Cameronton, to a numerous audience. The feats were astounding, and could scarcely be excelled by any performer of the day. The audience greeted the Professor with the warmest demonstrations of approval. His most "wonderful feat" was: "Cutting a Man's Head Off, putting it in a plate and placing it at his feet, and the audience will be permitted to examine the same." Presumably the head was safely restored to its rightful owner, and the audience remained suitably mystified, for the "Professor" repeated his acts occasionally over the years, supported by amateur talent. 108

A few benefit concerts were also given, but sparring exhibitions were the constant. Their format remained the same, with the boxing events supplemented by the glees, songs, and recitations of earlier entertainments. While the fighters were initially amateurs, and one of the saloon owners gave lessons in "the manly art of self defence," in the spring of 1866 professionals followed the returning miners. On May 12 Loring's Saloon advertised:

Mr. George Wilson in a Glove Fight with any man in Cariboo, for

THE SUM OF $500
The Entertainment will be interspersed with Songs and Music Suitable for the Occasion.

But prize fighting, "contrary to what one would expect, was frowned on by the authorities," probably because of protesting groups of citizens, to whom the resident magistrates were usually responsive. Subsequent fights "for the championship of Cariboo" were therefore held out of town at the Williams Creek Meadows, below Cameronton, or at the still more remote Government Reserve on Valley Creek. Fought with bare knuckles and according to the rules of the English prize ring, betting at such events was extremely active, giving the professional gamblers another opportunity to exploit the miners' common weakness for games of chance. Between those bouts they got around the law by holding the apparently allowable sparring exhibitions in the saloons and charging admission to them as "benefits" for the fighters.

A likely local stimulus reflected in this short-lived interest in fighting was the currently incessant mining litigation, which was the major source of social discord and remaining obstacle to cohesion. As early as August '65 the paper had noted that "Cariboo is troubled with too much law," with "the three richest claims in the country enjoined from being worked" because of restraining orders pending the settlement of their legal disputes.

The worst feature of the chase after the shining metal is the fruitful source of discord it creates. . . . Miners must recollect that in placing themselves in the hands of lawyers they are taking so much money out of their own class. The lawyers toil not, and they only spin yarns which in all cases prove costly to the unfortunate miners. . . .

This tendency, which had been mocked earlier in Judicial Frolics, was an increasingly serious problem because Chief Justice Begbie was manipulating it. A much less laudable figure than is usually portrayed by historians with an individualist bias, and never popular with the miners because of his implication in conflicts of interest and his habit of insulting juries when their
verdicts did not agree with his own, Matthew Begbie's highhandedness had
taken an ominous turn. Apparently he knew little actual law other than as a
criminal judge, and, whereas the Gold Commissioners had formerly given satis-
faction in mining decisions and kept proceedings short, Begbie had been
stepping in and encouraging appeals to his Supreme Court, overturning the
magistrate's decisions in favour of the bigger companies involved. Now he
began putting them through a court of chancery as well, even reversing there-
in his own Supreme Court verdicts.

Because of this court cases tended to drag on for months with the
ground in question lying idle; men were laid off, working capital was lost to
the district, business suffered. Since Begbie was directly contravening the
Mining Act, which gave gold commissioners power to "settle all mining dis-
putes absolutely," he was undermining the miners' security, and faith, in the
law. And since full understanding of what he was up to and the means of
countering it spread slowly among them, the disputes created distrust and
tensions beyond the cases at hand. That there was very little outright phys-
ical confronation as a result suggests that the boxing matches may have
served a timely purpose as outlets for, or purgings of, hostile feeling.

Despite the ongoing problems and setbacks, however, advances continued
in community development. 1866--1867 saw the emergence of fraternal soci-
eties, the first being the Cambrian Society; composed of Welsh miners--a
staunchly religious group--under the leadership of John Evans, a lay preacher,
they built the Cambrian Hall, which opened in 1866. It served as both church
and meeting hall for some 80 Welsh and any others who cared to join them. At
social gatherings of which St. David's Day, honouring their patron saint, was
the most elaborate, essays by the members were presented on such subjects as
"The Cultivation of the Mind" and "The Duty of Man as a Member of Society,"
showing that the activities of the organization were related to the myths of
concern. The literature of Wales was another main area of interest, and the
writing and presenting of poetry and songs in Welsh is indicative of impulses toward both self expression and cultural continuity. On St. David's Day 1867 they had an entertainment as part of their festivities, but this was a closed affair except for a few invited guests. 113

At the same time a group of Freemasons was holding their own meetings at one of the saloons and organizing their institution. Turned down by the Vancouver Island Lodge, they had to apply for their charter to the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and therefore did not open their building until 1867. They assembled a decent library and besides their ritual gatherings held "masonic chats" for "the good of the order." Many who later belonged to the theatre were members. Because Freemasonry, as a secret society, was liable to misunderstanding, they explained their objects through the newspaper: they were dedicated to furthering the brotherhood of man and to moral and societal improvement, and if membership did not guarantee men's virtue, yet "they were better than if they had not been masons." They were a strong force in Barkerville and responsible for many good acts, providing funds for the hospital, the needy, and maintaining the cemetery. Beginning with only a few, they quickly enrolled some 55 members.

Of the Caledonian Benevolent Association, also formed in 1867, little is known, except that it too was organized in one of the saloons and was presided over by Robert Poole, agent of Barnard's Express. Having no building, its meetings were held in the Cambrian Hall. It would seem to have been patterned on the benevolent associations of Britain, which were a cooperative means of providing health and unemployment benefits to members. Given the existence of Scots bards and entertainers, it may also have had cultural purposes; whether membership in the association was restricted to Scotsmen is not known, but probably it would have included Canadians of that ancestry at least.

While these organizations also reflect that cohesiveness was still par-
tial and confined to closed groups, and that many still felt most at home among others with whom they had some extra-local tie, still, they do show that a significant proportion of the settled residents were striving mightily in the direction of the community living of their common myths through the transplanting of social patterns from their native culture. Public holidays were beginning to be celebrated as well. With two-thirds of the population now British subjects, the chief example was the Queen's birthday, beginning in 1866 with a concert and ball in which Americans happily participated.

We thought as we saw the banners of two great nations waving so gracefully together over the heads of a united community that the prayer of Burns was being realized, 'When man to man the warld o'er shall brithers be an' a' that.'

Other holidays included July Fourth, the anniversary of black emancipation, and St. Patrick's Day.

Clearly there was an awakening need for more meaning and purpose in their lives than mere money making, a more extensive experience of becoming and belonging. In the paper individuals urged each other to bury their differences:

Life at best is not very long. A few more smiles, a few more tears, . . . hasty greetings and abrupt meetings, then our little play will close, injured and injurer will pass away. Is it worth while to hate each other?

and to "Be Social;"

The man who cares for nobody, and for whom nobody cares, has nothing to live for that will pay for the keeping of body and soul together. You must have a heap of embers to have a glowing fire. . . . So to have a brisk, vigorous life you must have a group of lives to keep each other warm, as it were, to afford each other mutual encouragement and confidence and support. If you wish to live the life of a man and not of a fungus, be social, be brotherly, be charitable, be sympathetic and labor earnestly for the good of your kind.

Just as one could only live as a worm without money, one could only vegetate without social and cultural life. Now the conviction that "love is best," in its Victorian significance, implicit already in the hospital and other activities and in the miners' comradeship in adversity, was entering the conscious
vocabulary of the Cariboo ethos as a principle for daily living. In an editorial, "What we Live For," John McLaren rejected wealth, duty and other imperatives to declare: "It is love alone that makes life beautiful. Reader, live for something. Do good and leave behind you a monument of virtue."

With the recognition and articulation of the importance of such values of the secular religion, their ethos was nearly complete. But so far these impulses, though they had been given limited concrete forms and occasional practical functions, did not yet embrace the community at large. Books and newspapers and poems could extoll and revive the secular creed in men's minds but could not embody its abstract values and imaginative truths in terms of directly experienced physical possibilities, or try out social norms and goals in terms of present social actions. The popular religion needed a popular ritual to enact it; the community needed a theatre and a drama, as the analogy of life as "our little play" reveals.

In the fall of 1866 the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association announced plans to open a theatre during the winter, a larger population having begun to settle. The Parlor Saloon was spoken of as the building intended for it, but no more was said and the idea came to nothing. Three separate efforts in as many years testify to the strength of this need and the importance a theatre had for them, but it also indicates that while a theatre can foster and elucidate a society's cohesion, identity, beliefs and goals, it also depends on some prior existence of such community bonds and a commitment to them within the social body as a whole. In Cariboo, with its still partially committed, somewhat divisive population, they were not yet sufficiently encompassing and fundamental. Yet by its democratic nature and isolated position, a theatre could only emerge in Cariboo from the popular will and consensus, from a sense of common cause and identity of interests, from that "mutual encouragement and confidence and support."

These had been latent in the mining enterprises, and within those most
basic and comprehensive experiences and concerns alone could the prerequis-
itive transcendence of differences and the all-embracing societal bonds and
goals develop; and they were beginning to do so. In the wake of the failed
monopoly and flood of 1865 merchants had begun to realize that
on the mining interests we have all to depend, whether we are
traders or farmers, therefore when the mines are not encour-
aged the country must continue to retrograde.

That winter the old haphazard credit system was done away with and felt as a
benefit to miner and trader alike. The greatest abusers had been those with
large-paying claims, who had ruined the system for the "poor but honest"
miners in real need of credit. Henceforth, at the insistence of merchants,
the Gold Commissioner enforced payment of debts by those whose claims were
yielding, and future business with them was conducted on a cash basis. At
the same time merchants could afford to be more accommodating when money was
scarce, and served notice on their lower country suppliers that they "will
find we have protection if they try to screw us up, so they must wait" (for
payment) "like everybody else." 121

This in turn meant that merchants were more willing and able to invest
in prospecting and mining ventures or to "stake" the poor but industrious.
In August 1866 a rich new creek was discovered by a group of "poor prospectors" whose "provisions have been given them by one of our enterprising mer-
chants," and such efforts became increasingly the rule among businessmen who
now recognized that they had as much at stake in the development of Cariboo
as any of the miners. Distinctions between the groups were also blurred by
miners opening businesses with the proceeds of their claims and businessmen
becoming shareholders in mining companies; names of merchants and their em-
ployees frequently turn up in reports of claims registered, merging their
capital and financial stability with the skill and labour of practical miners.
It was a merchant named Lindhard who was most credited, by the grateful min-
ers he aided and partnered over a period of years, with the eventually
successful working of Lightning Creek. Both groups now saw the necessity for new discoveries to expand the economy and replace diminishing deposits, and parties were formed for prospecting further afield and were outfitted— one of them alone amounting to $6,000— by "the inhabitants of Williams Creek."  

It was the Bed Rock Flume and the Bed Rock Drain that most emphatically fostered and symbolized this enlarging spirit of collective enterprise. In May 1866 the merchants of Williams Creek raised a subscription of $2,500 for the owners of the drain to clear it out after the flood. The original company ceded its chartered rights to ground above Cameronton and a new "Miners' Bed Rock Drain Company" was formed to continue the drain tunnel up to the canyon. Built by the "common day labor" of the creek residents, it was completed by early 1867 and greatly augmented the workable ground near Barkerville. The flume was finished soon after, and its benefits were also widely apparent. The preservation of these works became a vital matter of community concern and preserved and enhanced the utilitarian mutuality of interests.

The great cost of these institutions and the impossibility of working any part of William Creek if these drains be destroyed render their protection from the coming freshet a matter of the first importance, not only to the miners on the creek but also to the inhabitants of the whole district. Anything that halted the flow of capital from established mines injured everybody, directly or indirectly.

A call for "a united effort" to build proper bulkheads to contain the creek waters was universally answered by the business community, except for one of the banks, and a subsequent card thanked "the Merchants, Saloon Keepers and others... for the prompt and generous response." Though the old individualistic tendencies and the perennial fear of monopoly caused some to protest these large undertakings, they were answered with the motto of the British trade union movement, "in union there is strength," and this became a principle of the new order of things. At times this spirit faltered, but the Sentinel, that inveterate "Cariboooster," was quick to remind people of their
best interests and upbraid the recalcitrant. The bulkheads were found to
protect the towns as well as the diggings behind them; in subsequent years
the mutual interdependence of the mining and mercantile economy was oft ex-
pressed in terms of those bulwarks, and several times stood the test of com-
mon natural threats. Similar "public works" in neighbouring mining towns had
similar results.

With the stimulus given to the claims on established creeks and to more
skilled, systematic and extensive prospecting and mining in general, ground
previously overlooked was being brought more and more into operation. On
Williams Creek itself claims in the hills above Barkerville and Richfield
were being made to pay for the first time, while signs were found of a richer
buried channel running further under the hillsides. With prospectors ranging
over greater distances, it was

cheering to know that the old creeks are still yielding good
pay to the miners employed on them, and that new creeks are
being discovered every week, which give promise of being very
rich in the precious metal. These new discoveries are not
confined to any particular direction, but extend from this
place to every point of the compass.

Some discoveries, such as Mosquito Creek and Red Gulch, were rich and new
towns began to spring up; many more paid at least "wages," and all gave rise
to a conviction that Cariboo's mineral resources had hardly been tapped and
that a century could not exhaust them.

Another strong impetus to economic and social development was given
during the winter of 1866 to 1867, which was a decisive turning point.
Scattered efforts at winter mining had gradually brought the realization that
the climate was no more severe than that of Canada and now "a year round pop-
ulation of almost 2,000 had begun to settle," augmented throughout the next
year by a steady stream of people who had previously left on excitements;
those who were loudest in their denunciations of the colony and
British institutions, after visiting San Francisco, Idaho, Montana, etc., have been glad to return here looking wiserrif
not happier men.
And of course the improving relations with the business community were yet another encouragement for miners to remain. Moreover the benefits of the wagon road were increasingly observable. The road itself was later found to be badly maintained by the government, and its route far too long and circuitous, while the continuing tolls and taxes further negated its potential advantages for Cariboo; nor did the government ever extend it properly through the mining district, and the inhabitants of Cameronton had to pay to continue it even that far. But though the cost of living remained 2½ times that of Victoria, nonetheless the road had made a big difference and prices no longer rose significantly during the winter. 129

It was now "practically demonstrated that some descriptions of mining can be as successfully prospected...during the cold weather as during the summer season." Noted the Colonist,

Tunnelling and drifting are now extensively prosecuted after the creek claims have been frozen. Instead of, as formerly, imitating the example of the swallows...most Cariboo miners remain and work their claims. If they cannot wash pay they can at least follow the lead and run the dirt to the mouth of the tunnel, where it will be ready for sluicing at the first thaw. 130

In fact some pay dirt could be washed, thanks to an ingeniously discovered method of directing available surface water down shafts and washing underground into the drain tunnels. With snowshoeing and sledding over ground that was at least dry and solid, prospecting could actually be more easily carried on, while claims above the canyon "required this winter to prove their real value." With but one or two exceptions these claims have paid over expenses throughout...". 131

With the larger number of miners most businesses remained open through the winter, and, with steadier employment and money supply and the cost of living about ten or twelve dollars a week where it had formerly been almost that much per day, life itself was becoming more pleasant.

We have seen the uncomfortable and repulsive hovels of past years, with their leaking and unchinked walls, give place to comfortable
and attractive cabins, with stoves instead of smoking chimneys, . . . that were not too large nor too cold for sociality, where ambition dilating in the convivial space, shaped dreams of enterprise, labor and wealth; where were unlocked the choicest stores of memory in which lie the treasures that make life happy. . . .

That winter's "pleasures, enjoyments and associations have been so far in advance of other winters" that it was said that even unlucky miners could "be happy in their misfortune to have to spend another winter in the mines."\textsuperscript{132}

During the spring and summer of 1867, with Williams Creek the fixed centre of a mining district expanding in all directions and with its favourable location having made it the chief town on the creek, Barkerville grew apace to become the distribution, commercial and entertainment centre for the whole region. By mid-April its appearance was "improving daily" and there was "not a building site left unoccupied."\textsuperscript{133} The town reached almost to the canyon upstream and downstream buildings now had to be built on piles where the bank narrowed. It consisted of one main street running almost a mile along the eastern bank. A shorter street running behind it housed the Chinese section, emphasizing their general exclusion from Cariboo society; more from cultural prejudice aggravated by mutual misunderstandings than from racism; they were disliked by many whites, tolerated by others, but never mistreated. So rapid was Barkerville's growth that spaces intended for side streets were even occupied by buildings.

Cabins climbed the hillside above the town and Cameronton remained as the main residential area—a "suburb." Richfield continued to be the seat of government institutions and a smaller number of businesses and cabins. The whole creek thus constituted a sort of frontier metropolitan area, or "greater Barkerville," with Barkerville proper as the hub, the downtown, and "the capital of Cariboo." The population of Cariboo cannot be ascertained: with a mining population of about 2,000 the total would have been at least as many more, with tradesmen, merchants, and their employees; but with miners working on outlying creeks how many actually lived near Barkerville can only be
Fig. 3. Barkerville Improving ca. 1868. Note the more level sidewalk, the graded street, the signs of care and maintenance, the dressed lumber siding and decorous detail on the buildings. The woman on the balcony is Mme. Bendixon of "hurdy" fame. The more elegantly attired group seated on the verandah suggest a more leisured and self-conscious, though still informal, community. Provincial Archives Photo.
guessed at, though most probably wintered there and periodically came to town in the summer for supplies and entertainment.  

The principal buildings of Cameronton, including the two banks, were now removed to Barkerville and the literary institute was installed there in a new building, with John Bowron doubling as librarian and government postmaster, which helped keep it alive. Throughout the summer of '67 were the "hammer and axe continually heard" in repairing old structures and "constructing the first buildings in which architecture had directed the mechanic, and we now see a town, once nearly deserted, without a lot to sell. . . ." In fact the development continued over the next year, ultimately comprising about 120 buildings and including the 18 saloons, a dozen or more general stores, 3 shoemakers' shops, as many restaurants and lodging houses, 2 drug stores, 2 watchmakers, and 3 breweries. There were various mining-related businesses, such as tinsmiths, blacksmiths, mining and commission agents, and more specialized services: a clothing store, where even made-to-measure suits could be ordered from Victoria, a dentist, two barbers, bathhouses, and a jeweller who did goldsmithing. The presence of two photographers indicates the degree of self-consciousness and concern with their image that were developing within the population.  

Such a concern, and the growth of civic pride and respectability, were being disseminated for the benefit of the outside world by the Sentinel, which had already helped give Caribooites a stronger image both of themselves and of their relation to that world. In articles like "The Social Aspect of Cariboo," it attempted to show how far Barkerville had gone beyond the usual stereotype of mining towns.

But let such enter the town of Barkerville today and it is not very easy to imagine their surprise at beholding the well laid out town, the neat and handsome appearance of many of the stores and dwellings, the architectural style of the verandahs, piazzas and bow windows, the proficiency of white paint . . . the various institutions . . . Let all these evidences of civilized
enterprise be exhibited to him . . . and more particularly when he beheld the sidewalk being promenaded by well-dressed men, not in gum boots and baize shirts, but with broadcloth coats, white collars, and polished boots. Such evidences of refinement would make him think that he had evidently made a mistake and had not found the mining camp for which he was in search. This . . . is no fancy sketch, but a true picture, not overdrawn, of the town of Barkerville, William Creek, Cariboo.

Certainly the photographs of the time bear witness to this transformation.

It was also observed that no place where civilization was so recent could boast "so many marks of refinement or facilities for information and improvement," nor such "order and good behaviour."

That there are vices, and perhaps those of a flagrant character, we are ready to admit, but their indulgence seems to be of so peaceable a character that they pass almost unnoticed. 137

The tolerance of the frontier was here being merged with the propriety of established Victorian Society. This was not the only compromise or synthesis that was being made: this interest in conveying an accurate image of Cariboo society, "warts and all," was but part of a whole concern with being understood, taken seriously, its worth appreciated--politically and economically (outside capital investment) as well as socially. It was also an expression of more substantive transformations; behind the surface portrait qualitative shifts in the common identity, values and aspirations can be discerned.

It was a population more solidly committed to the development and future of Cariboo. All that building and improving represented an enormous, unprecedented investment in the area on the part of business owners, encouraged by the new community of interests with the miners, many of whom also had a considerable stake in the vastly increased scope of their operations. The year round living was itself part of a larger identification with the whole Cariboo way of life. Both merchant and miner had relinquished all get-rich-quick ambitions in favour of slower and steadier gains. Both had suffered the consequences of "excitements," and McLaren warned the lower country people not to start any:
An excited rush would . . . fail entirely to see the foundation
on which we are building our hopes of prosperity . . . They
would know and care . . . little about the number of miners who
have resolved to invest their first 'raise' in stock raising in
the colony, and of the many worthy men who purpose making mining
their profession and the colony their adopted home.

Those "wiser if not happier men" who had been returning were now "fully im-
pressed with its importance as a gold region." A more "remarkable circum-
stance" was to see even men who had made fortunes and left returning "to the
scene of their former labors." The Sentinel could only account for "this
strange tendency" by the "excitement," "productive novelty" and "feeling of
manly independence" of the gold miner's life, "which remained attractive to
all who have once followed mining as an occupation." 138

The appeal of the search and discovery in themselves, the attendant
protean satisfactions, integral existence and sense of purpose, were now
caus[ing many to stay or return, as were the freedom and challenges of fron-
tier life in general. Their lives were irrevocably transformed:

It has already become an acknowledged fact borne out by every-
day experience that men who once abandon their legitimate trade,
occupation or profession in settled communities to search for
. . . gold, seldom or ever return to their wonted vocations or
take up their abode in their native land. It matters not how
intense the yearning may be with many to revisit the homes of
their youth after the lapse of years of toil, it will often be
found when their desires have been fully realized, and the long
wished for goal has at last been reached that nothing but a
feeling of disappointment and mortification is experienced at
the changes which time has wrought in their once happy homes. 139

Finding themselves "only a stranger" in their native lands, such men were
returning to Cariboo, where they felt more at home now, where onetime stran-
gers had since become more cherished companions, where they had found a more
congenial identity and recognized sense of worth, where there were still
desires to realize and goals to reach for, and toil had acquired meaning and
a purpose. Others, like J. S. Thompson, John Bowron, and restaurant owners
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Kelly, already knew this and never left. The shared
myths of protean man and happy home were now fused with the new land, their
impulses to be fully lived out within it, adapting it and adapting to it, hopefully to be resolved in a happy home for protean man.

An economic index of the shift in values, goals and identity is that the mining season of 1867 was considered to be the most successful in the history of Cariboo. This was so not because of the total yield of gold, which was less than the record years of '63 and '64; nor because of individual big strikes, which were virtually absent. Rather it was because a smaller, more experienced population had been working more effectively throughout the year, had ranged over "an unusually large surface of this district, and fair prospects have attended their explorations; so much so that it is believed that the yield of our mines, taken collectively, will average wages to every man employed. . . ." This yield per man had been improving steadily over the previous two years, with the more united and concentrated efforts of the inhabitants, and from then on it was this collective yield, reflecting a spirit of collective enterprise and the value of mutual interests, that was the criterion for judging the outcome of a mining season: a community success that was the societal counterpart of the broader and more balanced notion of personal success discussed earlier.

That Cariboo miners produced three times as much gold as a comparable number in Australia and twice as much per man as in California became the standard of the worth of the mines and of the people of Cariboo. It was also gratifying to know that the thoughtless extravagance of former times has in a great measure ceased to exist; the miner now sets more value on his money, but fewer bad debts have been made and a steady business has ruled throughout. Money was more equitably distributed, most miners made wages or better, more capital remained and was circulated, the whole economy was more stable, and much satisfaction was expressed with this state of affairs. Optimism replaced cycles of excitement, boom and depression as the dominant public mood. Here were the causes of the current growth of Barkerville; these were the
foundations on which they were building hopes of prosperity.

Prosperity, progress, and permanence are in fact key words of the Cariboo vocabulary during this period. Recurring constantly in articles, letters and speeches, they are the lexicon of enlarged systems of belief articulating the past, present, and future directions of Cariboo, transposing the shared myths of concern, the individualized becoming and belonging, into a collective mythology and identity and a social consensus. One still hoped to make his own fortune, but that hope was now largely vested in the fortunes of Cariboo as a whole, his integrity and his future identified with those of the community. The individual resolve to make mining a permanent occupation and the colony an adopted home was an element of the general will to ensure "the permanency of this as a mining district and Barkerville as a centre of distribution and depot of supply." 142

It also worked the other way: with the moderation of individual expectations and the preference for steady business and at least wages for everyone employed, their all encompassing goals were defined in terms of the utilitarian ideal of "the greatest good of the greatest number."

The welfare of the country depends more upon the well being of the people generally than upon the accumulation of riches in the hands of a few.

That general prosperity in turn depended on developing the resources of Cariboo, rather than the easy exploiting of them, and led back, through mutuality, cooperative capitalism, and an organic economy, to the conviction that every person in the community has an equal stake in the development of the country.

These social ideas were natural extensions of the constitutive, democratic experience of joint stock mining ventures into a kindred, but more widely integrative, community identity, one which sought to integrate people not only economically, but also socially, culturally, politically, absorbing all the connotations of the myths of concern and informed by them. 143
Like an individual's identity it simultaneously differentiated Cariboo from other communities and related it to them, was shaped by its own unique qualities and experience and by "the utilitarian spirit of the age." Both these points are exemplified by what progress meant to them. It was not the purely (and narrowly) material progress of industrial Britain, nor a progress for some at the expense of others. A major sign of progress for Caribooites was that what in Europe was the work of centuries—to "blot out the lines of caste"—they had accomplished in a few years. Growing out of allied efforts of individuals to improve themselves through mutual associations, progress also included the socio-cultural warrants of their protean mythology: when the library, in one of its periodic difficulties, was threatened with closure the Sentinel could imagine "no greater calamity that could befall a community than retrogressive progress," which the loss of the library—"the pride and boast of Cariboo"—would have meant; the response was immediate and it was once more made secure. Progress signified not the piecemeal, narrowly defined variety, but an integral moving forward of the community on all fronts.

At the same time they sought to align their technical progress in mining with that of the age as a whole, as in "Laying Low the Mountain," in which the effects of hydraulic mining, just being tried out in 1867, reminded the author "that we live in a day when the eye of man not only 'searcheth out every precious thing,'" but when his hand "makes even the earth 'tremble at his coming.'" Another instance of this ideology in action was their looking to older mining regions for guides to their own future progress and prosperity, concluding rightly that the only means of permanence in the latter were through applying the former in the shape of steam machinery and developing quartz mining: "the only permanent source of wealth."

As part of the outgoing quality of the Cariboo identity, and the community's expanding consciousness of itself in relation to the outside world, a mutuality and reciprocity of interests and efforts was desired with
the other sections of the colony; in fact it already characterized the relationship with the farmers (some of whom were old Caribooites) of the grain growing and cattle raising areas of the interior. They supplied Cariboo with cheaper food and were in turn provided with a ready market. Even the Colonist caught some of the spirit, echoing the Sentinel's utilitarian phrases, urging Victoria citizens to reinvest the capital from the mines and thereby advance their interests with the miners, as San Francisco had done; it coaxed them to overcome their English "timidity and supineness" and acquire "a dash of American goaheadativeness."\textsuperscript{148}

As an attempt to counter the sectionalism of the colonies, and reduce the waste and burdens of two governments, Caribooites had unanimously supported a movement to unite the colonies in 1866. This had been accomplished, but now the rival ports fought over which should be the capital; Seymour, partly to placate New Westminster, which lost the bid, and partly under the influence of an entrenched bureaucracy, largely retained the redundant officials and government buildings in both places. Cariboo gained nothing and even lost one of its two representatives in the reshuffled legislature. It is no wonder they were especially fond of farce as a dramatic genre.

But the growing political consciousness among Caribooites, together with their collective solidarity, led them in the late summer and fall of 1867 to a further enlargement of their ideology and of concerted action that transcended both the final obstacle to community cohesion—the litigation problem—and the great barrier to progress and prosperity—the colonial government. Indeed the two were now closely related. The previous summer Begbie had set aside the verdict of a jury and privately arbitrated a mining suit in a scandalous manner, using the proceedings to completely dispossess several black partners in one of the contending companies and dividing their shares among the other litigants to force a settlement. This galvanized community awareness of what Begbie had been doing all along, focused politi-
al protest on the judicial as well as the executive branch of government, and resulted in the "first public meeting ever held in Cariboo." Characterized by "good order and decorum" and "harmony and unanimity . . . on every point, it demonstrated "the power of a united people." Resolutions were passed requesting the Governor to either remove Begbie or set up a court of appeal with trial by jury. They showed their support, however, for the justice of the Gold Commissioner by presenting him with a gold handled walking stick.  

When the government ignored the miners' petition the resentment with the law's administration grew worse along with the chancery suits, and both reached the breaking point in the Grouse Creek difficulty of 1867. In July a dispute was farcically complicated by Begbie and the Gold Commissioner contravening each others' court orders, a confusion which ended in members of one company chasing the others off the contested ground. When constables were sent to arrest the men, 400 miners backed up the company in what, under the circumstances, was really an act of civil disobedience. Begbie now aroused such hostility that Seymour had to bring in Justice Needham of Vancouver Island to hear the case, and when Begbie's obfuscations were cleared away the company at fault immediately saw its error, withdrew its suit, and all ended amicably. Having involved virtually the whole community on one side or the other, this case seems to have constituted both a catharsis of ill feelings and a recognition of the folly of such proceedings; litigation sharply decreased thereafter.

Caribooites' final disillusionment with government, together with Seymour's refusal to call the election of a new mining board, their only means of influencing mining laws, provoked another positive response. Spurred by the formation of the Dominion of Canada that summer, they held a "Great Confederation Meeting" on November 23, 1867. The possibility of a union with the eastern territories had long been entertained by individuals like Dr. R. W. W. Carrall, who had written to a friend in 1864 that "I am full of Confed-
eration to busting." The Sentinel had expressed the hope of a "speedy union" the previous May, while complaining of their "colonial masters" spending $700,000 to govern them with nothing for public works. But now the convergence of all the events and forces accumulating in that decisive year won it the support of a "mass meeting" and even some Americans joined the new movement. Resolutions were proposed and passed, congratulating the new Dominion, declaring that Confederation would "contribute more than anything to the growth and prosperity of British Columbia;" and urging the Canadian Government to foster it and Governor Seymour to expedite it.

This was the ultimate collective enterprise and expression of common cause, social cohesion, and group identity; its envisioned results were the ultimate extension of their mythic imaginations in the creation of a protean homeland. John McLaren spoke of Confederation as "the dream of our adventurous lives by making us contented and happy at home." To another speaker it was to enhance the personal identity and status of individuals through allowing them to "assume a more marked national character," for "some people, old countrymen in particular, sometimes assume to look upon a Colonist as something inferior to themselves;" no doubt a reference to the British clique in Victoria. A third man predicted: "it will draw aside the funeral pall. It will show up our hidden wealth and resources and start us off on the great race of civilization and progress." In this collective "rebirth" we shall lay the foundation of a power which ere long, should glorious old England fail to demonstrate that she is perennial ... this vicarious Great Britain will extend her filial hand of love and afford the support and sustenance to her declining years, which will prove but a feeble return for all the affection she has borne her offspring.

The colonial government had not dimmed the imaginative and emotional connection most Caribooites felt to "Mother England," and the union would thus doubly enhance the sense of continuity and belonging and at the same time "give us all the advantages of a free and independent people," as the Sentinel
later expressed it. Other communities followed Cariboo's example, and that winter a Confederation League was formed among them. But nowhere did the flame burn so bright as in Barkerville, Williams Creek, Cariboo.\textsuperscript{153}

At that meeting one speaker had referred to Canada having "stepped forth upon the stage of the world's theatre to play its part in the great drama of life." Cariboo was doing the same as a community, and the Confederation Movement was the product of its mature will and consciousness; so was the theatre that was being organized that same fall. The political-theatrical analogy is itself suggestive, as it was commonly used in Cariboo and had been the year before when John McLaren, its "favorite actor," had declined to appear in the "comedy" of the legislature, for which the miners had nominated him. Indeed, the immediate circumstances in which a theatre finally emerged closely parallel the negative impetus behind the political activity.

Just a month after the litigation bubble had burst, sparring matches, which had remained the most prominent form of live entertainment, came to an equally inglorious end. On the afternoon of September 24, at the Government Reserve on Valley Creek, another prize fight was held between George Wilson, "the Cariboo Champion," and Joe Eden of Victoria. The fight was for $1,200 a side, some 1,500 people attended, refreshment stands were set up, and a twenty-four foot square ring arranged for the combatants. Betting had been heavy, with Wilson favoured to win. But during the fight Eden repeatedly dropped to his knees "to avoid punishment," and in one of those moments, contrary to the established rules, Wilson supposedly lost his temper and hit him while he was down, thereby forfeiting the fight.\textsuperscript{156}

However, it "leaked out later that Wilson had sold the fight to the big gamblers of Barkerville." He had induced many of the acquaintances he had made to bet on him, meanwhile arranging to fix the bout "for a consideration." The newspaper concluded:
We never admired pugilistic exhibitions, and we are glad to know from the feeling that now exists on this creek, that such exhibitions are not likely to receive the same countenance and support on any future occasion, as they have heretofore. 

In fact, "when the miners learned how they had been duped, they hounded Wilson out of town, and turned thumbs down on the sport ever after." Just as the legal contests had finally been exposed as a combination of their own follies and their victimization, so too were these physical counterparts.

Again positive alternatives were beginning to assert themselves. Mme. Lange, a graduate of the "Conservatoire de Musique" in Paris, had opened "The Concert Hall," a saloon in which her husband managed the bar while she "played sophisticated music on the piano. . . ." Monsieur Deffis had established a small "academy" where he offered "instruction in French, Spanish, and English Grammar." J. B. Melanion, a former violinist at the Paris Opera, gave music lessons. On September 30, in response to the more settled population, Professor Hermann, the first touring performer since 1861, appeared at the Crystal Palace Saloon. His "reputation"

drew a large audience, among which we observed a number of ladies. His sleight-of-hand feats were cleverly executed and were greeted with demonstrations of approval. As a ventriloquist, the Professor possesses great powers, and his inimitable rendering of the character of Miss Black, as a defender of women's rights, was hailed with bursts of laughter.

Little more was said of him, but he had large audiences also for the other five performances that were referred to. At one of them sparring made its last appearance, though apparently with amateurs. Hermann gave two benefits for the hospital, with local assistance, and was expected to perform again on his own account, but at the end of October the Sentinel, without an editor for the winter, suspended publication till spring.

It was during that winter, with the negative impetus of the discredited boxing entertainments and the positive reminders of "something better" from without, that the theatrical impulse was rekindled and a permanent theatre established in Cariboo. Just as the Confederation Movement expressed the
desire for representative and responsible government, so this would be a representative and responsible theatre. Both resulted from the self determination of a maturing community and its need for greater local autonomy and control of its destiny, as well as for an end to dependence on absentee or corrupt outside influences. Many of the same people would belong to both and each in its own way would expand and promote the community's living out of its common mythology and ethos, articulate its collective concerns with becoming and belonging, progress, prosperity and permanence. Yet this analogy is not meant to suggest a cause and effect relationship, but rather the confluence of all the forces that have been considered thus far: the theatre was a product of them all, and it expressed and supplemented them all. This context will continue to illuminate what the theatre did for them and how it did so, but it is now time to shift the context and view Barkerville through its theatre.
CHAPTER THREE

THE THEATRES ROYAL

Twelve months ago—'twas on that social night,
When cares are buried, and when joys are bright—
When mirth and pleasure hail the new-born year,
And friends endeavour to provide good cheer,
Our first debut was made in scenic art—
With faltering accents, and with beating heart....

James Anderson, "Prologue"
1869.
"An Amateur Dramatic Association, consisting of about twenty members, was formed at Barkerville last December;" so wrote a correspondent to the *Victoria Colonist* in March of 1868. But this formation must have begun somewhat earlier, because

... the expense of procuring a suitable house, erecting a stage, etc., was considerable.

It would seem unlikely that they organized themselves, raised the money, renovated the building, and cast and rehearsed the plays all within the space of a few weeks. Probably the writer mistook the first public awareness of its activities for the actual commencement of them. And of course it was less the founding of a new company than the resurrection of an earlier one, for it was identical in name and at least some of its personnel to that Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association which had performed in the Parlor Saloon in 1865, and even the location was the same.

At any rate, by December of 1867 the Dramatic Association had purchased the Parlor Saloon and was refitting it as a theatre. The building had presumably possessed some kind of rudimentary stage during 1865, but the correspondent suggests that this had been removed since—probably to make room for the hurdy dancing established by Mme. Bendixon—and that they had to start from scratch. Unfortunately there is no description or photograph of the building's exterior, but, since it dated from 1864, it may be assumed that its appearance was similar to others of the same period in Barkerville: that of a simple frame structure of whipsawed lumber, its facade rough and unfinished, and of but a single story with a peaked, shake-covered roof. Hence its availability at a time when saloons were becoming increasingly more elaborate and when otherwise there was "not a lot or building to be had in Barkerville." The latter statement, dating from June, 1867, indicates that the Dramatic Association had bought the saloon at some point in the preceding spring.
Concerning the interior of the theatre, its shape and general lay-out, we are on surer ground, thanks to Isabel Bescoby having elicited a description and a floor plan (reproduced on the following page) from A. H. Maynard, who had performed there as a child of eleven. The building was rectangular in shape, and, according to Maynard, measured "about one hundred feet long and sixty feet wide." Those dimensions, however, must have been an exaggeration produced by a sixty year old memory—and the memory of a childhood impression at that—for the second theatre was notably larger than this one, and its dimensions were only sixty by thirty feet. It would be more accurate to conclude, therefore, that the size of the first theatre was no more than about forty feet in length and twenty-five in width, proportions that the diagram would indicate.

Entrance was from the main street at the front of the building into a small foyer, immediately inside of which was the ticket seller. Another doorway directly opposite led into the auditorium, where tickets were collected. The auditorium was apparently starkly simple—even spartan—and seating consisted of rows of plain wooden benches parallel to the stage and divided by a single, central aisle, suspended above which were three oil lamps. According to the Sentinel "250 only could be accommodate with seats," though there is the implication that some standing room was also available. About two-thirds of the seating consisted of reserved seats priced at $1.50, while the remainder, at the back, comprised the "rush" seats at $1.00. These admission prices remained unchanged throughout the 1860's and 1870's, and though slightly more expensive than in Victoria, so was everything else in Barkerville; a drink and a dance in a saloon, after all, cost a dollar.

Maynard's description lists the stage dimensions as about thirty feet in width and twenty in depth; again, this is an exaggeration, though probably a lesser one and more dubious regarding the width than the depth. Unfortunately neither his plan nor his reminiscences indicates the relative width of
Fig. 4. Plan of the Theatre Royal, Barkerville, 1868. Based on a sketch by Isabel Bescoby from a description by A. H. Maynard; from Bescoby, "Some Aspects of Society in Cariboo," Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1932. The original rendering was not only out of scale, but its proportions were entirely improbable; accordingly some modifications have been made to bring the auditorium to stage ratio in line with Maynard's verbal description.
the proscenium opening and whether the stage included wing space or, if there was none, the actors entered from the dressing rooms masked by flats. The men's and ladies' dressing rooms, discreetly separated on either side of the stage, did have outside doors. Nothing is known about the height of the stage or its elevation from the floor of the auditorium.

Scenery consisted of painted wings and a backdrop. But while only one set of wings is depicted in the plan, there must certainly have been at least another pair, and perhaps two. Otherwise entrances and exits would have been extremely restricted and masking of the offstage areas impossible. Since the plan shows the arrangement for the opening half of a minstrel performance, with the troupe already onstage in the traditional grouping, and since they required no entrances and only a general background, they would likely have dispensed with the downstage wings to make room for their ensemble numbers; and again the memory may have been selective on this point—remarkably lucid though it was on others.

Stage lighting is indicated in the form of footlights running the width of the stage opening. They would presumably have been coal oil or kerosene-filled troughs with wicks suspended in them and backed by metal reflectors, or else candles may have supplied the light in the fixtures. Whether additional lamps were concealed backstage and behind flats is not positively known, but it is safe to assume that they were since some such arrangement would have been necessary for general illumination, especially upstage. Also, onstage lamps could easily have been integrated with the predominant interior settings of the plays and scenes staged around them.

At the front of the stage was a drop curtain; both it and the backcloth were undoubtedly raised and lowered on rollers since there is no indication anywhere that the small, improvised theatre possessed either fly loft or machinery. A small orchestra pit fronted the stage, though it may not have been a pit as such; the drawing suggests that it might have been simply a
curtained off area. If it was the former then the stairs that are depicted probably led down into it; otherwise they must have led up to the stage. Excluding some minor alterations carried out later, this is all that is known about the first Theatre Royal, but while more information might always be wished for, still its two most important characteristics can be deduced from what exists.

In the first place, it was clearly an intimate theatre: it was, after all, adapted from a saloon called the Parlor, and would naturally have retained the quality of casual informality, of a home-away-from-home, combined with the appurtenances—or at least some of them—of an established theatre. Thus it was closer in many ways to the intimate playhouses of today than to the large scale theatres of its own time or the elaborate opera houses of other mining regions. No seats would have been very far from the stage and sightlines would have been clear from most of them. Though the cheaper seats were at the back, this does not seem to have reflected the price distinction as much as dealing with the inevitable problem of seating last minute ticket buyers; indeed, if there were seats with a restricted view of the stage they would have been those at the sides of the front rows. Such intimacy would naturally have affected the performances, creating a close and informal relationship between actors and audience while also encouraging (as will subsequently be shown) a critical perspective and concern with elements of verisimilitude on the part of the latter, and a correspondingly increasing naturalness and detail in the playing of the former.

In the second place, it was a democratic, classless, auditorium, reflecting those traits of Cariboo society and cultural activity. There were no private boxes or dress circle, neither "pit" nor "gods," to foster socio-economic distinctions, as was the general rule among other theatre buildings of the day—including those of Victoria and of other gold mining centres. Everyone shared an equal degree of comfort—and discomfort—on the same wood-
en benches. It is true to say that these characteristics were the practical result of financial considerations; they clearly were. But these in turn derived from the particular kind of mining activity and economy that Cariboo produced, and thus also of the kind of people it tended to attract and the kind of society to which it gave rise.

Cariboo's theatre did not wait—indeed, like its hospital and library, could not wait—upon the pleasure of some extraordinarily wealthy individual or company controlling the mining economy (as did the Opera House of Virginia City, for example), nor upon the existence of an upper class clique, nor an individual impresario. It waited, rather, upon the sense of "general prosperity" and widespread commitment to the place, the collective recognition and cultural channelling of central myths of belief, the awareness of common cause and common goals, the social extension of the essentially cooperative nature of mining activity, and, emerging from all these, the feeling of civic pride, a strong collective identity, and the experience of mutually interdependent interests and concerns. This democratic theatre mirrored the egalitarian community spirit and the free association of free individuals that produced it, and the popular forms of entertainment which it served—entertainment, said the Sentinel, "for all classes." ⁹

While the Dramatic Association was busy renovating and rehearsing for its first performance, it was reported that at a general meeting of the literary institute

... the extensive repairs made to this institution to render it more comfortable and spacious for winter were casually brought to the notice of its members ... when a committee were appointed to arrange a concert ... that the public might aid this ... resort for leisure and improvement.

Because the theatre was not available, "Messrs. Barry and Adler, with their usual liberality, placed their saloon—the largest in the district—as the service of the committee." As a result of the thriving saloon trade Barkerville contained several professional musicians. Chief among these was a Mr.
Wilson, dignified locally with the title of "Professor," who was employed at Adler and Barry's saloon and was subsequently the musical director for the dramatic association. He "consented with that courteous promptness familiar to men accomplished in their occupation" to supervise the entertainment, thus creating public enthusiasm for the enterprise.

Professionals and amateurs vied with each other in offering their assistance. Among the former were Madame Lange, Messrs. [illegible], and Carpenter; and among the latter Mrs. S. P. Parker, the Welsh Glee Club, the Ethiopian Minstrels and several ballad singers.

Thus the presence of professional talent in Barkerville, far from discouraging amateur entertainers, appears to have materially added to the quality of theatrical performance and even to have helped to develop raw or latent abilities and boost standards among the nonprofessional citizens. As with mining, knowledge, skills and energies were readily pooled in a spirit of cooperative endeavour.¹⁰

After careful rehearsal under Wilson's direction, the benefit concert took place on December 28, with the saloon "seated for 300 persons and more found standing." Following a "splendid facetious address by J. S. Thompson," representing both the literary institute and the dramatic association, the performance got under way, with all the incredible variety that Caribooites enjoyed, in common with other frontier communities. It included

... overtures, glees, madrigals, cornet solo, cornet duets, flute and vocal duets, quartette, ballads. The performances were a perfect success, particularly the original conundrums, in which the Government, the magistracy, the banks and the Bed Rock Drain were remembered with much comic force.

Local, topical humour was always popular, especially that which mocked or parodied objects of authority, common dislike, and serious threat or anxiety. The concert ended with the singing of "God Save the Queen" and the triumphant report that $350 had been netted for the literary institute. It exemplifies a vital interdependence of theatrical activity and other community enterprises and concerns, and also demonstrates how individuals and groups (like the
minstrels and the Welsh Glee Club) emerge, disappear, and re-emerge within the mists of Cariboo history. Those mentioned in connection with this concert appeared later at the Theatre Royal.

A few days after—on New Year's Eve, 1867—the first performance was held in the theatre. It was a meaningful close to an eventful year in which Cariboo had "come of age," and the commencement of a new one full of hopes: personal and collective; economic, social, and political. It was an apt time for an isolated community to have a place where a society "thinks in public in front of itself," a social mirror in which to perceive, reaffirm, readjust its identity, its image of itself, and in which the individual might recognize and sense himself as part of it. If that mirror reflected images of the remembered past or experiences longed for and envisioned as future possibilities, more than those of the present, it was all the more appropriate for the time, place, and circumstances.

On the first evening two popular farces from "Mother England" were played before "a crowded house:" Fish Out of Water and Box and Cox. The Colonist correspondent reported that the...

... happy cast of characters made by the committee, the application of the actors during rehearsals and the great delight of the audience united in making and declaring the performance a decided success.

A second performance of two more farces was given on January 27, 1868 to another full house, and enough cash was then on hand, in spite of expenses, to donate $50 to the library, a demonstration, thought the reporter, of "economy and consideration:" A third production, on February 15, was planned as a benefit for the hospital, since...

... the Government, by a notice of intended parsimony to the physician, ... had dimmed the other eye of Cariboo. In such a context, and given the long standing and bitter resentment of the government (currently sharpened by the latter's neglect of the Cariboo mail
service for several weeks), the serio-comic drama The Demon Lover, in which a young man outwits a vicious uncle for having usurped his birthright, and Poor Pillicodd, with its foolish husband neglecting his business responsibilities for his domestic comforts, may have taken on some force of analogy. Certainly the purpose of the performance actualized the possibility of some political redress and collective autonomy, in local matters at least.

By this time the dramatic association was beginning to show signs of progress, for "taste acquired and experience gained" was enabling the company to put plays "on the boards in a manner worthy of notice." Equally satisfying were the interlude entertainments, consisting of "songs and recitations," which were to become a regular feature, while the orchestra

... under Mr. Wilson contributed largely to the success of the entertainment, both by soothing the savage dispositions of the critics and inspiring confidence in the actors with strains of music.

Apparently it played introductory mood music for the plays, as well as accompanying the interlude vocalists. The reviewer was also well aware that plays and performers make up only one half of a successful theatrical event; though loath, in a short "sketch," to compare the actors to those elsewhere, he did not hesitate to favourably contrast the Cariboo audience to any other:

... those disturbances and systematic interruptions, so characteristic of all other theatres are not even to be attempted at Barkerville, a fact at once pleasant to the Association and creditable to the miners.

The implication is that the Barkerville theatre was also a mirror to be turned toward the outside world, especially Victoria, and show them the "improved ... social aspect" reflected there, the efforts to "lose something of the stereotyped ... character" of a mining town. 16

There was probably at least one more performance during March, as a later reference to a production of The Waterman during that period would suggest. 17 The Sentinel's description of the May 11 "opening night" as the "re-opening" of the theatre indicates that it was closed during April, probably
for further renovations. It may now be concluded, then, that the founding and performance history of the Theatre Royal did not begin in May of 1868, as has heretofore been assumed, but in fact some five months earlier, at the end of 1867. The sentinel's use of "re-opening" aroused suspicions on that point and, thanks to the letters of the Colonist correspondent, the matter has been cleared up.

This brings us back to the May 11 "opening" of the theatre, as the Cariboo Dramatic Association advertised it.

THEATRE ROYAL

OPENING NIGHT!

Monday, May 11, 1868

Doors open at EIGHT o'clock. Performance to commence at HALF-PAST Eight.

"D'YE KNOW ME NOW?"

INTERLUDE:
Consisting of Glee{s}, Duetts and Comic Songs.

--The Performance will conclude with the Farce--

"MAD AS A HATTER"

Obviously this referred to the formal, or "official," opening night, and the association had undoubtedly delayed it until May because they wished to make it a significant occasion. Not only was the theatre in a more finished state, but this month always betokened the arrival of spring, and after the long, cold winter that in itself was cause for celebration.

While spring's approach was seen as another step toward "the end of all hope and effort," it was also, in the mythic imaginations of Caribooites, a renewal of immediate, secular hopes through the rebirth of "kind" nature, on whom they depended in the "wooing" of "fickle" and "niggardly" fortune:

Smiling May, however, softens the obdurate heart of Dame Fortune, and the advent of the merry month brings 'good prospects.' In plain English this meant the thaw and the rain brought more water for
washing pay dirt. Moreover, the official opening of the mining season on May 20 augmented the year round population with the return of those who had wintered elsewhere, besides generating public energy and enthusiasm. And of course the Sentinel had resumed publication, assuring publicity for the event.

It would also seem to have been intended as a dedication or christening of the building, for this was the first certain instance of the public mention of the name, Theatre Royal; hence the proximity of the Queen's birthday lent additional significance to the event. The name was typical enough for provincial theatres in the old country, while the theatre in Victoria had previously borne the title. But the context of Cariboo society and the current political climate suggest that it was a particular, local, affirmation of the dominant British cultural and political loyalties and goals. As a gesture of commitment to the motherland and to the desired homeland of the Dominion, it could hardly have been unconscious, especially considering the Confederationist membership of the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association. All these factors taken together indicate that the opening performance was a meaningful, even symbolic, occasion for the people of Cariboo.

It was also a highly successful one, causing the Sentinel to gleefully, even smugly, predict a most favourable future for C. A. D. A., as the dramatic association will hereafter be referred to.

... and we must say, without any attempt at flattery, that it has seldom been our privilege to witness an amateur performance where a more skillful judgement was manifested in the cast of character ...

As it is quite representative of subsequent ones in form, content, and general quality, it would seem worthwhile to describe the performance in some detail. The first play on the bill was D'Ye Know Me Now?, a farce in two scenes, set in the public room of an English country inn and a neighbouring grocery. It turns on the feud between Septimus Sellwell Jolly, an arrogant commercial traveller "who professes to sell well, but is eventually sold,"
and Jabez Sniggins, a "grocer, who gets most grocerly abused," and refuses to give him the sales order that would complete his little local monopoly. Among the comic themes are those of the would-be deceiver deceived and pomposity deflated.

Learning that the salesman has threatened to "punch his head," he pays Samuel Waitwell, a mercenary cockney waiter with a limping gag about "standing up for the cloth" ("the table cloth"), to make Jolly believe that Sniggins is a "tough customer," and member of a dreaded secret society, "The Muggletonians." The salesman is duped, and as a counterplot he employs one Nogo Dumps, a failed and unconfident commercial traveller (who has also irked him by absent-mindedly drinking up his brandy), to use the Muggletonian order to trick both his antagonists. Convincing the desperate and gullible Nogo that he must belong to the "order" to be successful with Sniggins and the other grocers, he teaches him a ludicrous set of improvised signs of the supposed "Muggletonians" with which to annoy the grocer.

JOLLY... lose not a moment, put the thumb of your left hand on your nose--so--stretch out your four fingers--so--describe a circle with the forefinger of your right hand--so --and say, 'D'ye know me now? D'ye know me now? D'ye know-- d'ye know--d'ye know me now?'

DUMPS. What wonderful signs!

Of course the grocer overhears, and responds by giving five pounds and a large order to the delighted Nogo, whose lack of "go" is thereby remedied. But when the bewildered Jolly tries the same thing, he gets the comic beating he had intended for his pawn. The seller has been "sold."

If the play seems silly in summary, it does contain some amusing stage business, some representative modern types for that time underneath the Dickensian names, and a topical burlesque of Freemasonry that ensured its popularity with Caribooites. Professor Wilson even wrote a "Muggletonian Schottish" the next week, dedicating it "to the Chief Mug, Dr. Carrall" (a C. A. D. A. member and a mason). The reviewer was delighted with the performances:
that of Jabez Sniggs by William Cochrane (the Mining Recorder) "was good acting and hard to be beaten by a professional." W. W. Hill, a miner and sign painter, as Jolly had a difficult part to enact and consequently did not elicit so much applause as he really deserved: the long period of silent acting, which his part necessitated, is exceedingly trying on the stage and rarely ever gets its full meed of praise.

William Bennett, a miner and a popular singer, made a promising histrionic debut as the waiter. 24

"But," said the critic, "we think it will generally be accorded that Mr. Thompson carried off the palm as giving the most natural rendering of his part;" and he also had the best part. J. S. Thompson, a successful miner and a self-made man of many parts, was to prove C. A. D. A.'s mainstay and leading actor for many years. Nogo Dumps, as the very mockery of a protean individual, ludicrously "bilked" into leaving a secure job and his family by exaggerated advertisements of easy success as a commercial traveller, was humourously analogous to the past experiences of many Caribooites, though comfortably more foolish. A good comic actor could certainly have made such scenes as the following extremely funny:

Enter NAGO DUMPS L.
---he walks to table in centre, places his hat, sighs, walks to front, sighs, takes off gloves, returns to table, sighs, puts glove in hat, walks to front, groans, takes off other glove, returns to table, groans, puts glove in hat, sits down, takes out ragged pocket handkerchief, covers his face, draws handkerchief slowly off, and exclaims
DUMPS. Misery of Miseries! 25

Thompson did make it so, and in the following scene:

The cool indifference with which he sipped and drank Jolly's brandy, and the longing, wistful look at the empty glass, was the sublimity of personated misery; but his giving of the signs of the Muggletonians was the crowning feat and brought down the house with convulsive laughter. 26

The succeeding "Interlude" consisted of a variety of vocal numbers of equally varying moods and cultural backgrounds. It began with a seasonable glee, "Spring's Delight," which, as presented "by Messrs. Patilla, Bowron,
Hough and Hudson,

was well rendered, and when encored they gave the "Wanderer's Farewell" with equal success. Mrs. Kelly sang Burns' "Farewell, Bright Bay," and was loudly encored when she gave Campbell's "Jock o' Hazeldean." Mrs. Kelly has a fine voice, and with a more favorable place to sing, would display it to better advantage.

Mrs. Kelly and her husband ran a hotel in Barkerville and were to be lifelong residents. Songs of parting and homelessness were naturally popular with the audience, but so, too, were lively folk tunes and comic songs. One of the latter, "Le Beau Nicholas," was sung by Monsieur Lecuyer, another hotel owner commonly known as "French Frank;" he followed it with a romantic ballad, "Un Fleur pour Reponse," displaying "a fine voice and musical talent." "The Organ Grinder," a music hall number, was performed by Jack Hudson, a miner and a skillful comic singer, who was "loudly applauded and deservedly encored."

Concerning the little three-piece "orchestra,"

when we say that it was conducted by Professor Wilson, aided by Mrs. Lange, and Mr. Barry, we think the community will have a just appreciation of its efforts; for no added praise of ours can increase a reputation too wide spread throughout the colony to need our feeble commendation.

Unfortunately it was always reviewed in these terms, frustrating to the historian hungry for details; but it was at least mentioned later that the members, respectively, played the cornopean, piano, and violin.28

For the afterpiece another farce was presented: Mad as a Hatter, which employs humours characters and misunderstandings to ridicule immoderate behaviour and fixed ideas in the older generation, scientific authority, and the tendency of modern society to pigeonhole the individual and repress human vitality and spontaneity. Crotchettly Fuzzleton, "an eccentric old gentleman with very curious theories on the subject of moral control over mental aberration," has become a household tyrant unwittingly because of his fanatical obsession. Receiving a letter from his brother, whose son, Charles, is coming to visit, he reads what he wishes for—a patient—into his brother's
own intemperate characterization of his offspring. Fanny, Fuzzleton's
daughter, peruses the puzzling correspondence:

\[ \text{FANNY. . . . 'My mad son will be with you to-morrow.'} \]
\[ \text{(That's to-day). 'For heaven's sake take care of him, and} \]
\[ \text{keep him steady; don't let him make an ass of himself with} \]
\[ \text{your little Fanny.' (Indeed, that's pretty good, the old} \]
\[ \text{wretch).} \]

But Fuzzleton convinces everyone that the "madness" is meant literally, by
his excessive learning, misapplied.

\[ \text{FUZZLE. . . . I'm sorry to say he is suffering from an aber­} \]
\[ \text{ration of intellect.} \]
\[ \text{BOB. Which?} \]
\[ \text{FUZZLE. Dementia; non compis mentis—in short, he will re­} \]
\[ \text{quire a great deal of attention.} \]
\[ \text{BOB. A nun compos mentis in shorts?} \]

Bob, the servant, who has "read the outside of all the books" and is a mala­
propist of absurd proportions, is the opposite extreme: too little learning,
not applied at all. 29

When Charles enters, immediately kissing his cousin extravagantly and
making all kinds of ridiculous jokes, it is obvious that what his father
called mad is merely a bit of "madcap;" youthful high spirits. These, aggra­
vated by everyone's initial odd responses to him, become for them a "self­fulfilling prophecy." Finally Charles realizes, "Why that old lunatic thinks
I'm mad," and manages to enlist Bob (who is sick of his master's humours) in
a scheme to teach the uncle a lesson. After convincing Fanny of his compara­
tive normalcy, he proposes marriage (the original purpose of his visit) and
she, having always been fond of him, accepts and agrees to help the plot.
The uncle, after unsuccessful attempts to "fix" Charles with his eye and sub­
due him, brings in two pedantic doctors who can agree on nothing except
mutual dislike. When Charles, driven out of all patience, drives them out of
the room, Fuzzleton sends for a keeper to put him in a straitjacket, but Bob
enters disguised as the latter and confines the real aberrant: Fuzzleton.
They all employ the traditional comic cure of giving him a dose of his own
medicine—agreeing that he is mad, threatening to shave his head, et cetera.

Everything is finally resolved, and Charles declares the moral that "if you once begin to adapt facts to theories you may prove all the world mad." Charles and Fanny are betrothed and Bob is ordered to marry the pert and pretty maid who has flirted with him continually, to his master's annoyance. Fuzzleton, only partially driven out of his humour, contemplates the pleasure of grandchildren—as subjects for his moral force.

Fancy my fixing four dangerous little lunatics of various sizes all at once--two with each eye.30

And "the curtain falls." This one-act comedy, with its congenial and salutary themes of moderation in all things, the abuses of learning, and tolerance for individuality, was equally well enjoyed by the Barkerville audience. Indeed, they later adapted the name "Crotchety Fuzzleton" as a synonym for the forms of extreme behaviour represented by the character.31

In addition, it involved the female members of C. A. D. A., who were always welcome to the largely male audience. Mrs. S. P. Parker, a saloon-keeper, in spite of a "trying" (uninteresting and unlively) role, "had a very good conception of the character."

... in the short tête-à-tête with Charles on the sofa her struggle between love, fear and obedience was well acted and caused quite a sensation of smothered applause.

FANNY. (aside) Good gracious he's getting excited. (confusedly, getting to the door) Oh, not in the least! Pray don't apologize. ... I think your dinner's ready. (exits)

"Miss Wilson, as Maria Jane, rendered her part well;" this was Florence Wilson, also a saloon owner, and the first librarian of the Cariboo Literary Institute, now returned like many others from a futile excursion to the lands of Idaho and Montana.

The charming manner in which she captivated the heart of the reluctant Bob showed a power of real fascination which the strongest and most unloving heart might find it difficult to resist.
Perhaps the "ever watchful" *Sentinel* succumbed a little too. As another C. A. D. A. stalwart she was later referred to simply as "Florence" by an affectionate public. 32

Notwithstanding the charm of the ladies, the men's performances by no means went unappreciated.

Mr. Grant as Crotchetty Fuzzleton, was most excellently cast, and seemed to understand the true rendering of the character. Mr. Blunt personified Charles Harebrain to the life, and made, as did Mr. Grant, the most that could be gotten out of his part.

George Grant and H. Shirley Blunt were each employed at one of the banks and, with equal symmetry, were two of C. A. D. A.'s most skilled and versatile actors. Mr. Hudson as Dr. Amens and Mr. Cochrane as Mr. Wye Zed, F. R. C. S., "were perfect representatives of a brace of old therapeutic fools, and their get up was as faultless as their acting." ("Fright wigs" and baggy pants were clearly in order.) Only J. Z. Hough as Bob seemed miscast; though he . . . threw a great deal of life and fun into the play by his humourous expression and gestures, which produced much merri­ment, . . . Mr. Hough is evidently better adapted to represent a real live Pike County Yankee . . . for the native independ­ence of his character seems too unyielding for the true repre­sentation of a servant in the English sense.

Hough was indeed a colourful individual, apparently a dandy and gambler as well as a miner who had made his "pile," and calling himself "Jossifius Hoffius of British Columbiæ" in a spoof of aristocracy. Later he did actu­ally find his forte in "Comic Yankee Impersonation."

The orchestra had the last bow of the evening, playing *God Save the Queen* while the audience stood. Every performance by the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association was brought to this ceremonial close. But the *Sentinel* had the last word, as newspapers will do.

In conclusion, we must say that the Dramatic Association deserve well the thanks and the patronage of the public for their laud­able efforts to give intelligent entertainment to all classes. 34

The hope that more such performances would soon be given was for once not ex-
pressed in vain: the theatre was now firmly established in Cariboo; like the other cultural transplants, it had finally taken root in the soil of the mountain community, and would endure with it and nourish it with "moral food" for many years.

Queen Victoria was honoured at greater length on Saturday, May 23, when Mr. and Mrs. Kelly held an anniversary ball in the theatre. For the British subjects, now in the majority, she symbolized not only the motherland and the personal home, but also the fixed centre of a spinning, changing, world. Yet she also signified the true progress of Britain, and "the development of intellectual and moral worth;" her long reign affirmed the value of earned respect. For Barkerville, therefore, it was a time of joy and thanksgiving:

Thankfulness, that amid the tumult and discord that at the present day seems to be disturbing the entire world, the dominion of Victoria, "on which the sun never sets," stands firm and unshaken; and joy that that Queen, on whom our hearts' most loyal affection is bestowed, is one who is worthy of our allegiance and love.

The pangs of remembered absence and the rekindled desire for a transcendent experience of belonging seem to have made Victoria into even more of a secular icon of the "good and virtuous woman," the great mother and ideal wife, than she was in England. At one minute past midnight royal salutes were "fired from different parts of the city."(!) The "cannon" consisted of two anvils placed one on top of the other and a powder charge ignited between them; devised by William Winnard, the blacksmith, its resounding roar made "the forests ring and the surrounding hills echo and re-echo."

At that moment in the Theatre Royal the "dancers stayed for a time their fantastic tread and both men and maidens joined in the grand hurrah for England's Queen." Their voices were reinforced by a party of miners celebrating in Barry and Adler's saloon and another held elsewhere by H. S. Blunt. The gatherings went on until "the wee sma' hours,"

... and when the sun rose bright and beautiful, the flags of twenty staffs reflected his cheering rays. Throughout the day no further manifestations were made than the social and
kindly greetings . . . bestowed by the entire community.
The Queen's birthday had been celebrated in Cariboo before, but from now on it became increasingly elaborate and widely honoured, and after this year would be marked by a performance in the Theatre Royal.

By the following Tuesday C. A. D. A. was ready with another production. This time the opening piece was their first attempt at a full length play: Charles' Mathews Jr.'s Used Up, a well-written comedy with sophisticated elements and some serious undertones. The Sentinel "feared that the boys had undertaken too much," considering their relative inexperience, but as the play proceeded our fears were dispelled and the well deserved reputation of the Barkerville Amateurs was fully sustained . . . The play occupied one hour and a half and gave entire satisfaction and elicited great applause.

It was something of a personal triumph for Dr. Carrall, who excelled in the title role of Sir Charles Coldstream, Bart., the rich but world-weary aristocrat who finds a new and more purposeful life by learning the hard way that love and the traditional, humble rural virtues are "best." In the afterpiece B. B., a farce featuring the mistaken identities surrounding two people with the same initials, C. A. D. A.'s third actress, Emily Edwards, made a promising debut "on the score of self possession alone." The daughter of the owners of the Richfield Hotel, young and pretty, she would later prove a most appealing ingenue.

C. A. D. A. continued to sustain its reputation at subsequent performances, which occurred at roughly two-week intervals. They even found time to make improvements in the theatre, the Sentinel observing on May 28 that "the elevated seats lately erected add very much to the comfort of the audience." The performance of June 4 was not so well attended as the preceding ones had been, a circumstance for which the reviewer was "at a loss to account." He need only have consulted the other columns of his paper, however: the same issue describes the emergency efforts made to save the Bed Rock Drain from
being flooded by the spring freshet, a threat to "all the creek claims" and thus to "the entire country." This exemplifies the negative side of the interdependence of the theatre and the mining community, and a continuing problem for the theatre, given the unpredictability of mining activity and the "Fickle Goddess."  

But by June 23 two more one-act comedies, *A Regular Fix* and *The Area Belle*, were presented once again to a full house, and the company was showing marked advances in the quality of its productions:

We must say, therefore, that the performance of Tuesday evening has added more to the standing of the corps than any of the others that they have given. The principal characters in each play—the first by Mr. Cochrane and the second by Miss Wilson—were portrayed in a manner that would do no disservice to well-reputed professionals . . . we are indebted to the Amateur Dramatic Corps for one of the best evening's entertainments that we have ever seen in Barkerville.

So Barkerville's self-made dramatic company was now solidly established, like its theatre, and the community appears to have been well pleased. Gratitude was also expressed on behalf of the miners by a letter to the editor, together with further praise and the hope that their endeavours may be crowned with success—not in any pecuniary sense, for that I believe is the least of their objects—but that each coming performance may be looked for with interest and concluded with satisfaction and pleasure to themselves and the audience; and that their little Theatre Royal may grow up and expand with the institutions of the creek and become a permanent and indispensible fixture. . . . So let us take into consideration the trouble and expense the ladies and gentlemen of the A. D. A. go to for our amusement—and their own no doubt; make all allowances for their lack of time and practice to acquire that confidence so essential to become topsawyers on the "boards," and acknowledge that for amateurs they are tip-top sawyers.

FUENTE.

Another letter considered the theatre, which afforded "agreeable and innocent amusement," as an index of the improved state of Cariboo society. The *Sentinel* only wished that they might perform more frequently, for even two weeks seemed a long time to wait for entertainment that gave so much enjoyment.
The only hint of dissatisfaction at this time, conveyed in Fuente's letter, was with the theatre building and the observation that it should be made more spacious and attractive. This echoed the sentiment of the reviewer of the opening night:

We regret that their house is so small, for we learn that many could not obtain admission. ... We trust, therefore, that an effort may be made at an early day to erect a theatre such as the town demands, for we look upon the drama, when properly conducted, as one of the most laudable and elevating modes of entertainment.

This request was, as it turned out, answered at "an early day," but under circumstances such as he could neither have predicted nor have desired.

At the very time that the Theatre Royal had opened, Martin the Wizard--"the World Renowned Wonder Creating Wizard," to use his full title--had started for Cariboo "to astonish the natives with his dexterous tricks." With him went the wizard's wife, Clara, assistant and object of some of the aforementioned wonders. Indeed the summer of 1868 was marked not only by the continued activity of the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association, but also by a large number of professional theatrical performances; more, in fact, than in any prior season of Cariboo's short history.

It is not difficult to account for that sudden change. News of Barkerville's theatre had of course reached Victoria two months earlier, but more generally the growing belief in the permanence of the mines and of Barkerville as their centre, together with its more widespread prosperity, had rekindled outside interest in the area. With "the very satisfactory" yield of gold the previous year, its population was reported by the Colonist to be "much increasing" during 1868, and, with the more year-round mining activity prevailing, a relative minority of miners now spent their winters and their entertainment dollars in Victoria. In Victoria itself some effects of the '66 to '67 recession lingered, and the extent to which it and its theatres still largely depended (directly or indirectly) on the miners, who still pro-
duced the only significant economic wealth in British Columbia, is indicated by the fact that the capital had "sadly declined" in amusements:

... the time was when it could support two theatres; now it was unable to support one. This is unfortunate as many a miner... hastens to San Francisco during the winter. ...

That was the preceding year; now even that "one" closed, as R. G. Marsh, the lessee of its Theatre Royal, because of the "impossibility of doing anything at the theatre for the next five months," left for a lengthy tour--of China!

Martin, on the other hand, took the high road to Cariboo with the returning miners. In view of two enthusiastically received engagements in Victoria that winter he was no doubt expecting favourable reports to pave his way. His standardized advertisements, in typically Barnumesque flamboyance, boasted much:

MARTIN THE WIZARD
HAS ARRIVED!

Turning, as if with a Magic Wand, this popular place of amusement into a Gorgeous and Enchanted Temple of Magic and Mystery; or a Night in the Wonder World, together with innumerable and amusing incidents in

VENTRiloquism,
SECOND SIGHT MYSTERY
and
MECHANICAL FIGURES

But he also assured ladies that

... perfect order and decorum will be thoroughly maintained, this Exhibition being of a chaste, elegant and classic character and free from all vulgarity.

Initially charging $1.50 general admission and 50 cents extra for reserved seats, he was pragmatic enough to reduce them to one dollar, and also to begin the shows at 9:00 P. M. in consideration of the miners working the longer summer evenings.

He performed five successive times in Barkerville, including Sunday evening, before going on to Centreville, the rising town on Mosquito Creek,
"to give the mosquitoes a show." He was well received.

As a slight of hand performer Martin is hard to beat; and as a ventriloquist, we doubt if he has an equal.

But except for such brief encomiums the Sentinel printed no review; the Colonist, however, gives a vivid impression of some of his effects:

The scene of the wonderful 'Sphynx, or Floating Head,' was really outstanding. Let the reader imagine lying on the table before him a living human head, apparently detached from the body of the owner, speaking, moving, rolling its eyes and carrying on an animated conversation with him, and he will obtain some idea of what the audience beheld. . . .

The "wonderful trick of 'Second Sight'" was a mind-reading act.

Mrs. Martin, with her eyes blindfolded, described articles held up by her husband from among the audience, told the time of a watch, . . . the number of blades in a knife, etc.

Of course this was accomplished by the use of code words unbeknownst to the spectators.

Both the latter trick and the "mechanical figures" (large animated dolls with clockwork mechanisms) were derived from the famous French watchmaker turned illusionist, Robert-Houdin. They indicate that Martin was a magician of the evolving modern variety, moving away from the exotic costuming and bogus orientalism of the earlier "conjurer" to the professional evening clothes of a scientific lecturer, and from an air of occult mystery toward the mysteries of technical craft and pseudo-science. The emphasis was now on

the control over nature which man could exert through his knowledge of mechanics, optics and chemistry. . . .

Yet stage magicians retained "the ambivalence between the technical and the mysterious," and the tensions between rationalism and primitivism, which were relevant to the contemporary ones between materialist skepticism and pragmatism and a new superstition of science and technology.

Thus it is understandable that the magician, affirming the human power to manipulate the physical world to advantage was a popular form of theatri-
cal entertainer among gold mining populations. With their heightened mixture of utilitarian pragmatism and mythic imagination they sought to unlock the hidden treasures of nature by a hopeful but uncertain combination of technical skill and physical means, on the one hand, and an intuitive divining of her secrets and an accommodation to her unseen forces on the other. But what was uncertain for them the magician adroitly and effortlessly fulfilled. The very dynamics of the magic act turn on an intense excitation of expectation and surprise, which, as Rickard observes, are also the "essence" of prospecting and discovery. Then, too, as the most obviously protean form of theatrical transformation, the magician threw into particularly sharp relief, and metaphorically enacted, their mythic preoccupations with the willed change of self and environment. The magician himself is a motif of the archetype of rebirth, and, through associations with alchemy, has long been linked in the imagination with gold.

Interestingly, just as Martin had been leaving Victoria for Cariboo an explanation of the "Floating Head Mystery" as a simple arrangement of mirrors had been published from a report by the American Institute: pseudo-science unmasked by science. Yet far from ruining his appeal, it merely shifted appreciation to his mental and physical skills, from the illusionistic "what" to the technical and aesthetic "how." Said the now knowing Colonist for the benefit of Cariboo readers,

"The merit of Martin is not so much in the novelty of his tricks as in the cleverness of their execution. Indeed, "that it reveal its lore, repudiate its mysteries, seemed to be the only condition upon which a materialistic society would tolerate so primitive and arcane a profession."

Hard on the heels of the wizard came Lafont and Ward's Minstrel and Variety Troupe. First billed in the Sentinel as the "Victoria Minstrels," consisting of Tom Lafont, Ned Ward, Mrs. Lafont, and Miss Ella Montez, with,
in smaller letters, Mr. Westgarth, Mr. C. Phillips, and Mr. J. Johnston, they
too must have been counting on prior popularity with those who had wintered
in the capital. Tom Lafont was a well known performer along the west coast.
In 1862 he had toured to Oregon with the legendary Lotta Crabtree and her
Metropolitan Male and Female Minstrels; at that time "a tested friend of ear­
lier tours" to California mining towns, he was "a comedian who could make a
trombone both stirring and funny." In the company then was a young lady
balladist who may very well have subsequently become Mrs. Lafont.

As early as 1864 he was an established favourite in Victoria as "the
Champion Whistler of the World and Negro Delineator . . . the ne plus ultra
in his whistling and imitations of Birds, Beasts, Frogs, Reptiles, Dogs,
Pigs, etc." In November of 1867 he had taken over The New Idea, a music hall
or "melodeon," and in 1868 had opened the Alhambra Music Hall, in partnership
with William Franklin, George Pierce, and Ned Ward. But, as already noted,
it was a bad time for such business there. Ned Ward, an acrobatic comedian
and singer, known in Victoria as "the flower of the Alhambra," had also per­
formed with Bartholomew's Great Western Circus. A "Miss Ella" was listed as
a member of Marsh's stock company at the Theatre Royal until the latter de­
camped, when she presumably joined Lafont and Ward; her last name was prob­
bly added by Lafont, given his association with Lotta Crabtree, herself a
protege of the lovely, "notorious" Lola Montez. It suggests not only a pub­
licity gimmick, but also that Ella Montez was the company's "sex appeal."

Nevertheless, this troupe, like Martin the Wizard, provided thoroughly
"chaste" entertainment; at the Alhambra a select performance had been given
for ladies and children on Thursday evenings, when no smoking or drinking had
been permitted. That such troupes were popular in British Columbia tells
much about the state of society, its tastes and self image, and in particular
about that of Cariboo. Considering the Columbian's fulminations against the
poor quality and the "obscenity and blasphemy" of most touring companies, as
well as later references by the Sentinel, it is safe to assume that those who toured to Cariboo did so because they knew that their quality and lack of vulgarity would be appreciated. It was not only the distance that accounts for so few troupes making the journey, but also that they had to be sure of a welcome reception at the end of the road. The Caribooites "didn't like anything second rate, it was all A-1." 49

This, then, was the company that visited Barkerville, and was later joined by George Pierce from the Alhambra. "Tom intends taking up his quarters here permanently," the Sentinel reported after the arrival of Lafont and Ward on June 17, "and is determined there shall be no lack of fun here this season." 50 It is suggestive that some prior arrangements had been made with C. A. D. A., from whom they leased the theatre; C. A. D. A. might even have initiated them to help satisfy the demand for more performances and to generate extra revenues. In any case, Lafont and Ward were the closest that Barkerville ever came to having a resident professional stock company, and this apparently was the troupe's original intention.

Tom Lafont's motto was:

Care to our coffin adds a nail, no doubt,
And every grin, so merry, draws it out.

The little company seems to have lived up to it; certainly their performances on June 20 and 21 were considered a

decided success, and afforded the people of Barkerville one of the best treats of fun that probably has ever been given in Cariboo. Tom Lafont and Ned Ward as negro delineators are hard to beat... and we would advise all who can enjoy a good laugh to go and see them.

After another show they also made a side trip to the rich diggings of Mosquito Creek.

Look out down there at Centreville! Tom Lafont and Ned Ward are going down to wake you up with a laugh such as you have not enjoyed since your town has had a name.

If the women went too it must have been a rough trek, for with the govern-
ment's neglect of trails even "hardy miners" could not travel a few miles without "floundering through swamps and mud." It is not known what they performed in, but it could only have been a saloon. 51

Meanwhile, preparations were being made to commemorate the first anniversary of the Dominion of Canada. An advertisement headed "Men of Cariboo!" extended an invitation "not only to the friends of Confederation, but to all lovers of Free Government." It was not just a celebration, but a political rally as well; a self conscious, deliberate ritual designed to reaffirm and enhance community identity and aims, and to "convince the most skeptical" elsewhere "that the people . . . desire Confederation." The anvil battery that began the day "opened a new era in the history of British Columbia." 52

In the afternoon speeches were delivered by "those gentlemen who have by their eloquence made Cariboo celebrated;" among them were Dr. Carrall and J. S. Thompson of C. A. D. A. The speeches were a virtual litany of protean impulses and Cariboo values writ large, embracing shared ideals and individual self-interest within the vision of a vast cooperative enterprise. Although Cariboo, said Carrall,

has made considerable progress, still it has not advanced so far as we could wish. Confederation would give us the impetus we require. It would not . . . make us all rich, but it would do for us what we could not do for ourselves, it would increase the general prosperity and improve us all individually.

The same by-words and sentiments recurred throughout the various orations. The current "irresponsible autocracy" comprised "favoured offsprings of fortune," who were not only anti-democratic but "pebbles under the wheels of progress." The people were urged to see "where their best interests lay," to "unite and bury all sectional feelings," and to "recollect our common origin." Confederation would transform them from "serfs in this age of progress," and render "ourselves practically independent," to "become the California of Canada;" it would "raise us . . . from . . . bankruptcy and serfdom" and "give us a degree of greatness and power." Caribooites, as "the mainstay of the
colony" who were "treated with indignity," would then "be enabled to develop our own resources." To temper the idealism with a programme of practical action, resolutions were proposed: that the Colonial Government's opposition to union was contrary to "the declared wishes of the people;" that the people should therefore adopt "some organized mode" of furthering their object; and that a committee be appointed to work with the other districts in the Confederation League. All were passed unanimously and a committee of five was nominated, including Dr. Carrall.53

A series of athletic games followed, with a prize of $20 to the winner of each, and comprising various foot races and jumps, putting the heavy stone, throwing the hammer, etc. Ned Ward of the Minstrel Troupe made himself doubly conspicuous, winning the standing high jump and then improvising an acrobatic entertainment atop a flag pole:

The ease and dexterity with which Mr. Ward ascended the pole and performed his most wonderful and daring feats drew forth peals of applause from the crowds of admiring spectators.

It must have seemed an exhilarating expression of their soaring spirits and aspirations—it was also a clever publicity stunt for Lafont and Ward's Minstrel and Variety Troupe. Music for the celebration was provided by Professor Wilson's "New Dominion March," while James Anderson had written, by request, an "Anthem for the Dominion of Canada" (sung also at the Yale celebration); the metre shows that it was sung to the tune of "God Save the Queen."

In the evening Mrs. Tracey held a Grand Ball to mark the occasion and to open her new saloon, judiciously combining the pragmatic and the ideal. In the Theatre Royal the minstrels gave a performance, thus inaugurating what became a regular holiday custom, though in future it would be carried out by C. A. D. A. At half-past eleven this ritual celebration of community vitality—political, social, physical, imaginative—closed in a burst of fireworks. The "harmony, good order and behaviour of the people" was pointedly emphasized by the Sentinel's editor, who could not imagine
an event which seemed to meet with a more general sympathy from the people of any community, and which may be taken as a full expression of their feelings. . . .

The Americans had enthusiastically supported the festivities, and when the latter celebrated their Fourth of July with a reading of the Declaration of Independence, sports, and the singing of national airs, the British and Canadians joined them with "the utmost harmony and good feeling." The Sentinel extolled the universal love of homeland as binding them together, and went a step further to envision an ultimate cooperation between the two North American democracies, "with results that will transform the political and commercial world." 55

With such unbounded optimism and fellow feeling and the mines promising a better yield per man than ever before, it is not surprising that Lafont and Ward renewed their intention of remaining in Cariboo indefinitely and announced that they would

design by strict study and attention so to vary the performances as to make this one of the best places of amusement on the Pacific Coast. Self praise not being a trait of good performers, the public are invited to give their attendance and pass their own praise or censure. 56

It was praise they received, including a long letter from "A Forty-Niner," which no one contradicted.

. . . . as I have ever been present in the rushes, I occupied a reserved seat on the occasion of Tom Lafont's rush last evening. . . . Gold mining, Mr. Editor, like fun-seeking or love making, or laughter-hunting, depends for its success upon striking the lead. After nineteen years of disappointment in gold seeking I was rewarded last night by having located a claim right over the channel of fun-making . . . at the Theatre Royal. . . . "Virtoo is its own reward," as the late lamented Artemus Ward hath it, and perseverance has enabled me at last to light right square upon the channel of laughter without the bed rock pitching. In a word, Tom Lafont has supplied the greatest desideratum the up-country ever stood in need of in the shape of laughter-begetting enjoyment unattended by hot coppers and self accusing recriminations on the following morning. 57

Lafont and Ward had "superceded the games of chance." The analogue of theatre and gold mining, and the sense of theatre fulfilling a deeply compen-
satory need, are brought out strongly here. That theatre is a healthy form of vicarious satisfaction, helping people to keep their mental bearings ("striking the lead") and psychic stability ("without the bed rock pitching"), is also implied. Its felt properties as an emotional purgative and restorative, and those of laughter especially as "the best medicine," are evoked by the Sentinel's announcement, "Drs. Lafont and Ward will minister to the mind diseased. . . . Rejoice ye disconsolate and attend."58 Forty-Niner concluded by vowing support for good, clean entertainment.

Go on, Tom; don't deviate from the programme of last night. Be chaste in your language and choice in your expressions, and the miners will see to it that you don't want for the sinews of war.59

They continued to perform twice weekly, charging the same prices as C. A. D. A., and augmented their strength by securing the services of Professor Wilson, T. A. Barry, and Frank Wrigglehuth as musicians. They used other local talent too: William Bennett, who was considered as a solo singer to have "no equal in Cariboo," performed voluntarily, while on August 9 Prof. Endt, the magician turned cabinet maker and miner, presented his popular feats of "legerdemain." Several other amateurs also seem to have joined them on various occasions, including A. H. Maynard as a child performer. With his reminiscence, the printed programme, and secondary sources, it is possible to create some impression of a typical performance by the troupe: that of July 26, 1868.

The show began at nine o'clock with a "packed house," and after an overture—a pot pourri of light opera tunes—the curtain rose to reveal nine players sitting in a semi-circle on the stage, two negroes—"Bones" and "Tambourine."

This was the traditional arrangement for the first half of a minstrel show, but apparently only Lafont and Ward wore blackface make-up; Ned Ward no doubt played the more acrobatic Bones, with Tom Lafont as "Tambo" and George Pierce as the "Interlocutor," placed midway between the two "end men" as straight
Theatre Royal, Barkerville.

LA FONT
AND
WARD'S
TROUPE
WILL APPEAR ON
Sunday Evening, July 26th,
In one of their chaste and Comical Entertainments.

STAGE MANAGER, T. LA FONT.
BUSINESS MANAGER, NED WARD.
MUSICAL DIRECTOR, PROFESSOR WILSON.

PROGRAMME:

OVERTURE—Operatic, Band.
Opening Chorus, Company.
Mr. King Bird, with Interludes by Tom Lafont, Mrs. Lafont.
what's your old Natalie, Ned Ward.
Ma, my poor Mother, Mrs. Lafont.
Anvil Taps, Misses Ward.
Faking Mickey, Mr. Horry.

Anvil Chorus, by Ward, Lafont & Co.

WALK AROUND,
WHO'S DAT HEEL A BURNIN'!

OVERTURE, ORCHESTRA.

CHINA ACT.

VINEY ST.
Mialcan Man, Mr. Power.

MRS. LA FONT.

Comic Negro Dance, - Tom Lafont.

MATRIMONIAL SWEETS—DUETT,
BY MRS. LAFONT AND MR. WARD.

For the July 26, 1868 performance by Lafont
and Ward. Printed by the Cariboo Sentinel.
Similar handbill programmes were
issued in advance of performances by
C. A. D. A. and by other local groups.

Fig. 5.
Theatrical Programme.
man for their jokes and moderator for the rest of the proceedings. First the orchestra accompanied the whole company in an "opening chorus," which was then followed by a series of solo songs of varying moods. When Mrs. Lafont began the lively refrain of "Listen to the Mocking Bird," a universal minstrel favourite in which the bird was originally mocking death, suddenly:

The great whistler, Tom Lafont, leaves his place, comes forward, and imitates a mocking bird.

Expressing the triumph of animal vitality and the human power to master and manipulate the natural world, this sort of spontaneous, show-stopping outburst was to be made famous, decades later, by Al Jolson. 61

Next, T. A. Barry provided a sentimental contrast with "Rock Me to Sleep, Mother," giving vent to a longing for home and the innocence and security of times past which that audience could share with particular keenness.

Backward, turn backward, oh Time in your flight.
Make me a child again just for tonight!
Mother come back from your echoless shore,
Make me a child again as of yore.

The eternally theatrical component of childlike make-believe must have functioned with added poignancy for men like Forty-Niner, many years from home. Still in the melting mood, Ella Montez performed another ballad, one of the most cloying to our ears that the Victorian period produced, but no doubt moving to them: "Nita! Jua-ha-ha-nita! ask thy soul if we should part..." The lost sweetheart followed the absent mother. 62

Then Lafont and Ward picked up the pace and rescued the audience from bathos, supplying comic relief in German and Irish dialect songs that ridiculed the unaccomodated immigrant. The end men would naturally have interspersed all the musical numbers with their "rapid fire" low humour—a wild and preposterous succession of puns and conundrums about firemen wearing red suspenders to hold up their pants or a shipwrecked sailor washing himself ashore with a bar of soap. Unfortunately the most perishable of minstrel fare, these delighted and also profited the popular audience by making them
aware of the intricacies and pitfalls of language, of current topics of interest, and of "the staccato pace of modern life," to all of which everyone had to become adjusted. 63

"Anvil Chorus" would seem to have been a grand opera burlesque, a common feature in such an irreverent and anti-aristocratic form of entertainment. The finale to the first part was a standard "walk around," in which the whole company stood in a semi-circle while the soloists alternately stepped forward to sing a stanza, interrupted by brief rhythmic punctuations by the group. "Whose Heel Dat a Burnin'" was by the legendary Dan Emmett:

Solo. De snow am in de cloud,
Chorus. 0, whose heel dat a burn-in?
Solo. De wind does whis-tle loud.
Chorus. 0, whose heel dat a burn-in?

It ends with the stock figure of the foolish black man discovering that his foot is on fire. The final chorus included everyone, and to an instrumental wind-up they danced wildly and boisterously, accompanied by the "clapping of hands and jigging of feet in the audience." 64

A second overture suggests that there was an intermission, followed by the "olio" or "varieties" section of the minstrel format. At this performance it included a magic act (not mentioned in the programme but referred to in the paper) presented by Ella Montez, several ballads by the women, and a romantic duet, "Matrimonial Sweets," by Ned Ward and Mrs. Lafont. China Act was a short farcical sketch; with a standard minstrel subject especially popular on the Pacific Coast (and undoubtedly so in Barkerville), it mocked the strange speech ("Melican Man") and appearance of the Chinese and the presumed fact that they "ate cats and Bow-wow soup." Such sketches apparently eased accommodation to foreign groups, but only at the price of presenting stereotypes as the minstrel show itself did with the blacks. Finally came

... the "event of the evening;" The Masquerade Ball--an
artificial comedy in which each member performs and is admitted to a ball in costume. "Then they all danced around and had a Grand March, but it all didn't amount to a hill of beans." "God Save the Queen."

His caustic comment seems like a self-conscious afterthought; at any rate, it is not supported by the responses of the time, and the Sentinel considered the July 26 performance the best that the troupe had given.

This was not the "pure" minstrel format—the presence of women and performers in whiteface shows that—and the admixture strongly reflects the marked alterations that were resulting from the Civil War and its aftermath.

Although the mythic images of the idealized plantation remained a minstrel fixture . . . social commentary about the problems of white Americans outside the south replaced Negro subjects as the focus of minstrelsy . . . when immigration, urbanization, and modernization forced the American public to undergo fundamental institutional, social and moral changes.

It tried informally to help people cope with needs, concerns and desires which, as we have seen, the gold seekers shared. Blackfaced "negro delineation remained at the centre of the performances, but less as a novelty, as subject matter, than as an effective stage convention: one of its original functions had been to give "the minstrel a position similar to the classical fool;" set apart from society, in an inferior place, he could provide criticism or satire without being taken seriously or perceived as threatening. He could also suddenly indulge in gentler feelings, spontaneous outbursts or pure whimsy, supplying emotional outlets for the white populations of harsh cities or the rough, male dominated frontier.

Hence the complex ambiguity of minstrelsy: it rationalized racial discrimination while simultaneously expressing the "enthralling vitality" and the richer, freer emotional and cultural life felt to be a part of black character. It presented, too, an idealized, edenic myth of a happy home, "sharply contrasting the stable, loving families of an idyllic rural life to the harsh realities and social chaos of cities"; (or the frontier), and vicariously assuaging the white man's pangs at the loss of a common folk culture.
and the roots of a traditional or folkloric wisdom. The very stability and familiarity of its ritual format were evocative of home, as its elements of anarchy and irreverence were suggestive of freedom and individuality.  

Minstrelsy also appears to have embodied the ambivalent feelings of whites toward their own situation as somewhat analogous to that of blacks: the figures of the happy and unhappy black slave alternately formed contrasts and parallels with the "wretched white wage slave;" the freed black man, presented as ignorant, gullible, confused, and out of place in a rapidly changing society or an unfamiliar environment, was a heightened reflection of kindred experiences undergone by the mass of white people in trying to cope with their own disorienting culture, and which the gold seekers throw into sharp relief. Thus the minstrel figure was a caricature of the ordinary white man as well as--and by means of--the black man. Certainly The Masquerade Ball, for example, was symbolic not only of the uppity black trying to get into the master's house, but also, increasingly, of the intense desire of whites to gain admission to the society of "something better" by a "performance" that confirmed their sense of personal worth. Theatre is indeed a "dialectic of ambiguity" and popular art a "funhouse mirror." The distorted composite image of a white man, aping a black man, aping a white man would seem to have cut both ways, making the minstrel black at once scapegoat and alter ego. In Barkerville, where there were relatively few blacks and no evidence of inequality or segregation, the latter role would appear to have predominated and helps us to define the popularity of Lafont and Ward, as well as their own local minstrel performances.

The other major trend exhibited by Lafont and Ward was the movement of minstrel show in the direction of the general variety entertainment. It had always been eclectic, but the "sixties and seventies saw the inclusion of quite alien material," such as Irish ballads, magical and other specialty acts, and overt forms of white sentimentalism. "Its origins at about the
time of the Civil War... variety was an outgrowth of the saloon culture... of the American frontier." According to Eastern historians, variety was bawdy, salacious and uncouth and lacked middle class acceptability till the 1870s; minstrel shows lacked women, romance and sex appeal supposedly until the 1880s. But a troupe like the Lafont and Ward and its appeal for British Columbia audiences suggest that they are wrong and that those traits emerged much earlier and evolved from the frontier, where the pioneer performer also had to adjust his means to its realities, where middle class ties began to reassert themselves, and where men weary of "haunts of dissipation" and longing for a sense of home demanded the presence of women, in the "holy trinity" of mother, wife, and sweetheart (all of which the Lafont and Ward troupe presented).

Variety was also characterized by easy intimacy and an atmosphere of personal familiarity between audience and performers and by the general informality of the shows. In Barkerville this was encouraged by both the theatre building and the nature of society. Lafont and Ward actively promoted these by employing local people, a common device of frontier touring companies; that they actually achieved, and benefitted from, such a relationship to the community is indicated by the affectionate references to "Tom" and "humourous little Ned," and by signs of their inclusion in social activities.

Above all variety was the theatrical spice of life and symbolized the fuller, wider range of experience, the desire for which had brought people to the frontier but which that environment had also curtailed and frustrated in many ways. Despite superficial differences the variety format was the prototype of all theatrical activity in Cariboo, and the variety performer's multiple roles and surprising skills symbolically enacted protean powers and hidden worth. In particular, "the inimitable Tom Lafont," who was especially versatile and apparently had some of the personal uniqueness of "star
"plucky little Tom and his associates who have come all the way to Cariboo" were similarly felt to embody the Cariboo virtues of pluck and perseverance. Thus the fusion of minstrel and variety show, proclaimed in the company's name, gave analogous life and form to the major concerns of the common myths and provided common entertainment: democratically enjoyable by all and in keeping with the respectability the community sought to cultivate. It complemented the local familiarity and empathy of the amateurs while supplementing it with professional polish and a taste of outside sophistication. Lafont and Ward could have remained indefinitely had not Dame Fortune intervened.

From July to mid-September the troupe continued to play to full houses. Only one performance—Saturday, July 18—was "not so well filled as the others; probably because Saturday was a working day and usually reserved for the wash up of pay dirt, but whatever the reason they switched their performances to Thursday and Sunday evenings and good patronage returned. The lady members were fast becoming popular favorites" as performers as well as representatives of "the fair sex," showing "evident improvement . . . in their singing and acting." Improvement was always welcomed, whether onstage or off. Mrs. Lafont "as a ballad singer" was "much liked and invariably encored," and she apparently received requests for "Way Down in Maine" by homesick Americans. Miss Montez had a local song hit, "Pretty Feet," which the Sentinel reported would "bear repeating every night;" it epitomized Victorian sexuality, discreetly confined to the extremities. George Pierce was popular as a banjoist, but the chief sources of delight were still the leaders of the company: "Lafont and Ward's fund of humour is almost marvelous. It requires no ordinary degree of talent to keep up . . . such interest as is manifested in entertainments so frequently given . . . ." Titles mentioned in their advertisements were those of comic sketches.
and one-act farces which played an increasingly important part in minstrel shows. Skits like *Deaf as a Post* ran only ten or fifteen minutes, with two or three characters and a simple low comedy incident providing a mere framework for dialogue jokes, slapstick, and the exhibiting of individual performer skills; *Jocko, the Brazilian Ape* had long been a favoured vehicle for acrobatic comedians like Ward. All are variations on typical minstrel formulas and ridicule its usual targets of ignorance, gullibility, gaucherie, and pomposity. In *Sublime and Ridiculous*, for example, the would-be comedian literally cannot play the role offered him because of his ignorance of linguistic or stage conventions, yet he is also employed to debunk the pretensions of tragic drama and artificial "serious" acting. *The Persecuted Dutchman*, a full scale farce running fifty minutes and three scenes, exploits the popular mockery of the German immigrant and farcical devices of misunderstanding and coincidence to develop the concerns with the requirements of social acceptability and protean self-improvement and mobility. The moral is that in a new society one will be a ludicrous victim of chance and circumstance and of the misappraisal of his self-worth, like John Schmidt in the play, unless he is "wised up" to the right "lingo," social norms and conventions, and the proper uses of money. Just this sort of wising up was a prime socio-moral purpose of all minstrel sketches and of the minstrel show itself.

C. A. D. A., in the meantime, was not inactive, but gave two more performances during the summer. That of July 13 was a benefit for Mrs. Parker in appreciation of "her valuable services," and despite—or perhaps because of—the influence of professional performers C. A. D. A. showed further histrionic development with audience and critical response continuing to be enthusiastic as a result.

The house was crowded to its utmost capacity, and but one opinion prevails throughout the entire community, which is that the performance on Monday evening was the best that has ever been given . . . by the Amateur Dramatic Association.
The *Sentinel* still claimed that they offered "the best and most rational amusement that the people of Cariboo are privileged to enjoy." Clearly their less frequent appearances were not from any fear of invidious comparisons, but because the theatre was busily engaged by a group that was paying them rent and perhaps also allowing them a respite.

Beginning on August 18, the minstrels felt confident enough to hold a series of benefits for the solo performers. The first two for Mr. Pierce and Ella Montez ("the fair beneficiary") were well attended. On the 22nd they went again to Centreville, considering that "as many . . . of that town had come up here to patronize the troupe, . . . turn about was but fair play." That shows that the theatre was drawing people from a radius of several miles. Unfortunately on this trip Mrs. Lafont took sick and Mr. Phillips fractured his ankle, causing cancellation of the Sunday show in Barkerville, but on September 3 Mrs. Lafont took her benefit under the joint patronage of Gold Commissioner Chartres Brew and C. A. D. A., and was followed by that of "humorous little Ned" who was "duly appreciated." Concluded the reviewer: "There yet remains one act of justice . . . and that is to give the inimitable Tom Lafont a rousing benefit."

"Justice" is ironically suggestive here, for the same newspaper issue reported a sudden dark cloud on C. A. D. A.'s horizon: M. A. Benrimo, its current manager, had been arrested for embezzlement of "divers sums of money" collected in the employ of the Miners' Bed Rock Drain Company; a double blow against the community, depending as it did on the drain and on honesty and trust. Appearing very shaken and contrite at his trial, he admitted guilt and pleaded an unblemished record and a "weak moment." Said Judge Begbie:

This is a very painful case. The prisoner, hitherto a person of respectability, . . . has in fact sold or bartered his honor for a few hundred dollars--a poor income.

Begbie very leniently sentenced him to only nine months in prison, but the
wretched Benrimo, all reputation gone, never returned. In the moral world of
that time and place much could be forgiven or tolerated, but such breaches of
the fundamental code of honour and ethics could not be, and could only make
the doer an outcast. 82

Of more generally serious concern was that the abnormally hot summer
had by then become a drought. The creeks had been drying up and mining
operations, dependent on the flow of water for running machinery and washing
pay dirt, ground to a halt in some cases and were considerably curtailed in
others. This of course decreased the cash flow—always a problem with the
lack of a British Columbia currency and of outside capital investment—and
business slowed down as well. The drought caused further anxiety lest the
rains come too suddenly and the swollen creek burst the flumes and drains,
flooding the claims as it had done in '65, but this was lessened by the
cooperation of miners and merchants in repairing the drain and bulkhead. 83

If C. A. D. A. was daunted by any of this, however, there was no sign
of it as they announced their most ambitious production to date: Tom Taylor's
"Original Comedy," *Still Waters Run Deep,* for Saturday, September 19. There
was "sufficient evidence of the talent and ability of the members," thought
the Sentinel's editor, to ensure that its "world-wide reputation would not
suffer." No "care or pains were being spared" in its preparation and a longer
rehearsal period was allowed for, indicating a healthy spirit of emulation in
the presence of a professional troupe. To facilitate such larger-scale plays
and casts they had just completed an addition to the theatre, which provided
for a comfortable "green room" and for the stage to be "somewhat enlarged."
Anticipation was also expressed regarding Tom Lafont's intended benefit, but
neither of the performances came to pass. 84

On the afternoon of September 16 a real disaster struck: at 2 o'clock
a fire was sighted on the roof of Adler and Barry's saloon, caused by heat or
sparks from an unsafe stovepipe. The long drought had made the wooden
structures extremely flammable, as did their proximity to each other; it also
left little water with which to fight the blaze that spread almost instantly.
In two minutes the saloon was engulfed, and in less than twenty minutes "the
whole of the lower town was a sheet of flame." One quick-thinking group
toiled to remove from a store some fifty kegs of gunpowder--enough to blow
everyone up. Another saved two thirds of the library books. But with no
prior organization or facilities to direct their efforts most people hap-
 hazardly carried away what they could, and in an hour and a half the
destruction of Barkerville was virtually complete. Surprisingly, no fatal­ities or injuries occurred. One hundred and sixteen buildings were burned to
the ground, however, at a total value of $673,000 or more. In the upper part
of town only Scott's Saloon was saved, with water from the Barker Company's
flume which passed over it. At the lower end the fire was finally checked,
saving a saloon and two warehouses. The Theatre Royal, only a few doors up
the street, perished with the rest, the replacement value of the building and
contents roughly estimated at $1000.

Despite the cries of some that "Barkerville is gone in and the Country
ruined," the calamity was for the most part "philosophically borne" and the
work of rebuilding commenced at ten o'clock the following morning:

Ere the smouldering embers had ceased . . . the indomitable
spirit of those who had raised from obscurity the name and
fame of Cariboo was once more aroused, and the resolve went
forth that Barkerville, the sole stay and support of the mines,
should be rebuilt. 87

And the prospects of those mines, which in their turn supported the town,
were "unchanged," though the drought had momentarily dimmed them a little.
Within ten days thirty buildings of a new town had arisen "Phoenix-like:" 88
The end of October saw the principal part of the town rebuilt with ninety-
five buildings standing on the original site; "surely no better evidence can
be given of the faith of the people in the future prosperity of the country." 89

Even the Columbia Mission Society used the speed of the reconstruction as an
index of the eventual progress of British Columbia as a whole and of the end of the "recent depression:" it was "striking proof of the vitality which exists and the confidence which has been inspired." 90

But to the watchful Sentinel the faith and vitality belonged only to those "who rely solely upon their industry and energy for success and a compensation for toil"—the miners and merchants of Cariboo. The banks had not rebuilt and the Hudson's Bay Company had been the last to do so. Moreover, the banks used the fire to arbitrarily lower the price of gold—absolute value and the only hard currency and circulating capital—against the relative worth of their own paper notes.

The industrial history of Cariboo is similar to that of the entire colony of British Columbia. The capitalists, like so many buzzards or jackals, follow in the wake of those who combat and overcome, that they may share in the prey of those who go before . . . undertake only in that which proves by others' risk to pay. 91

Labour versus corporate capital, the industrious versus the speculator, and hinterland versus coastal city: these were some of the ongoing tensions (and still are) that came to the surface at such junctures. The government raised another by offering no other aid than "terribly sorry about Barkerville," 92 and was subsequently accused of having profited from the fire through the duties on added imports. The Caribooites fought back at both by lobbying for a branch of the assay office (idiotically situated at New Westminster). The banks finally rebuilt. They never were of any practical benefit, but their presence may have been desired as signs of stability to attract outside investors. Aside from these sour notes, however, optimism continued unabated.

What really constituted an act of faith was that Barkerville was not just rebuilt but vastly improved, not merely reconstructed but transformed. Ultimately the new town boasted not only more buildings but much better ones: a "great improvement on the old houses," "skillfully constructed and solid," of a more permanent character, and the first in which "design played a part."
Fig. 6. Barkerville Transformed. The town rebuilt after the fire. The photograph was probably taken in the summer or fall of 1869, with the community in a holiday mood and the buildings decorated for either Dominion Day or the reception of Governor Musgrave. The evergreen wreaths and letters are a typical example of adapting new materials to old forms. Evidences of increasing respectability, "general prosperity" and emerging patterns of family life are now visible. Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Kelly are seated at right with their children. J. S. Thompson is standing in window at left.
Photographs, like the one on the preceding page, support such statements, and reveal the change from the mostly hurried fabrications of the old town to a care for form and structure, details and touches of elegance, in those of the new. The main street was widened from a cramped fifteen feet to about thirty, sidestreets blocked by squatters were left open, sidewalks were given an even grade, and the whole town presented a "more uniform and pleasant appearance." Thus the rebuilding presented an image of growing civic pride and identity, of the sense of a vital, personal and collective stake in Cariboo, of a commitment to the permanence and further development of Barkerville. It reveals an investment far beyond a concern with short term gains and private interests: the old town restored would have sufficed for that. As G. R. Elliott observes:

Many merchants who had intended leaving with quick profits were burned out. Only those planning permanent businesses remained. It was a new town "both in character and appearance."  

Not only were the existing social institutions all restored during the following winter and spring, and the library augmented with two hundred books donated by Gold Commissioner Brew, but further "marks of progress" were noted in the cultural and moral spheres. During the summer these had already been initiated by a number of Caribooites petitioning for a resident Protestant clergyman; the Catholic Church had been more responsive and their building had been established and consecrated at Richfield in July. Just before the fire two Protestants had arrived: Rev. Thomas Derrick, Wesleyan Methodist, and Rev. James Reynard, Anglican. Derrick and his congregation built and opened their church before Christmas. Reynard, having lost the old Anglican building in the fire, held services in temporary quarters, and, while attempting to recoup the money to build a new church, established a church institute there with classes for children and adults; both he and it would later prove important to theatrical life.
Another sign of increasing moral concern was the authorities' stopping of all gambling in rooms adjoining saloons, as a response to citizens' petitions; it had already been prohibited for some time in public barrooms, though friendly card games of the "penny ante" variety continued. There had been much discussion about whether to have a tax on professional gambling or to ban it outright, which indicates the consciousness and tendencies of an early pluralistic society seeking to rationally resolve its differences democratically and by dialogue. That this problem should have arisen and such a solution been ultimately adopted shows how far Barkerville was moving away from the stereotype of a gold mining town.

The rebuilding of Barkerville, then, was not just a renewal of faith in the future of Cariboo; it was part of an acting upon that faith, acting it out. It manifested the desire for both permanence and improvement—progress on all fronts—both continuity and collectively willed change. It reveals a social group attempting to live its common myths and their symbols, attempting to bring their resolution in a protean home, a society of "something better" won from the wilderness, closer to actuality. One might say that they sought to experience a part of the imagined community as physically present truth, and it was in this social climate and as a component of this continuing process that the second Theatre Royal was built.

In the physical climate and seasonal process the theatre was missed almost immediately, as a "place which would afford much agreeable amusement during the long winter nights." But on October 27 it was reported that the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association was "not defunct," and that a new building was planned "to be held in common as a theatre and a public hall." On November 7, C. A. D. A. held a meeting at the new library at which Mr. R. Lipsett, co-owner of Scott's Saloon, perhaps in gratitude for his building's rescue from the flames donated the lot next door; the earlier theatre had presumably been leased or mortgaged and the lot sold or foreclosed after the
fire. As owners of a sawmill that had received a lot of business from the rebuilding, Meacham and Nason offered to supply lumber on exceedingly favourable terms. Generous offers of assistance in labour and materials have also been made by several merchants and mechanics, and we trust that everyone will be so far alive to his own interests as to give what assistance is in his power, so as to get the building completed without delay.

The characteristic identification of private interests with the public good seems to have had the desired effect, and tenders were soon requested for the construction of a building 60 by 30 feet, according to plans prepared by E. D. Howman, a local constable and C. A. D. A. member.

But they were not the only ones in need of a building: a fire hall was also proposed. After the fire there was naturally considerable talk about the failure of cooperative enterprise and practical foresight that had eventuated in utter "helplessness," with the Sentinel ruefully concluding that "experience teaches fools." They were, at any rate, hardly alone among communities in this respect, though that thought must have been cold comfort. Now, with much more at stake, they resolved to take proper precautions: Fire Wardens were immediately appointed to "inspect buildings" and to enforce safety measures; on the evening of October 9 a public was called to organize the Williams Creek Fire Brigade; regular business meetings were instituted, officers and committees nominated, and Isaac Oppenheimer of Oppenheimer Brothers, merchants, elected Captain; a constitution and by-laws were drawn up, and rules and fines governing discipline, attendance and drills were implemented. In amusing contrast to this businesslike attitude, the style and colour of uniforms absorbed inordinate deliberation and debate; finally scarlet tunics with black trousers, black waterproof hats and belts, and inscriptions on both the latter garments of W. C. F. B., were chosen. People were eager to join, and by November the public had subscribed almost $2000. A committee sent to Victoria to appeal to the Governor for a fire engine was
fobbed off with a thousand dollar grant, and so, despite large government outlays annually for Victoria's fire brigade, Barkerville was as usual left mainly to its own devices.  

At the same time as G. A. D. A., therefore, the fire brigade was also advertising for building contractors, and this, furthered no doubt by several overlapping members and mutual economic needs, led G. A. D. A. to propose a compromise solution to their common problem. E. D. Howman presented a revised plan whereby the brigade would have a hall measuring 30 by 40 feet underneath the theatre. The brigade accepted the offer and appointed a committee to "co-operate with the Dramatic Association building committee," each organization agreeing to bear half the cost of construction, which was estimated at $4000. A contract was let to Messrs. Billsland and McCormick for shingling and a week later the exterior of the building neared completion.

On the evening of December 28, 1868, a Grand Fireman's Ball was held in the unfinished auditorium for the benefit of the brigade. Tickets including refreshments were eagerly purchased at $5.00 apiece, and the happy throng commenced dancing at nine o'clock and, after a midnight supper, continued until the dawn's early light.

The black and scarlet uniforms of the firemen combined with the more sombre garments of the male guests and the handsome dresses of the ladies presented a most charming spectacle.

In addition to this "most brilliant and pleasant reunion ever held in Cariboo," there were church services, a public entertainment arranged by the Welsh in the Wesleyan Church, and other social gatherings of the season, causing Tal O Eifion to forestall any assumption that in the wild, cold, inhospitable mountains of Cariboo, exiled from friends and relations, ... Christmas with its fond recollections of home and the happy scenes of the past, would be conducive to gloominess rather than merriment; however the contrary is the case. Each wishes his neighbour the same old "merry Christmas and happy New Year" ... as he was accustomed to do with his friends and neighbours at home. Everyone has attempted and succeeded ... to make this Christmas of '68 a real merry one.
This was certainly a change of tune for the author of "this silent land feels lonely" and "our moral condition is like the thermometer, thirty degrees below zero."

With the outside of the theatre building completed and the holidays over, the amateurs "went to work with a will to finish the inside," in preparation for a very special opening night. In a newspaper notice they offered "sincere thanks to the numerous volunteers who have so kindly assisted them," for whereas the previous theatre had been the result of a cooperative endeavour among a small group, this was a full-fledged community enterprise embracing miners, merchants, and tradesmen and reflecting the growing social spirit and cohesion which the efforts of C. A. D. A. had apparently helped to foster. These in turn influenced the role and relationships which the theatre, and C. A. D. A., were developing within the community.

While the former establishment had occupied a location at the lower, or downstream, edge of town the Theatre Royal now enjoyed a more prominent place at the upper end of the new Barkerville, and with its more prepossessing appearance it quickly became a landmark. Several photographs exist of its exterior, and the one on the following page reveals it to have been a simple structure, dignified and tasteful in keeping with the town's settled maturity, its facade of whitewashed siding redeemed from plainness by the tall windows, decorative panelling and molding and wide double doorway. Whether because of an arrangement with the fire brigade or because it needed none, the theatre bore no permanent sign. One of the largest buildings in Cariboo, to the editor of the Sentinel it was a "colossal edifice" and an ornament to the town, and how they perceived it is perhaps more meaningful than how we do.

Of the interior little is known, possibly because of changes in the building's structure and function over the years and its sudden demolition.
Fig. 7. The Second Theatre Royal. Probably taken in 1869 during one of the holiday celebrations or Mungrave's visit. The Williams Creek Fire Brigade, shown with their hose carriage (in default of the hoped-for fire engine), usually decorated the building on such occasions. The letters W. C. F. B. were part of the temporary decorations, not a permanent sign. A portion of the Scott and Lipsett Saloon is visible at the right of the picture and of Florence Wilson's Phoenix Saloon at the left. Provincial Archives Photograph.
Bescoby states that it was similar in design to the former theatre, by which she would seem to mean that it shared the same ground plan and removable bench seating, because otherwise it was considered by contemporaries to be a much more impressive and attractive auditorium with a larger stage. By contrast the previous theatre had been "a mere shell of a building," whereas this one was considered "a splendid hall . . . which would do credit to any established city." The transformation or improvement of the theatre was emphasized on several occasions, and even an outsider called it "quite a creditable theatre." It was variously described as "large" or "spacious" and the ceiling as "lofty," which may account for some of the impression of magnitude. Reported box office receipts suggest that it could have seated anywhere between 300 and 350 people (and possibly held as many as 400 with standing room), as compared with the figure of 250 for the first theatre.

Two dim photographs in the British Columbia Archives show a small balcony at the rear, also indicated in the Sentinel, which would have made room for at least some of the additional seating. Otherwise it does seem to have retained the intimacy and social democracy characteristic of the earlier auditorium.

That it also possessed a degree of the elegance strived for in the rebuilding of the town is indicated by the observation that from the ceiling three ornamental chandeliers were suspended, the principal one of which was a triumph of Cariboo art, surmounted by a crown, and containing seventy-two wax-lights in three tiers. . . .

The archives' photographs reveal that the walls were of well-finished wood with a dark varnish, as was the floor. To the right of the stage was a large cast iron stove, a necessity in the Cariboo climate. Unfortunately these fragmentary details complete the rather vague impression that is available of the auditorium.

The stage is remembered as about twenty feet in width, presumably that of the proscenium arch, and another photograph taken in 1937 suggests that
this is approximately correct, that the stage was elevated three or four feet above the auditorium floor, and that the height of the proscenium was between twelve and fifteen feet. Another photograph showing C. A. D. A. members backed by stage scenery indicates that the flats were about fourteen feet high (see page 271). The 1937 picture also suggests that there was no fly space above the stage, an impression furthered by the exterior photographs; probably there was none and the invariable musical interludes functioned to bridge the scene changes. Apparently the green drop curtain was suspended on a roller, so no doubt the backcloth was as well. A. W. Ludditt describes the stage curtains as being of heavy velvet, another touch of luxury. The photograph of C. A. D. A. members outside the theatre shows an overhang at the back of the building of about four feet, indicating an extension of the stage, and a visible, narrow doorway in the edge of it presumably allowed scenery to be raised and lowered from outside; a shed that can be seen adjoining the rear wall was likely used as a scene shop or storage space, perhaps both.

There is a tantalizing spatial problem that can be solved only by conjecture. The arrangement accepted by the fire brigade stipulated that it would have a hall 40 by 30 feet underneath the theatre; the total dimensions of the building are given as 60 by 30. What became of the extra 20 feet of space downstairs? A reasonable assumption, since the dimensions upstairs left little room for one, would be that it was held in common as a foyer, just as the whole building was as a theatre and fire hall and as the brigade was allowed free use of the auditorium for its own social gatherings. Certainly the wide front doorway served as both a graceful entrance for theatre-goers and an easy access to the main street for the firemen and their equipment. Inside a staircase would have led to the theatre and an inner doorway to the firehall.

Michael Booth has observed that this combination of theatre and fire hall may be unique in theatre history, but certainly the combining of a
theatre with some other building was not unusual on the frontier, which demands invention, adaptability and compromise. In this case it reflects the cooperative basis and mutuality of interests typical of Cariboo mining and society, and the heightened awareness of crucial interdependence that bound men and institutions together. It may have derived specifically from the grim reflection that as the theatre was where the largest number of people congregated, had the fire occurred during a performance the results might have been far more calamitous. In any case, the theatre-fire-hall is an evocative image in the context of Cariboo society, expressive of the increased community integration of Barkerville as well as the integral relations to its well being that the theatre was developing and the expanded functions this building would serve. It symbolizes, too, the position of Barkerville at this point in time: it helps to substantiate a concern, even an anxiety, that seems to have underlain the surface optimism; a realization of the critical necessity of putting its imaginative aspirations on a firmer practical foundation, of grounding its progress and improvement on the means of its survival, whether in the physical terms of the fire hall, the economic ones of a stable quartz industry, or the political ones of Confederation.

On January 16, 1869, the new Theatre Royal was opened to the public. That the building and the performance were seen as meaningful celebrations of civic identity and the "recuperative powers of Cariboo" is evinced by the following assertions:

To-night, four months to a day since the disastrous fire which laid Barkerville in ruins--never to be rebuilt again as croakers then predicted--the Amateurs will face the music and do their best to amuse their friends once more . . . on a stage and in a hall which many a town of twenty times the size and age of Barkerville might well be proud of.

And of course the play, Still Waters Run Deep, was the same one that the fire had interrupted, and whose very title may in the interim have taken on some
specifically local applications. The performance "brought together a crowded
house."

At half-past seven J. S. Thompson stepped before the curtain and "very
ably" spoke the following prologue, written for the occasion by James
Anderson, "foremost in the rank of Cariboo poets:"

Twelve months ago--'twas on that social night,
When cares are buried, and when joys are bright--
When mirth and pleasure hale the new-born year,
And friends endeavour to provide good cheer,
Our first debut was made in scenic art--
With falt'ring accents, and with beating heart,
Like a young child, whose mother's arms were all
The feet he knew—now walks, yet fears to fall—
We came before you, nerves and feelings strain'd,
Till step by step your confidence we gain'd;
And when your plaudits struck the anxious ear,
Care trembling fled, pursued by tim'rous fear,
We called you friends, the friends we know you now;
Pleased when you smile, and gratified, we bow.
The year sped on! and many an hour we spent
In mutual pleasures, for our hearts were blent--
And spoke of more to come—the night was fix'd--
Man's cup of pleasure is with sorrow mix'd,
"He may propose, but One disposes all,
Without Whose will not e'en the sparrows fall"--
For ere the sun had risen on that day
Our city smould'ring in its ashes lay.
But not to linger on so sad a tale,
The storm is oe'r, and past the scorching gale,
Our city stands rebuilt—'tho' built in haste--
A credit to your energy and taste.
And here to-night, within this spacious hall,
Built by kind labour volunteered by all
We meet again—and by your beaming eyes
You're pleased once more to see the curtain rise.
Whom shall we thank, when thanks to all are due--
We'd rob the many, if we praised the few--
That man who nailed a board upon this frame,
Can say, "I built it," and he builds his fame!
And now kind friends we look for your applause,
Nor hide displeasure—when you see just cause
"Tis easy finding fault, but you will try,
To view our failings with a kindly eye.
If we afford you pleasure for an hour,
Our object's gained tho' critics may talk sour.
We might say more but deeds are better far,
"Where still the waters, deep the channels are;"
Be you the laughing brooks 'mid sunny beams,
And we the fountains that supply the streams;
And may the current, bright, unsullied flow,
In rills of pleasure to the house below.
In its neat couplets the prologue points up the strongly felt relationship between C. A. D. A. and the community at this time, and also unintentionally implies what it would be in the near future. "Mutual pleasures" and "our hearts were blent" evoke a sense of the analogue of the theatre and the mutual concerns and shared interests outside it, of theatre and cooperative endeavours and community spirit in general. Thus it implies a bond between theatre and the cohesion of society, an interaction with its animating energies and the delicate balances ensuring its survival. Similarly the idea of a personal stake in the theatre parallels that of a stake in the development of the country; of every individual's efforts counting for something in the societal scheme; of individual aspirations merged within collectively achievable and meaningful ones ("Can say, 'I built it,' and he builds his fame!).

Like every theatrical prologue, whatever its ostensible subject, its real subject is the workings of the theatrical event itself. Its purpose is to define the social situation that allows the theatrical one to develop; the bases for consensus, the fundamental things agreed upon and understood, which then permit the effective functioning of those conventions by which the performance can be authenticated, communicated, and comprehended. The use of the play's title is clearly meant to suggest an analogy between the play and the actors' relationship to, and judgement by, the audience; but it also points beyond that, suggesting parallels with mining ("deep . . . channels") and its human interdependence and dependence on nature, and with the spirit and character of Caribooites in light of their recent "deeds."

Before the play the Welsh Glee Club sang "Hark, Hark, the Lark," and in response to enthusiastic applause an encore number, "Foresters, Sound the Cheerful Horn," both pieces echoing the kinship with nature expressed in the prologue. They were followed by Anderson, Fraser, and Hudson performing "Dame Durden" and "A Little Land Well Tilled;" the latter would seem to have
been timely as well as nostalgic, given the recently experienced benefits of British Columbia agriculture. "The curtain was then raised on Act 1st of Still Waters Run Deep," with the stage set for the drawing room of John Mildmay's villa at Brompton, England:

MILDMAY. Suppose, Emily, you gave us a little music.
MRS. STERNHOLD. Music! Nonsense! That you may have the opportunity of snoring without detection, Mr. Mildmay?
MILDMAY. I thought, perhaps, Emily might indulge me with "Auld Robin Gray."
MRS. MILDMAY. "Auld Robin Gray!" Now, aunt, only conceive his asking for a stupid old melody like that.
MILDMAY. You used to like playing it to me before we were married.
MRS. MILDMAY. Before we were married! When you know I adore Beethoven.
MRS. STERNHOLD. To appreciate Beethoven, Emily, requires a soul for music: Mr. Mildmay has no soul for music.
POTTER. No, no, John, you know you haven't. You've no soul for anything.

Mildmay is a successful self-made man of simple Lancashire background. His genteel wife, too much the product of her aunt's pretentious influence, does not value his plain-speaking, undemonstrative manner or his humble tastes and quiet pursuits. He is treated with indifference and even scorn by her and her family.

Her father, Potter, himself a victim of Victorian matriarchy, simply adopts the women's view of things with no resistance. Mrs. Mildmay wishes for "a husband to interest me, to share my feelings, to invest life with something of poetry and romance." Mildmay, on the other hand, is happy growing celery and house painting, and his coolness annoys her. After an uneasy attempt at further conversation, he announces that he must leave for Manchester on urgent business, and will be away all night.

Captain Hawksley ("what a contrast") seems to Mrs. Mildmay a more attractive and romantic figure; as a regular visitor he has also been peddling stocks in his "Galvanic Navigation Company." Mrs. Sternhold, too, appears to be under his spell and badgers her brother Potter into buying a
quantity of the shares with his promised settlement on his daughter. Feeling
guilt and misgivings at having risked this money, he tells Mildmay, who turns
out to already know about the venture and, before leaving, calmly agrees to
buy several thousand worth himself.

When Hawksley arrives he carries on a seductive flirtation with Mrs.
Mildmay, during which it is revealed that she had once been engaged to him,
but broke it off at her aunt's insistence. In spite of her weak protests he
intends to return later when the household is asleep and to expedite the
secret rendezvous has removed the bolt from the conservatory door. He leaves
her in a state of anxious conflict between his rekindled attraction for her
and her fear of infidelity and its consequences. But Mrs. Sternhold has
overheard everything! Taking charge as usual, she sends her niece to her
room and prepares to surprise the would-be seducer. Mildmay, having received
a letter that had rendered his trip unnecessary, returns unexpectedly and
overhears the following scene:

MRS. STERNHOLD. (rises) Villain! Swindler! Adventurer!
Impostor! Beggar!

HAWKSLEY. Your excitement makes you illogical. Allow me to
observe that beggars don't ride, and that my cab is at the
garden door.

MRS. STERNHOLD. Thanks to the poor dupes who pay for it, of
whom I have been one too long. She, who "could love a man without esteeming him," knows his life is a lie
and threatens to expose him. But he replies with a threat to ruin her own
reputation--"kept up at such a cost of hypocrisy and deceit"--by revealing
that she herself is the victim of his seduction; and he has her love letters
to prove it. After they go out, Mildmay admits to himself that "I have
carried the laisser aller principle too far. It's a capital rule in politi-
cal economy--but it don't do in married life, I see. . . ."

In Act Two, feeling much the worse for the night before, Mrs. Sternhold
tries to delicately broach the problem with Mildmay. Hoping to inspire "his
sluggish nature with one spark of chivalry or sentiment," she now realizes
"he is at least braver and more manly" than Hawksley. He asks her to "speak out, straightforward like" for a "dull Lancashireman." When she says that she has been "insulted," and needs a defender, he coolly turns their imposed version of his character against her, saying that if he is a "dull, stupid man" and a "nobody" (as she had stated earlier), then he cannot be expected to suddenly act with "pluck and energy" and responsibility. But after buying up Potter's shares in Hawksley's company, he leaves to confront the "captain."

In Hawksley's apartments his fraudulent dealings are demonstrated in a scene with his crony, Dunbilk. After the latter leaves, Mildmay arrives and there ensues a long discussion scene involving parasitical speculation versus honest industry and cutthroat versus ethically-controlled utilitarianism. Hawksley speaks casually of ruining existing rival ports with his galvanic boats, and, in the course of competition, "so much the better for the world in general."

MILDMAV. . . . Only I was thinking. . . . That as the general interest is made up of particular interests, perhaps the general interests may not be so much benefitted after all.126

After exposing the corruptness of such general rationalizations, Mildmay reveals the particular objects of his visit: to make Hawksley buy back the falsely valued shares at the original price and return the love letters; to do so he further exposes Hawksley as having once embezzled money from Mildmay's former business partners, the mysterious letter having provided the legal proof for a long-felt suspicion.

Hawksley is forced to accept Mildmay's terms, and, enfuriated, tries to strike him but is overpowered.

MILDMAV. If we come to that game, remember it's town versus country; a hale Lancashire lad against a battered London roué; fresh air and exercise to smoke and speculation. . . . I might send you into the street without the trouble of going downstairs.

Hawksley takes refuge behind his duelling skill, threatening next time they meet to humiliate him; Mildmay replies that it takes no "pluck or heroism" to
"call out a man who never fired a pistol" and turns to leave.

(HAWKSLEY seems to meditate a rush, but checks himself, and stands biting his lip, and trembling all over.)

TABLEAUS.

In the final act Mildmay, back in his drawing room, returns the sealed letters to Mrs. Sternhold who, suitably grateful and humbled, admits her misjudgement of him. He also makes her aware of her tyrannical behaviour and bad influence on his wife. She thinks he has changed, but he replies, "I am the same man today as I was yesterday." What has altered is their perception of his inner worth ("deeds are better far") and his demand that henceforth he be valued accordingly and be "master in this house." In a reconciliation with his wife he admits that she is "not the first to prefer the shadow to the substance" and confesses that he was to blame in carrying his plain virtues to extremes: "I have been rough, and cold, and careless..." She replies, "I misjudged you."

At a social gathering that follows Hawksley arrives and challenges him, but with choice of weapons Mildmay proposes that the pistols be shuffled with only one of them loaded. This test of "true grit" unnerves Hawksley, the others see what real courage and manliness are, and Hawksley is arrested by the detective whom Mildmay had hired to investigate him. The play ends with a double statement of the moral theme: its title and, appropriately for the audience, "All is not gold that glitters." 128

Between the acts of the play ballads and songs were performed. Prof. Wilson having left Barkerville after the fire, Daniel Whelan had taken over as master of the music. His performance on the violin was excellent; his imitation of the bagpipes was exquisite, and natural enough to have roused the feelings of the most dormant Irishman or Scotsman present, and deserved all the applause it received.

The leading characters in the play were "exceedingly well sustained."
Mr. E. D. Howman, as the cool, quiet, yet shrewd and unfathomable John Mildmay, could not have been excelled. The profligate gallant and accomplished swindler, Capt. Hawksley, found a most competent representative in the person of Mr. H. S. Blunt. The scene betwixt him and Mildmay, in Hawksley's apartment was admirably executed; but his declaration of love to Mrs. Mildmay was deficient of that sentimentality which should have accompanied it. The various representations of bravado, cunning, passion and cowardice were very well done, and merited all the applause they received. That old eccentric individual and inveterate snuff taker Mr. Potter, was most faithfully impersonated by Mr. J. S. Thompson, whose elocution and actions were, without doubt, faultless.

Neither snuff-taking nor eccentricities are actually mentioned in the script, and were the apt and effective inventions of either Thompson or the stage manager. Concerning the women's performances the reviewer continues:

The character of the young wife was ably rendered by Miss Emily Edwards, whose execution of the denial of any improper intimacy with Hawksley was excellent; but the reconciliation between her and her husband was devoid of that display of feeling which would be naturally expected at such a scene. Florence Wilson, as her aunt, Mrs. Sternhold, added fresh laurels to those already won by her since she has been in connection with the Amateurs; in fact, to use a neighbor's expression, "Florence excelled herself."

Mr. J. H. Sullivan "was quite at home in the character of Dunbilk—in fact, Irishman to the backbone" (a bit of adroit type casting there), and the various minor characters "were creditably represented."

Only one major defect marred the production, said the critic who urged them to amend it in future. "I refer to the almost inaudible tone in which a large amount of the conversation was carried on. . . ."

There is a possibility of its being attributed to the unfinished state of the house at the time, but nevertheless it was a defect seriously felt by almost every individual present.

It may also have been due to the "lofty" ceiling and larger auditorium. That frustration rather than boredom resulted might have been a left-handed tribute to the other elements of the production, and nonetheless, "taking the performance as a whole, it was a grand success, and elicited frequently the applause of the house." The critic considered that it augurs well for the future career of the Dramatic Association. They have proved themselves capable of grappling with pieces
which actors of high standard and reputation have not considered unworthy of their study.

He wished them well. This is the first review that was not anonymous; it was in fact written by Tal O Eifion, the Welsh miner and poet, and budding journalist, and it indicates that the dramatic performances were being taken more seriously, and more critically.

In spite of the ordeals by drought and fire neither Barkerville nor its dramatic association were "defunct," and because of the nature of people's responses to such trials they ended up with a new and better theatre, while the alacrity and the means with which it was built demonstrate how necessary theatre had become to the life of the community in a short time. Tom Lafont, however, did not get his benefit and Barkerville did not regain a resident professional company.

After the fire the troupe seems to have broken up, with Ward and the others leaving immediately while Tom and Mrs. Lafont and Ella Montez remained for a time. Perhaps it was fortunate that they did, for one of the unsung members of the company, Mr. Westgarth, drowned in the Fraser River near Yale when the steamer did not arrive and the canoe in which they were forced to travel hit a snag; the unlucky man had supposedly had a "premonition" of the accident, but probably he could not swim. Why the other three stayed on is not known. Perhaps Lafont had interests in mining property or possibly they waited to see if the theatre was to be rebuilt, but then C. A. D. A. decided, in view of the different circumstances of the new building, that they did not want it professionally occupied for extended periods. In any case Tom Lafont departed on November 6, but Ella Montez and Mrs. Lafont stayed until April 12, 1869; they must have performed in one of the saloons though unfortunately such performances were rarely reviewed. Whatever the explanations, Cariboo was again left to its own resources for theatrical entertainment, and it is those resources that must be assessed in the succeeding chapters.
CHAPTER FOUR

DRAMATIC REPERTOIRE IN THE CONTEXT OF POPULAR MYTH

Nor is it an unmeaning, useless, literary effort, teaching nothing, contrived and written for no other purpose than to please. . . . It demonstrates the danger of deceit, by showing the consequences to which it may lead in family affairs, when once an attempt is made to shield an error by false representation, although intended for the best. Absorbed in the business or politics of metropolitan life, men are apt to neglect the family hearth and give full opportunity to seductive friends to disturb their domestic peace, and "To Oblige Benson" is intended for an illustration of this social phase.

Cariboo Sentinel
November 20, 1869.
Between 1865 and 1875 there are references to 105 productions of 85 different plays in Barkerville. There are indications, especially with the 1865 season at the Parlor Saloon, that the actual number was somewhat larger, but as such totals can only be accurately assembled from titles specifically referred to, only one production from 1865 is counted here; the rest occurred between December 1867 and December 1875, which could be averaged out to 13 productions a year. That, however, is a misleading pattern: because many of the plays were one-act pieces and were performed in tandem; and because it does not reflect the slump (economic and theatrical) from 1872 to 1875, with no performances given at all in '74 and production only commencing again in late '75. A more accurate and revealing pattern is that of 105 play performances 94 belong to the period 1867 to 1871, of which more will be said in due course.

For reasons which will also become more apparent only a single locally written play was produced during these years: A Trip to the Peace River; or, The Road Agents Abroad. It was described as "a new melodrama written for the occasion"--of a fire brigade benefit on December 4, 1869--by one Augustus Frederick Funghoid, Esq., obviously a pen name. Unfortunately no script seems to have survived, but the advertisement at least reveals that the five characters included Clem Johnson, a road agent (meaning an agent of Barnard's Express, not an American outlaw); Steve Simmons, a hungry traveler; Jefferson Washington, landlord of Buckley House; and two Chinese travelers, Sam Chow and Choo Fung. The latter were not doubt extravagant caricatures, perhaps drawn, however, from the demonstrated propensities of some Chinese for violence and stealing, which injured the reputation of the majority. Though the topic, a current optimism about the Peace River district as a potential extension of the Cariboo gold fields, was genuine, the listing of spurious actors' names like W. C. F. B. Benfitusky and F. O. R. Morehoseky suggests a possible burlesque of a melodrama. In any case, the performance (comprising
also the domestic melodrama, *The Toodles*, was described as a "failure," the experiment was not repeated, and the mountain muse remained essentially lyric.

Of the origin of the other plays, only two presenting the figure of the stage Yankee, one of those featuring a stage Irishman, and four Negro farces were American. These would seem to have been chosen in part because of performers who excelled in the stereotyped roles. All the rest were British, which could be attributed to the dominant influence of British Drama in the new world generally, the increasing proportion of British subjects in Cariboo, and the actively pro-Confederation, anti-secessionist, membership of C. A. D. A. Probably it was a combination of these factors. Accessibility of scripts can certainly be ruled out since they were much closer to American centres than British.

Concerning genre, all belong to the popular dramatic forms and may be categorized as follows: 4 melodramas, 5 domestic dramas, and the remaining 76 as comedies or farces or an admixture of the two. Among the latter are some that were designated by various sub-generic terms of the time, such as "ballad opera" (*The Waterman*), "burlesque" (*Bombastes Furiosa*), and "vaudeville" (*The Loan of a Lover*), but they are all comic in form, spirit and subject matter, and the same can be said for "burletta," "comedietta," "petite comedy," etc. It would be pointless to break the plays down further into these nominal categories, since, as Allardyce Nicoll has shown, most of the terms became almost meaningless in the nineteenth century and are certainly so today. Often they designate only relative differences of emphasis in style, subject or length, or simply the presence of songs in some "illegitimate" pieces. Even farce and comedy are not absolute and reliable distinctions: many plays contain elements of both in varied proportions; others, like *The Rough Diamond*, are designated farces but are much closer to romantic or sentimental comedy, and vice versa.

As the concern here is with what the drama meant for Caribooites, this
major part of their repertory will be classified simply as comic. In the light of that concern it is merely worth bearing in mind that such a multitude of generic terms does indicate a "movement towards novelty of form," which may have been influenced by "romantic freedom." Certainly it reflects the novelty, diversity, and constant change of modern society, and also the problem of finding forms to contain and attitudes to express those qualities. Otherwise it is sufficient to observe that the vast majority of the plays performed in Barkerville were farces and comedies, or "farce-comedies." Furthermore, the "serio-comic," mixed genre of domestic drama overlaps in its use of humour with the comedic plays, while many of the latter share elements of its sentimentality as well as its contemporary societal orientation. It was, then, an essentially comic repertoire.

It was also a basically modern one. The oldest work C. A. D. A. performed was Charles Dibdin's ballad opera The Waterman, dated 1774. Only one other belongs to the eighteenth century, John Till Allingham's Fortune's Frolic; or, The Ploughman Turned Lord, and its pivotal date of 1799 is suggestive, for much of its spirit anticipates the next century. The earliest nineteenth century script is Bombastes Furioso (1810), a burlesque of heroic drama that enjoyed an extended popularity well beyond its day. A half dozen or so were from the 1820's and 1830's, and the rest, again the vast majority, range from the early 1840's through the late 1860's. The trend is certainly strong enough to show where Cariboo interests lay. These were mainly plays which, if not strictly contemporary, were roughly so in the sense of belonging to their own era, that of modern, post-industrial man. At the same time most of them were old enough to have had personal associations for the Caribooites, with home, youth and childhood.

Michael Booth concludes that the repertoire was largely comic because C. A. D. A. was not capable of Shakespearean Drama and lacked the technical means for melodrama. Both assumptions seem unwarranted. There are references
in the Sentinel to the desire both of C. A. D. A. to perform Shakespeare and of the public to see it. Shakespeare was, after all, highly popular in gold mining areas of the Pacific Coast (as evinced by the Booths in California) and certainly it was only the promise of a large and enthusiastic audience of wintering miners (the residents were not known as avid theatre-goers) that could have drawn Charles Kean to Victoria in 1864. Once C. A. D. A. had become somewhat seasoned the Sentinel reviewer felt confident that they had "the natural but not the artificial means" to do justice to the bard, and, considering the prevalent modes of Shakespearean production at the time, C. A. D. A.'s financial limitations, and the expense of obtaining costumes and properties "at this distance from the source of supply," this would seem the likely explanation.

As for melodrama, Booth's argument holds even less water, for although the more spectacular types would have been beyond the scope of their theatre, still they did produce melodrama of the simpler domestic variety. But the Barkerville audience does not appear to have had much taste for the genre. This was not due, apparently, to the inability of C. A. D. A. to act them effectively: the performances of them were well received, but the plays were not. The Seven Clerks; or, Three Thieves and the Denouncer was itself denounced in an angry review as being silly, worthless and utterly unbelievable, which it is. The Charcoal Burner alone aroused enthusiasm, no doubt because of its psychological touches and its subject of stolen gold. None of them was repeated, however, unlike the favourite domestic dramas or comic plays. Indeed, melodrama, with its extremes of behaviour and moral polarity, its escape to exotic realms, its violence, sensationalism and vicarious adventure, would seem to have been both un congenial and irrelevant to what is known of the spirit, concerns and experience of Caribooites.

Their spirit being on the whole optimistic, progressive and tolerant, in keeping with a new land rich in resources and opportunities, there would
have been no call for the fear and suspicion of crowded urban societies, reflected in melodrama. Their concerns were material, social and political, and their experience had already been sufficiently exotic and adventurorous. The vicarious experiences they longed for were quite the contrary: the comforts, security, and familiar associations of home; and to that end they were striving to make Cariboo "as much like the outside world as possible." Dramatic models and reminders of it would be doubly useful therefore. Their attitude to art appears to have been firmly of the practical, utilitarian kind typical of frontier areas.

With violence and crime at a minimum and a general respect for the laws of the land, with social and industrial democracy free from the seemingly monstrous forces and abuses of industrialism and the large cities, their moral problems involved, as we have seen, not good versus evil, but lesser and largely remediable vices and follies. Beyond the criminal courts and outside of the clergy and a few religious zealots, what was extolled by even the most respectable citizens was not absolute standards but relative social norms, what was more or less desirable to the the majority. These attitudes together with the cooperative spirit and methods, the adaptability and the ingenuity necessary to survive or succeed, essential to the continuance of Cariboo mining and living, are important features of the comic view of life.

That the comic forms of drama were the more congenial to Caribooites can also be illustrated by citing the prevalence and decisive functioning within comic plots of chance and money, which were directly correspondent with the crucial roles of fortune and gold in the existence of Barkerville and the lives of the miners; the same could be said of the equanimity which comedy encourages in the face of the uncertain interactions of the other elements. Indeed Caribooites have already been quoted to the effect that "gold seeking" and "funseeking" were analogous, that comedy provided compensation for the frustrations and release from the tensions and anxieties
of the gold mining way of life. As "Fuente" expressed it in his praise of C. A. D. A.'s productions:

In an outlandish place like Cariboo, where we have the fortune or misfortune to find our lot cast, where Dame Fortune takes a few of us under her special and kindly wing, while Miss-fortune seems to play rather roughly with the balance, or where at their will we are kicked from one to the other and handled with as little ceremony as paper shavings in a nor' wester, ... let us occasionally "bilk" the whole fortune family by throwing dull care in its teeth, taking a little fun when we can.

Laughter in particular was felt to be beneficial, even medicinal, in chasing away "dull care"—no small thing given the obsessiveness that gold seeking could inspire.

More positively, to laugh at the "curious freaks" played by fickle fortune is to be superior to them, to "have a heart above them," which one cannot do with fate, a concept for which the protean men of Cariboo had little use anyway. And if Mistress Chance or Dame Fortune cannot be controlled, it is at least possible, they believed, to woo and win them. One could try to "deserve" their favours, as individual gold seekers and the Sentinel were fond of observing, and which, as they also knew from observation and experience, was the most likely way of keeping as well as winning them. That this was as it should be, combined with the practical virtues, habits and abilities they sought to instill in themselves and each other to those ends, formed the bases of the outlook and ethic of Cariboo society; that they could also be better ensured by cooperating, compromising, sharing risks and resources, formed the basis of the society itself. The practical exemplification and reinforcement of these attitudes and of the potential favours and disfavours of fortune are all within the specific province of comic drama. Hence the multiple views of the moral and emotional purposes which the plays were felt to have: compensatory and cathartic; "elevating" or inspiring; "pleasing and instructive."

Caribooites as a group were positive, progressive people, and thus it
is more illuminating to seek positive, progressive, rather than negative, reductive, reasons for their choosing to perform particular genres and individual plays. That practical considerations also helped to influence the choice is not denied, but neither do they deny that it was still a choice, a decision expressive of the social will. Nor does the fact that the plays were not indigenous creations lessen the expressive significance of them for the local audience; the plays were extremely representative of their time, as will be seen, and, as has been seen, so were the Caribooites. If in drama context is everything, they brought much of that with them and created the rest from their responses to the new environment and their social groupings and interactions. We may take them at their own words that the plays they chose to present had meaning for them in terms of their common concerns and needs, allowed them to entertain and to be entertained.

To understand more fully what they entertained and found entertaining in these plays it is necessary to look at them in some detail, especially so since the comedy and farce of the early and mid-nineteenth century are much less familiar to us than melodrama and other popular forms, being glossed over or dismissed in most general studies and lacking one specifically devoted to them. Allardyce Nicoll is decidedly but usefully equivocal on the subject: he is prone to condemn them for mechanical structure, careless plots, stock situations and characters, and lack of literary invention; and yet such a judgement can hardly be final or unqualified. Here at least was a world of hearty laughter; here was a type of drama which carried that tradition for broad merriment which can be traced back to Elizabethan days and further.

It demands our close attention. Similarly he criticizes their sentimentality and conventionality while noting elements of realism and "a critical mood." He concludes that they are "at least alive," unlike the irrelevant, "stillborn drama" of the serious English speaking writers.

Ernest Watson pursues the point further in "a protest" against the
usual "disposing of the nineteenth century drama." He argues at length that
the drama of this period was heavily dependent on the development of stage-
craft, with the two uniting in an all important "stream of dramatic life," a
current of progress which was "in the main consistent with the unifying
principle of realism." Indeed one can see features of this in the scripts,
based on French models, that evolved from the practice of Buckstone, Mme.
Vestris, Charles Mathews, and others. Stage directions are increasingly
detailed and evocative of place and milieu; one can see elements of a growing
attention to realistic dialogue in touches of dialect, character mannerisms,
and so forth; and moments of thoughtful conversation alternate with the
broader comicalities in pieces like The Loan of a Lover by J. R. Planche or
The Rough Diamond by Buckstone.

This stream led ultimately to the more lifelike social comedy of Tom
Robertson, which, as Watson concludes, was not so much something new as the
pulling together of progressive tendencies which appeared diversely and often
alongside the older characteristics in the preceding comic drama. Still
Waters Run Deep is an example of such a play; anticipating Robertsonian
realism, that was performed in Barkerville. Its frank allusions to adultery
were considered very bold for the time, while a natural tone, diction and
subject matter are juxtaposed with artificial sentiments and conventionalized
behaviour in the discussion scene with Hawksley (with its references to con-
temporary attitudes and business affairs) and in the breakfast scene (in
which Mildmay eats, drinks tea, and asks Mrs. Sternhold to pass the cream and
the butter while she speaks in melodramatic hints and noble platitudes). Nor
do the juxtapositions lack irony and meaning.

An important component in the conflicting tendencies of these transi-
tion dramas was the gradual emergence first of the eccentric or "character"
role and actor, and then of the more individualized, unclassifiable figure
(in the sense of having character rather than of being a "character"), to-
gether with the prevalence of the old stock types. Again the "cool, quiet, yet shrewd and unfathomable" John Mildmay provides the most striking example. If the basic, defining situation of drama is always "that an image would be present," then insofar as the the unclassifiable, hence unpredictable, figure of Mildmay provides the pretext and motive force of the plot of Still Waters, the real subject of the play is to make present, out of the background of socially recognizable and determined types, this image of a more complex, differentiated, self-determining human, whose true essence and value cannot be assessed merely from his outward personality and given social background. The action of the play is the emergence and recognition of the new, self-made individual and of his claim to be accepted on his own merits. It is the imitation of an action archetypal of the modern age, with its myths of a protean humanity and a happy social and domestic home, exemplifying the conflicts and complications which the enactment of the one may cause in terms of the other unless their relative claims are clearly established and their codes and values adhered to. As will be seen, even earlier plays exhibit similar tendencies.

As Watson observes, the period from 1800 to 1865 gains a very special literary interest because of the "clash between conservative tendencies of 'legitimate traditions' and the new realistic principle, which was applied chiefly in the vulgar and 'illegitimate' forms of dramatic representation." In fact the progressive tendencies in the better plays lead well beyond Robertson; no less a dramatist than Bernard Shaw acknowledged their influence on his early comedy:

... the stage tricks by which I gave the younger generation of playgoers an exquisite sense of quaint unexpectedness, had done duty years ago in Cool As A Cucumber, Used Up, and many forgotten farces and comedies of the Byron--Robertson school, in which the imperturbably impudent comedian, afterwards shelved by the reaction to brainless sentimentality, was a stock figure. It is always so more or less: the novelties of one generation are only the resurrected fashions of the generation before last.
The plays Shaw refers to—the two mentioned by name being among those performed in Barkerville—were actually from well before the Byron—Robertson period for the most part, but that serves to confirm Watson's thesis. And in fact they also contain in many cases elements of sentimentality along with the impudence and unexpectedness, though it was not simply "brainless" in context.

It would seem that the "stream of dramatic life" was closely in touch with the stream of life in society at large, deriving from and reflecting it. Watson concludes that:

The authority and creative energy were unquestionably in the audience and in the conditions of the stage itself. It was as clearly the lot of the dramatist to follow and obey.22

Elsewhere he writes of "the young British democracy of those years attempting to find a satisfying amusement at the theatres," while Nicoll concedes that the popular authors were "pioneer workers" adapting modes of expression to the changing temper of the times. These suggest connections between the development of popular drama and what has been called the pioneering spirit of Victorian society, and between them and the literally pioneering and more radically democratic community of Barkerville. Nor was it only the progressive elements themselves that evince such meaningful connections; the very "clash" between them and the "conservative tendencies" indicates that the tensions between sentimentality and "critical mood," convention and realism, types and individuals, the mechanical and the vital, were expressive of the tensions and clashing tendencies of the age: old versus new, fixity and change, freedom and constraint, individualism and belonging, nostalgia and progress, and so forth. Literary and social history are indeed "no longer separable."

Nor are form and content, as recent criticism has demonstrated. It has also shown that much of what has been called faulty in these plays is itself endemic to comedy, such as type characters and stock plot devices. It has
been indicated, as with the heavy reliance of comedy on chance and coincidence and money in connection with the gold miner's reliance on them, that such components took on added significance in context. Comic drama by its very nature cannot ignore the contemporary and the social; its form and content soak them up like a sponge, become permeated with their realities and concerns, and so, by its relations with them it becomes infused with local meaning.

That a non-indigenous popular drama can be interpreted as meaningful for Cariboo audiences can only be made clearer by turning from generic and formal observations on the general repertoire to the discussion of particular plays. To avoid imposing interpretations it is necessary to employ an illuminating context that links the society of the plays and within the plays to that of the Caribooites. This is provided by the common myths and ethos culled from the motives and aspirations of the Caribooites and from the popular ideology of the age, the source of which was the very tensions and conflicting claims which the formal trends in the popular drama reflected.

It is only possible within the space of a chapter to discuss some representative plays, to exemplify how they enact some of the terms and implications of the myths of protean man and happy home through plot, character and theme. That the regular performance of drama in Barkerville emerged at a time when the largest number of people were attempting to live out these myths within Cariboo, in their wider socio-cultural-political terms as well as their economic ones, adds specifically local significance to the context.

*Fortune's Frolic; or, The Ploughman Turned Lord* presents the myth of protean man and that of the happy home in their earliest, sharpest, and simplest outlines, and for those reasons in the most sweeping and inclusive as well. A kind of folk tale fantasy, it uses the device of the chance inheritance, not as a hackneyed resolution but as an Aristophanic "happy idea:" an initial comic premise whose consequences constitute the play; it is
exactly the form of wish fulfillment that was a part of the motives of gold
seekers. The characters are fairytale or cartoon versions of idealized rural
folk, innocent before the fall of industrialism; they combine the virtues of
a traditional agrarian home with the protean urge to change their lot.

But this pastoral home is by no means edenic; their humble condition is
made harsh and less alterable as they live between two extremes of oppression:
the declining and decrepit feudal order, represented almost allegorically by
the deceased "Lord Lackwit, and the abuses of the rising capitalism, repre­
resented by the Steward, "Snacks," a latter economic schemer become economic
tyrant and the worst kind of self-made man--dishonestly made by feeding off
others. The comic premise of the inheritance mocks the absurdity of the
false premises that support the amoral and oppressive aspects of aristocracy
or capitalism: that the mere accidents of birth or the mere acquisition of
money (all too often equally fortuitous or unmerited) should make a man
superior and be used to set him above and against his fellows, to insulate
and isolate him from any moral responsibility towards them. Following the
counter logic of its own premise, that the very arbitrariness of good fortune
as wealth or position makes it morally imperative that they be used to extend
human welfare and fellowship, and supported by fundamental assumptions about
the nature of goodness and its relation to happiness, the play leads to a
utopian comic vision of a protean home for mankind.

Robin Roughhead, the good hearted title character, is an agrarian
descendent of Robin Hood and ancestor of the "rough but honest miner." At
the outset he, like the other tenants and farm workers, is downtrodden by the
malicious steward. The main motifs of the play are sounded in a minor key by
Frank, a young peasant who has studied agriculture and represents the self-
improving spirit and the hoped-for benefits of applied science. He wants to
lease a disused farm, but the steward, because of personal differences, has
used his manipulation of capital and legalities to bankrupt Frank in a long
litigation (another strong experiential reference point for Caribooites) and now threatens him with debtor's prison. Having begged in vain for the sake of his wife and children, Frank raises the ethical view that informs the play:

... my honest poverty is no disgrace; your ill gotten gold gives you no advantage over me, for I had rather feel my heart beat freely, as it does now, than know that I possessed your wealth, and load it with the crimes entailed upon it.\(^{28}\)

Virtue—the good—is identified as the only source of happiness, a dramatic truth that can be traced in English comedy at least as far back as Ben Jonson's "no ill can happen to a good man." The confusion derived from the utilitarian outlook, to the effect that the individual's pursuit of happiness was often assumed to be the chief source of the good, has of course all too frequently proved a source only of ethical wrongs and human misery (especially when happiness is narrowly defined as money and pleasure) and has rationalized all sorts of dealings.

After the scene with Frank, Snacks receives word that Lord Lackwit has left his entire estate to Robin, his legal heir by a clandestine marriage to a peasant woman (a comic redress of a besetting aristocratic sin not usually so legitimized). The steward plans to profit even more from deceiving the new lord, despite Robin's "devilish cunning," a trait he must be presumed to have inherited from his peasant mother. Robin's first reactions to the good news are the "Sancho-like exultation" and "harmless fooleries" permissable in a favourite of blind "Fortune," if not carried too far. He extravagantly declares that there will be no more work, only holiday for everyone, while anybody caught sober that day "shall be put in the stocks."

On his walk to the castle, which symbolizes the exercise of goodness as the sure road to happiness, he acts more constructively, by distributing money among the hard-pressed farmers. He also gives Frank, who had been kind to his ailing mother, the money to save his home. "Proud wealth," says the
grateful man, "look here for an example," but Robin, his natural ethical balance restored, replies:

... don't think of thanking a man for paying his debts. Besides, if you only knew how I feel all over me--it's a kind a--I could cry for joy.30

He then visits his sweetheart, Dolly, not to be forgotten in his altered existence. After a scene of rollicking farce in which he teases her by dumping the meagre food and cracked crockery onto the floor, he tells her the glad news, and relates the ideal of goodness as true happiness to the neutral power of money and its proper use.

Lord! Lord! I have heard people say as riches won't make a body happy; but while it gives me the power of doing good I shall be the happiest dog alive. 31

Components of the Sentimental Comedy and its "joy too exquisite for laughter," frequent in this early play, are to be seen in some of the later ones as well.

The second act, set at the castle, presents the efforts of the scheming steward to subvert the benevolent "lord of misrule" for his own purposes, including an attempt to divert Robin's affections to his daughter. But Robin is not "ashamed of my acquaintances as some people are," remains true to his Dolly, and quickly sees through Snacks, administering a comic beating which the latter had intended for a hapless servant. All is resolved when an aspiring bank clerk, originally betrothed to the steward's daughter, frightens him into confessing his thefts from the estate by means of the old ghost-in-the-portrait device.

With both couples reunited, Robin reasserts the moral and social ideals and, as a practical step toward their further implementation, he enlists the worthy Frank to serve as steward of the estate and to educate him, another protean ideal.

Robin. Now, then, Dolly, I am happy. With such a friend as Mr. Frank, Dolly, we shall know how to take care of ourselves and our neighbours--and I'll take care that poor folks shall bless
And the play ends with the prospect of a new and just commonwealth, with the good heart ruling, and assisted by, the educated head; science, technics and education directing the means of progress, and what is naturally good in man and his traditional folk wisdom directing the ends—a happy home for all.

Like most fantasies that picture the world as it ought to be, it ironically implicates the world as it all to obviously is—an intention borne out by the fact that the author, J. T. Allingham, was "an active operator in that busy region, the stock exchange." Yet a comedy "as you like it" also allows one to have his cake and eat it. Here the effect was enhanced by an identification with a figure embodying aspects of two early views of protean man and their social ideals; on the one hand there is the narrow but oh-so-appealing empathy with the transforming power of sudden wealth (inheritance—or stock exchange or gold rush); on the other there are distinctly discernible elements of the yeoman dream of a social order based on moderate prosperity made accessible to all, on industry, integrity and the prudential virtues, and on success as a trinity of competence, independence and morality.

These became contradictory aims and value systems with the rise of industrialism, laissez faire economics, and the other forces of nineteenth century life. But in the unspoilt "green world" and uncomplicated social relations of Fortune's Frolic, with only one easily expelled serpent in the garden, these are harmoniously united in the figure of Robin and the new social order that begins to form around him. He may be taken as a symbol of either the sort of the sort of protean philanthropist embodied in fact by a man like Robert Owen (with the fortuitous factors in his career analogous to the inheritance) or, collectively, of the yeoman dream, of the meek inheriting the earth in secular terms.

By mid-century, with the yeoman dream becoming an urbanized nightmare, and the philanthropic utopianism of an Owen having come to naught, it was
only in frontier areas, with unenclosed lands and the bounties of nature accessible to industrious and cooperative labour, that such dreams still held much promise for common humanity. In Cariboo the two visions were simultaneously attractive possibilities, with such ploughman turned "lords" turned benefactors as John Cameron and James Wattie ("the miner for the times") and with characteristics of an industrial-social democracy and increasing general prosperity and individual improvement, not to mention the hopes for Confederation. Thus, seventy years after its premiere, The Ploughman Turned Lord could have had only satirical meaning for most of English Society, but articulated in vivid colours and striking analogies the aspirations and strivings, personal and collective, of Caribooites.

None of the other plays, therefore, present such an inclusive social vision of a happy home for protean mankind. Some subsequent pastoral comedies, reflecting a still somewhat self-sufficient and idealized rural culture, do enact the two myths as coextensive, but only realizable in personal terms. Used Up presents them from the opposite perspective--the lord turned ploughman--and lightly applies them to the question of meaning and purpose in life. Sir Charles Coldstream, Bart., the "used up" young man of wealth and position, "bored to death" with life, represents an attitude expressed by protean mythologizers from Benjamin Franklin to Samuel Smiles:

The youth who inherits wealth is apt to have life made too easy for him, and he soon grows sated with it, because he has nothing left to desire. Having no special object to struggle for, he finds time hang heavy on his hands; he remains morally and spiritually asleep, and his position in society is often no higher than that of a polypus over which the tide floats.

For the man, whether on the rise or already risen, who confuses outward, economic with total, human worth, the end with merely one of the means, pleasure with happiness, his protean powers and possibilities are atrophied rather than enlarged. His life is less meaningful and he is as much a slave to money and idle pleasures as the unimproved "wage slave." He gains no
real respect, for that only inheres in socially useful work, no enlarged sense of freedom and self determination since those inhere only in the development and exercise of his capacities of mind and character. The play might almost have been written to illustrate these doctrines. Rickard's discussion of such problems afflicting successful gold miners of his acquaintance ("wine and women soon pall") and of the summit of their careers as the finding rather than the possession, together with the efforts of Caribooites to "live for something" through social and cultural enterprises, show that this play too would have had local significance.

Charles' social isolation at the outset is conveyed by a bored recital of restless travels through other lands--"... but they were all humbugs, there was nothing in any of them"--and by his restriction of human relationships to a clique of upper class parasites. His alienation even from his own earlier life and character is indicated by his inability to remember his childhood playmate, Mary, an embodiment of humble rural values and feminine virtues, or his former generosity to her father.

A desperate sense of his empty existence coupled with his mistaking of excitement for purpose and money for the means to achieve it, leads him to swear, "I'd give a thousand pounds for any event that would make my pulse beat ten to the minute faster." Thus he moves from passive amorality to active immorality in embracing that mischief of the idle, the spirit of his "friends," which spins the plot. Ironically it takes the form of a cynical sporting with love and marriage, and the object of it turns out to be the erstwhile victim of his companion, Sir Adonis Leech, who had once unsuccessfully tried to seduce the same woman by convincing her that her husband had been killed. Of course the supposed widow's husband now turns up alive in the person of Ironbrace, a blacksmith, who takes Charles for the wrecker of his home (victimization of the lower classes by the upper). In keeping with comedy's haphazard but moral universe, mischief recoils on the doer through
the equally irrational forces of chance and coincidence. In a fight between the two dangerously immoderate men Charles and Ironbrace both fall into the river and each is presumed drowned.

In fact both survive, each thinking he has murdered the other, and this comic death and rebirth heralds the character transformation (individuation) of Sir Charles. The comic metaphor of disguise is a literal enactment of the self-realizing process as he takes on the identity of a ploughboy with one of his tenant farmers, Mary's uncle; she loyally aids him in this, and her uncle has meanwhile been hiding Ironbrace in the cellar. Trial by water is followed by that of honest hard work as Charles, feeling that life is "beautiful" now, despite—or rather partly because of—his aching muscles, remarks on his change:

> When I was—what I was—that is, when I was myself—my table loaded with all the luxuries . . . I could not eat—the most exquisite wines yet I could not drink . . . Now I drink nothing but pure spring water, and it's positively horrible to think how I digest . . . It's curious—very curious. I haven't a moment to myself, yet I never feel ennui, I'm never bored—I'm never languid—I breathe—I live again—I exist! 43

The broken, staccato speech is expressive of his consciousness rediscovering itself, its vital springs, and its bodily nourishment; it is a psychological reintegration which is a form of rebirth. Renewed contact with simple joys, useful work, the earth; learning to live in responsible relation to others; the exercise of humble virtues and new-found capacities—all are components of his protean transformation, as is even his suffering of guilt and remorse for the supposed murder.

The latter is happily resolved after the two men finally meet in the darkness of the cellar and mistake each other for ghosts. In a last trial, when the new Charles, alive at his own funeral (another symbol of psychic rebirth) is "forced to preside at my own cutting up" during the reading of his will and accept the harsh post-mortem judgements of his worthless, would-be heirs on his old self, he finally finds the courage to throw off his
disguise, lay the former Charles to rest, and sever his false friendships. His new found worth in himself and in living has brought him to discover the formerly hidden worth, or lack of it, in others; in particular the recognition of true human value in Mary, with her recognition and cultivation of his own, leads to mutual love, the Victorian sacred jewel of complete selfhood, beyond price but accessible to all, if one but learns to seek it. This concludes his transformation, his redemption from cynical damnation, and officially and emotionally brings him back from the dead.

At the end Charles sums up what constitutes the real happiness and individuality of a person: the harmonious development and other-directed use of his protean faculties and the right valueing of the human ties that make a happy home.

I’ve found within this lowly farm what I’ve sought in vain amidst the dissipations of Europe—a home—yes, I’ve had a good lesson—man’s happiness after all lies within himself—with employment for the mind, exercise for the body, a domestic hearth, and a mind at ease, there is but one thing wanting to complete his happiness—the approbation of his friends, without which there is nothing in it. 45

Samuel Smiles could hardly have put it better; this time the hyphens express a patchwork of commonplace Victorian creeds, though nonetheless salutary ones for Caribooites—just as their poems and letters sought to remind them of the ends for which they should toil, and that "all of these are better than gold."

It has already been observed that the original prompting of Caribooites in their seeking of hidden worth in the ground was as a means of enabling them to mine and affirm the hidden worth in themselves, and of assisting in its recognition by others, as part of an archetypal impulse toward self-transformation (individuation—rebirth) awakened by a secular, materialist culture. In Used Up these were the substance of the comic quest and were held out as the bases for constructive and socially sanctioned change; the hero’s given wealth and station, like the inheritance, was a kind of dramatic foreshortening that threw the emphasis onto the inner quest without denying
either the importance or the complications of external worth. This discover-
ing of hidden or unrecognized worth in oneself and in others forms the main
theme of a number of plays and a minor theme in other ones. Usually, though
not always, it is embodied entirely within the standard comic motifs of
courtship, love intrigue, and marriage.

Yet the very haziness which makes such secular ideologies attractive,
and the vagueness of their applications in reality, raise problematic
implications even in the light treatments they receive in these plays, which
would have been intended mainly to present the gratifying attainment of the
mythic ideals in vivid stage symbols with minimal concern for logic-mongering
reason. Thus while the quests for inner and outer worth were not supposed to
be either mutually exclusive or identical, the contradictions and confusions
they gave rise to in actuality inevitably find their way into the plays.
They are not always easily or convincingly resolved, or embodied, given the
limitations of popular art and the formal problems previously alluded to.
Hence the thematic concern is more specifically limited to the difficulties
of recognizing human worth or having it recognized beneath the increasing
importance of economic standards and emphasis on shifting yet conventionally
persuasive social roles and personas, symbolized by the resurgence of
dramatic interest in disguisings of various sorts which Allardyce Nicoll has
noted as a feature of this period. If comedy generally satisfies the human
desire to "have it both ways," these plays reflect protean man's obsessive
concern with feeling loved—or befriended or respected—for himself alone,
while at the same time maintaining allegiance to the ambiguous "power to
assume a pleasing shape" and to the lure of gain.

Some of the darker implications of these issues are approached in The
Charcoal Burner, a form of psychological melodrama and the only example of
that genre to arouse the interest of the Sentinel reviewer. As the anguished
heroine asks, "is there no coming to the truth of a man's heart—is there no
seeing it?" a sentiment answered with more equanimity by a Cariboo humourist's assertion that if our breasts had transparencies there would be an uncommon need for curtains. But the play presents the problem in sombre relation to the evil consequences of the love of money, while not, however, denying the need to come to terms with money itself.

There was a time, too, I loved gold; but I loved it like a man--I was its master; but you, Matthew Esdale--you are its slave! 49

That enslavement has led to the murder of the speaking character's father for his gold, and in the instance of the law's inability to see the heart of the murderer beneath his altered name, surface and status, the old charcoal burner executes capital punishment himself in the name of just vengeance. The concern with the hidden heart of man reflects the growing interest in psychology and the unconscious: in two separate scenes a character is overheard talking in his sleep; in the first it is the unconscious wish, not acted upon, of the heroine's fiancée who is also the murderer's nephew and had learned of the long concealed crime; in the second it is the uncensored thoughts of the revenge killer himself. But in both cases the inadequacy of the perceptual tools of the material world in assessing inner worth accurately is shown up by the respectively mistaken and partial interpretations.

As noted earlier, the Caribooites' interest in such issues was not in terms of the moral extremes of melodrama, but rather in those of the relative social norms and problems of ordinary living which are amenable to comedy and society drama. In these the more serious implications of the acquisition of money are skirted; but even the established, legitimate possession of it creates difficulties, as it is felt to obscure inner worth and cast doubt on the sincerity of the avowed feelings of others. In Diamond Cut Diamond, for example, the eligible young heiress, in order to avoid being deceived about being married for love or for money, simultaneously protects herself and tests her suitor by putting on a cynical front and insisting that courtship
and marriage be treated in purely economic terms as a "joint stock venture"! Her two wooers try to test, and reveal for her, the value of their declared affections by means of a wager as to which can be first induced to leave the country estate and thereby forfeit the field to his competitor. One wins by instigating a fake duel with blank ammunition: his feigned death both causes his rival to flee and tests the heroine, who is forced to drop her cynical mask and reveal her true feelings for him.

This obsession with testing for hidden worth dominates the courtship and love intrigue plots—which are almost invariably carried on not against parents and other antagonists, but between the lovers themselves—in many of the one-act comedies and farces. In *Perfection; or, The Maid of Munster* the hero's vanity has led him to excessive expectations and a false and superficial sense of what constitutes human value in "the girl that I marry." His uncle is a sadder but wiser victim of the same folly who had rejected various otherwise suitable women in his youth because they were just a little too short, or fair, or thin; now he is too old and realizes belatedly that "there's no such thing as single blessedness; blessedness always comes double." The heroine, apprised by the uncle of his nephew's proclivities and his intention to "quiz her," replies:

Kate. . . . My fancy is this:—I will never marry until I have convinced myself that I am fondly, fervently, exclusively, and devotedly beloved!
Sir L. Well, what then? My nephew has only to take one peep at you, to be fondly, fervently, exclusively, and devotedly yours!
Kate. No, Sir Lawrence, one peep will not do—I would rather he disliked me at the first peep, and loved me afterwards, than that he should be over head and ears in love with me at the first interview, and scarcely ankle deep when I became his wife. Not wishing to be "trotted out like a steed for sale," nor to be loved only for her pocketbook or even her surface accomplishments, she tests him instead by feigning as many imperfections as possible. Only when he finds he loves her in spite of all and, feeling honour bound and sympathetic, vows to marry
her anyhow does she reward his discovery of her inner worth with the truth about her surface value. His "vanity has been humbled" and he now finds her perfect enough, "so much better than he expected."\(^{52}\)

One more example must suffice. The Loan of a Lover, an idyllic and charming "green world" comedy by J. R. Planche with debts to Marivaux, presents a cross-wooing between two pairs of lovers. The suitor of the heiress, who again protectively hides her feelings and undervalues his in the belief that she is testing him, and the peasant girl who loves the ambitious and industrious, but inhibited and unappreciative, farmer, engage in a pretended courtship which jolts the respective objects of their affections into recognizing their worth and admitting their own feelings.

Used Up, which goes furthest toward providing any thoughtful answers or practical solutions to such uncertainties and insecurities as the plays reflect, clarifies what is fundamentally at issue here. The cynical Sir Charles of the first act remarks to the penniless "widow" during his mock courtship that in "this money making age" "mere virtue" is "little enough" as a dowry.\(^{53}\) Later, in the midst of his change and in the first stirrings of love, he succumbs to the temptation of his former cynicism and doubts whether Mary loves him for his mere virtue (but recently acquired) or his mere money, the basis of his old identity and self worth. Testing her, and foiling his intended heirs, he secretly attaches a codicil to the will naming her instead, but then, still shaken by the harsh comments on him by the others, he mistakes her pretended insults to conceal his disguise as the ploughboy (symbolizing his still confused sense of identity) for a betrayal of his trust. The ambiguity of even concrete actions and other sensory clues in trying to test for hidden worth implies the ultimate insufficiency and unreliability of the values and perceptions of a materialist culture to detect mere virtue, as is the case with all the comédies of superficial testing. They use the love intrigue as a corrective to the material bias and
as a reminder that virtue belongs to a supra-sensory, non-material order of which "conquested love" is the crowning glory; it is precisely what must be set over and against the material order as the supreme court of values by which those of the other may be judged, not the other way round.

Only virtue can detect virtue, only love can find out love. In the final analysis the hidden worth in others can only be felt, and that is only possible if one feels oneself to have it, to share in it. This is the basis of Charles' lesson that "man's happiness after all lies within himself," in his power to discover and cultivate virtue. But his initial temptation to regress to his earlier cynicism occurs because what he is forced to encounter is his own former self-loathing founded on his own "original sin," both of which the cynical mask prevented his having to face. (The whole play is a striking example of the relation of modern drama—even popular drama—to therapy.) This condition had in turn derived from having built an insecure identity on a false and distorted sense of self-worth: the purely surface values of material wealth and status and the pleasure and excitement they can command. As a Cariboo poet observed,

How few there be who stop to think;
Who prize their being or its worth. . . .

The failure to prize his has led Charles to develop a false and distorted self, an ego too narrowly defined but also inflated at the expense of the rest of his personality; it both feeds on his potential being and mocks the meat it feeds on; lack of self-worth becomes self-loathing. Cynicism—or suspicion or insecurity or vanity, as in the other plays—is such an ego's projection of some degree of self-loathing outwards onto others, and thus it defends itself against self-awareness of its false and usurped position by hiding human worth in them and in oneself from conscious discovery, and by concealing its actual lack of it behind a protective, unfeeling mask, a false persona.
Love, or any other constructive human relationship, becomes impossible for such an unbalanced individual: he cannot see the value in anything because of the cynicism (or vanity, suspicion, etc.) and he cannot escape the cynicism without discovering the value which it conceals; it has become a vicious circle, a closed and partial mental system imprisoning the full needs and energies of the self, and the ego a jealous god guarding against any threat to its supremacy from without that might trigger a revolt within. The conscious attitude confirms itself and cannot be broken out of, only broken down (or "humbled," exposed, or jolted out of by others) in crisis. Charles' fight with the blacksmith is indeed an early comic treatment of an identity crisis; the river suggests the unconscious, the "death" psychological regression; the farm (back to the roots of his being, his childhood past) and Mary ("love's the best doctor") provide the therapy. His new, more substantial and genuine, self-worth is then tested by seeing himself as others see him: the self-loathing he had projected outward is reflected back at him. And finally comes the challenge of love.

Love, then, must ultimately be taken on trust and respect, but first one must trust and respect oneself, and for that one must have recognized and begun to cultivate virtues, the only basis for the ability to accurately detect the hidden worth in oneself and others. Finally, though, love demands, like religious certainty, some leap of faith from skeptical modern man—although a less drastic and forebidding one—and so does each relation to otherness. Charles, casting aside the devilish doubts of egotism and materialism, trusting to his belief in his worth and hers, makes the final leap in a kiss that significantly sacrifices his physical and emotional safety by exposing his disguise and his double vulnerability. So it is with all of the plays that deal with similar themes: the comic truth lies in the irony that those who presume to test the worth of others find their own on trial, and in the discovery that the only way of "coming to the truth of a
man's heart" is by coming to the truth of one's own.

Hence the psychological, moral, even spiritual validity of the Victor­
ian ideal that "love is best." For secular man it had become the one
universal certitude, and, as the higher virtues are felt to include the
lower, it became the goal to aim toward, the fixed compass point for all
constructive self-transformation and all happy relations with others (home in
its widest sense). By the extensibility of the wide-ranging conception of
"conquered love" into all human efforts and dealings, it was the one sure
touchstone for personal, emotional, ethical security and for secure, felicit­
ous social relations. As John McLaren had expressed it in the Cariboo
Sentinel, love in this encompassing sense comprised all that made life worth
living; it meant to "live for something" beyond egotism and acquisitiveness.
It alone, with its constituent virtues, could re-focus the vital energies and
free them from the temptations of individualism or "worldly selfishness"
which confined and distorted protean man and isolated him from happiness in
others. It could help people fit themselves for the two components of true
individuality which the two myths held out: the being as becoming of the
protean existence (secular "rebirth"); and the being as belonging of the
happy home (earthly "heaven"). Love was thus at the heart of the secular
religion, the nexus of its popular myths, the core and crux of their
harmonious realization and of the resolution of tensions and conflicting
impulses between them.

This context of convictions is what gave these comedies of love their
generalizing force and codifying relevance. The largely male audience in
Cariboo could enjoy a vicarious experience of love in its purely romantic
sense, as a pleasing and cautionary promise of future "double blessedness."
Yet Cariboosites were also perfectly aware that even without that particular
form of it love had social meaning and personal "survival value."
Though love be spurned, let life be crowned
With virtues from its social deep,
And more be learned by wisdom found,
While woes and cares are fruits we reap. 55

The poem is appropriately called "Trust," and certainly their cooperative mining and their convention of "the rough but honest miner" imply the need for trust and a small leap of faith in human worth. Yet in a gold mining country they also found it necessary at times to reaffirm the foundations of such assumptions, and they would certainly have recognized that the insecurities centred around money, disguises, and testing in the love relationships of the plays stood for a general anxiety about the extent to which modern economics and the protean impulses had irrevocably complicated the entire field of human relations for everyone.

The one-act farces of mid-century have been called "comedies of no manners," and so they are in that, being critical comedy, the plays in this group present their aspects of the common ideology in a largely negative light: the "how not to" of modern social behaviour in contrast to the positive emphasis of the self-help gospels. The humour derives generally from exaggerated "type" characters or egotistically unbalanced individualists, whose conduct, based on misapplications of old or new values, is ludicrously incongruous in degree or in kind. Mostly given urban or urbanizing settings, the best of them reflect the real societal confusions arising from people of different classes and backgrounds flung increasingly together with increasing mobility and from shifting interpretations of the secular myths and their desirable enactment. All of these conditions were certainly present in the melting pot of Cariboo, and so was the necessity for the multiple viewpoints, socially derived conventions, and audible audience consensus of comic drama.

Two plays already described in connection with the first Theatre Royal exemplify such characteristics. Mad as a Hatter parodies the "smatter" knowledge of misdirected self-education, the ignorance of those for whom it...
remains a closed book, and the mere pedantry that may mark the specialized professional authority; all are viewed with equal distaste as imposing their narrow standards of normalcy on the spirited individual. D'Ye Know Me Now? presents in the small figure of the commercial traveller the concern with business success and mobility, in which aggressiveness, competition and monopoly were eroding the earlier faith in industry and the prudential virtues, represented by the grocer.

A more witty and ambivalent expression of the bad manners of protean man is Cool as a Cucumber, which caricatures the kind of character improvement supposed to better one's "prospects in life." Shaw perceived in the leading character some of his own assertive self-made persona:

The hero was a young man just returned from a tour of the world, upon which he had been sent to cure him of an apparently hopeless bashfulness; and the fun lay in the cure having over-shot the mark and transformed him into a monster of outrageous impudence. 57

Having met a young Englishman briefly in Europe and glimpsed the name and address on his cigar case, Plumper shows up at the London home, hoping to opportunistically benefit by bringing the wealthy father news—all fabricated—of his son. He manages at least to cadge a meal and meanwhile rearranges the furniture to his own superior taste, tells the father, Barkins Senior, all that is "wrong" with the house, comments on his age, asks about his income, and commits other effronteries that alternately astound and offend that model of middle class decorum. Barkins' anxiety for word of his son is all that restrains him from throwing the rascal out. Blithely insensitive to the effects of his conduct, Plumper actually makes periodic apologies for still being too shy: "but I'll shake it off. I'm determined." 58

After some attempts to kiss the maid he decides to woo the old man's niece, purely from monetary motives.

Well I'll follow my old governor's advice and put a bold front on matters; besides, it's very well known that the bolder a man is the more he pleases the women. 59
He fails to please either of them, but as soon as he hears that Barkins plans not to give his niece a penny he loses interest anyway. For her, as a good many Caribooites had known, "dependence is indeed a hard condition." The son, it turns out, is in love with his cousin and had been sent away to forget her in favour of a lady of superior status and means, picked out by his father. When Junior, secretly returned, sneaks into the house there is some initial confusion as Plumper thinks him a burglar, but it is soon revealed that he had never even met the son, only a man who had found his lost cigar case.

By way of amends, Plumper resolves the complete deadlock between father and son in almost Pirandellian fashion by ringing down the curtain, joining the audience in front of it, and forcing the father to grudgingly relent.

Many of the plays end similarly, with characters stepping out of the play, whose conflicts are not so much finally resolved as put a stop to pro tem and thrown back into the audience to resolve in life. This has been called carelessness, but it might more profitably be seen as a crisis of available dramatic form, reflecting also the unresolved flux and tensions of modern society, with the old conventional bottles threatening to burst with the new wine of the very real social stresses of the age, which are thrust into light comedy and farce almost by default, given the excursions of other forms of popular and literary drama.

Plumper, in keeping with these artistic and social tensions, is an ambiguous figure: on the one hand he is ridiculed and apparently criticized for his immoderation and his gross insensibility to others and their standards of civility; on the other, his energy, cool determination, and pluck contrast with and show up the variously stodgy, pallid, and spineless qualities of the other characters and the bloodless, inflexible proprieties of established society. Clearly he heralds the aggressive vitality of the brashly informal, opportunistic urban "new man" to whom the future belongs. In so far as his character change has "overshot the mark" he seems
chaotically uncontainable and threatening; yet there is the implication that overshooting is better than undershooting, and to the extent that he is in control of situations and manifests an exhilarating freedom and individuality beyond the conformable type characters he invites identification, even a measure of approval.

This is true of the more individualized characters in many of the plays, similarly threatening to burst the confines of typified stock figures and conventional situations just as those did who were seeking individuality outside the theatre—especially those who came to Cariboo. Some of the tensions and ambiguity discerned here are indigenous to farce itself: Bentley emphasizes its tendency to allow us to identify with the enjoyment of the socially forbidden without fear of consequences; Esslin stresses its expression of social anxieties. It seems likely that the dialectic of farce is essentially compounded of the interplay of both elements, and thus its relevance to the Victorian period, with much of modern society in transition or formation.

Another protean motif that occurs in this play and in a number of others is that of the given name. Plumper, in his tendency to impose himself on others, calls the maid "Susan"—a generic, stereotyped one for her class and occupation—and persists, refusing to believe it is Mary. He of course has no less than six first names, each invoking a great man of the past and suggesting the multiple possibilities his parents, and now he, feel are open to him. In other plays the context is that of a character who has changed, or is preoccupied with changing, his name. In To Paris and Back for Five Pounds it is because the man's name is not high class enough for the woman with whom he desires a liaison; in A Regular Fix the given name sounds ludicrous and undignified to him, and he fears not being treated with respect therefore; in The Limerick Boy Paddy Miles wants to escape the reputation for trouble that precedes him in his new home. This motif could hardly have been
dramatically common or meaningful in a previous age of geographical, occupational and social fixity. In one of the opposite tendency, yet still marked by strong socio-economic distinctions, the answer to "what's in a name?" was plenty. It too is an ambivalent device: it symbolizes the understandable dissatisfaction of many people with society's definition of them, their given role and identity, and implies democratic impulses; but it may also be a metaphor for dishonest concealment of a shady past, a personal transformation made at others' expense, or even crimes as in The Charcoal Burner, and Uncle Zachary, and it often reflects a concern with merely superficial improvement. This motif also had a special significance in Barkerville, where changed names and nicknames were common.

Another motif that figures in several plays is the fake duel employed in conflicts between shifting standards of conduct. Slasher and Crasher deals with a guardian of the old military code of manly honour refusing the betrothal of his nieces to a pair of sophisticated new urban types, one of whom has declined a challenge to a duel while the other belongs to an anti-duelling society. They try to humour him by staging a duel with blanks, which he immediately sees through. One of the young men, having imbibed too much "dutch courage" beforehand and now becoming enraged at the other for his silly scheme, he chases him into the parlour with a sabre and the duel then begins in good earnest with much destruction of furniture and terror for the ladies. Finally they turn on their real antagonist and give the old militarist a comic beating until he consents to the marriages.

What this meant is clear enough: the old feudalistic code of honour is ludicrously out of place in a current, respectable, middle class society where men live by brain not brawn and standards of manliness are changing. Such methods of settling disputes, if imposed on a crowded, pluralistic, urban community, must result in violence and anarchy. The duelling code of honour is also mocked in A Regular Fix and Diamond Cut Diamond, and of course
in *Still Waters Run Deep*, where the leaning on military titles is exposed as a frequent fraud and the use of weapons as cowardly bullying.

In Barkerville, where gun play was virtually non-existent, such British comedies, together with the dominance of British justice and cultural influence generally, may have helped to reinforce a consensus that accounts for a major difference from the American west. Indeed, Harry Jones recounts the use of the fake duel when a dispute brought two otherwise devoted partners to edge of violence. One proposed a duel with shotguns, since no one carried a revolver, as a means of saving the pride of each, and then he secretly loaded the guns with oatmeal. It turned out that his partner could not bear to pull the trigger anyway and mutual, tearful apologies followed.

It is a fascinating verification of Kenneth Burke's theory of art as strategies for living.

*Good For Nothing* and *The Rough Diamond*, both written by the famous comedian John Buckstone, and particular favourites in Barkerville, comically pose the question of socially acceptable standards of behaviour within the specific areas of self-improvement and self-culture. Behind the humorous contrasts of the rough but honest heart and the polished but deceptive surface, lie common Romantic and Victorian assumptions about nature and society, the merits of the natural versus the cultivated man, and the protean mythology's concern with constructively changing one's shape without sacrificing or belying one's essence, losing one's soul as it were. In the terms of contrived social situations and simple characters, these plays and others express an interest in the desirable proportions and relative value of each of the conflicting claims.

In *Good For Nothing* natural mankind is embodied in the sexually blurred and collectively evocative figure of the tomboy, Nan, an orphan who has been raised, after the drowning death of her grandfather, by two old friends, Harry and Tom (the latter, topically, a railway engineer). Rustic descend-
ents of Terence's *The Brothers* and suggestive of a couple of mining partners, they cannot agree on how to "correct" her behaviour, largely because they themselves are contrasting examples of good hearted but emotionally uncontrolled types, the one always starting off in calm, rational tones and ending in angry shouting, and the other just the reverse. Says Charley, the voice of moderation and constructive, creative human improvement,

she is left to run about as wild as a colt, is taught nothing, while her manners and language are neither those of a girl nor a boy. 64

The conflict—and comic contrast of extremes—is with Young Simpson, the landlord's son and a man of prissy, priggish, over-refinement as opposed to Nan's unfeminine crudeness. It is turned into actual class conflict by Simpson's snobbishness: he wants to evict them because they are not "respectable," which he defines not as "honest, hard working people," but rather as "people who pay the rent promptly and are never seen in an alehouse." And due to some unfortunate circumstances and their own generosity they do not have the rent money.

Charley, who tells Nan that "I could improve you," describes his sister's ladylike dress, manners and accomplishments as models of socially approved worth, outward form enhancing inner substance. Because of her affection for Charley he represents that social approval which matters to her, and Nan begins to see herself from his point of view:

He said he admires her—is very fond of her. I don't think anybody will ever admire me, and I begin to fancy I don't admire myself much. 67

She transforms herself by washing, grooming, and dressing in the neglected feminine attire Harry and Tom had bought for her, and by trying to speak and act more "genteel" (the influence of this play on Shaw's *Pygmalion* is unmistakeable). The change is striking enough that Tom and Harry do not recognize her at first.

Her improvement is substantive too, as she no longer wants to feel
"that I'm no use to anybody, no good for nothing." She affirms her inner worth, hidden by the rough exterior, when she takes the money set aside for her future training, to pay the rent and validates the revitalizing force of spontaneous natural impulses when it is learned that she has saved a child from drowning while the more socially staid people hesitated. Despite the crudity of this device the play suggests again that the way to see into the heart of man is through the other-directed, self-denying, action, which paradoxically most fully affirms the value of the individual. As Tom says, democratically, we all have that good nature at bottom, and therefore "none of us need be good for nothing." 69

Nicoll has observed that Rousseau "still lays his hand" on such plays; but it is actually both hands, the apostle of education and human improvement as well as that of man's natural goodness. Her eventual marriage to Charley announced, Nan says, "I'm afraid I shall have to be changed a great deal before that can happen; but I'll do my best to deserve every good that can come to me." Charley's sister (whom he had set up in a shop) will teach her dressmaking, and he will teach her to read. The play ends with a statement of the ideal creative interplay of nature and culture, improvement and fixed essence, in the making of true individual worth. Aptly it is expressed by Tom, the illiterate but good hearted parent in whose home such natural goodness blossomed, the essential precondition for any really constructive, substantive self-transformation.

Many of our choicest flowers were wild once; and when Nature does so much, I maintain we ought to help Nature wherever we can, and do as much in return. We've found out Nature's done something for Nan, and so we are going to do something to help Nature, an't we Nan? Of course. 71

For Caribooites, whose library boasted two sets of Rousseau's complete works; who had initially had to meet the challenge of nature with their own natural capacities; who believed natural resources ought to be developed not just exploited, and that human resources were the most valuable a country
possessed; and who were attempting to civilize the nature without and within, this play would have had the force of analogy, or even allegory. Cariboo's honest, hard working people also felt themselves not treated as "respectable" by their colonial "landlord," yet they had saved the infant colony from bankruptcy.

The strong strain of sentimentality in Good For Nothing and many of the other plays brings us logically to the subject of home, for where one is, in this period, the other cannot be far behind. Although the influence of the natural home environment on character in this play is in one sense part of that stream of dramatic life anticipating the later interests and techniques of realism, the treatment here is idealized, positive, and, above all, sentimental. Before looking at the plays it is important to bear a few things in mind concerning home as it was popularly conceived and its relation to sentimental and comic treatment.

As was noted in the first chapter, modern economic man, because of the very forces of material change that produced him and his protean mythology, experienced a profound and increasing sense of homelessness. Secularization produced a gradual second "fall" from grace; in return for the fruits of the knowledge of his transforming powers and potentialities, the individual suffered a progressive banishment from age-old ways of life—divinely sanctioned and traditionally ordered—and a progressive erosion of the deeply rooted sense of innocence and security they had provided. The new environments—apparently incomprehensible, alienating, chaotically or arbitrarily ordered—created a correspondingly deep-rooted sense of loss and uncertainty, which, being bound up with socio-economic progress (desire for gain is inseparable from fear of loss), reached progressively aggravated intensities of regret (about what was past or passing) and anxiety (about what was yet to come).

Innocence and security must be understood in the widest connotations,
not only the ethical and financial, but also embracing the emotional and spiritual, domestic and social authority and stability, continuity of identity, and the whole experience of being as belonging. Thus it involves home in its widest associations as the sum total of human ties and relationships. Because of the polyvalent and socially extensible significance that had become attached to the symbol home in the Victorian era the responses of the individual and the society were roughly parallel: both found it difficult to maintain or recapture their sense of innocence and security in the harsh and shifting world of economic imperatives and material standards and goals, not to mention in the face of the dirt, disease, vice and crime of the urban scene. Death, too, became more visible, more frequently premature and from unnatural causes, and, shorn of much religious and moral consolation, loomed larger and more oppressive. Anxiety and regret could easily grow into fear and guilt.

Sentimentality would seem to take its stimulus from just such anxiety and regret and, through a selective and fond identification with objects and figures evocative of innocence and security, to provide a catharsis of the former feelings and a renewed sense of contact with the latter. Sentimentality is thus co-original with the sanctification of man's secular home and the weakening of faith in his spiritual one; its rise is co-extensive with the growing experience of a threatening or loss of the secular home and its values which was one of the products of industrial capitalism. The sentimental response, like the comic one, has become one of the most characteristic responses of modern culture. Just as the secular individual, with the passage of time and in light of accelerating change and the temptations and pitfalls of experience, has increasing cause to feel loss and uncertainty, anxiety and regret, so does society as a whole; we are probably more, not less, sentimental than the Victorians, though we ignore or conceal our own and laugh at theirs. In any case, some simple understanding of the
phenomenon is required if the significance and functions of the drama and theatre in Cariboo are to be comprehended.

Victorian society, then, found the mass of people, in terms of their personalistic mythology, living between two sentimental ideals of a happy home. One was the happy home of childhood, a sentimentalized, secular "eden" and part of the larger garden of the past from which economic mankind found itself increasingly banished. It was associated with the source of man's fixed essence, his soul, manifested in the natural goodness believed inherent in the child, and in the collective childhood of humanity in—or at least close to—the state of nature. As the source also of substantive, traditionally sanctioned values and codes, of accumulated folk wisdom, it was the repository of all that is to be held sacred and held onto amid the confusions of the economic order and the material pursuit of something better. At the other end of this latter day "pilgrim's progress" was the happy home of the protean man, future goal of his restless strivings and a hopeful haven from the storms of life. It was the earthly "heaven" or "paradise regained," with innocence and security transformed into social respectability and economic stability, based on propriety, status, and secured by means of improvement codified by the protean myth-makers. Thus these various myths and their values were ideally inseparable and complementary components of man's total happiness and complete individuality, the starting and end points that marked a sure and steady progress through the uncertainties of modern life. They were held up as guiding lights to his secular salvation in a secular religion, supported by their appropriation of Christian terms and analogues.

In practice of course the claims and impulses of this holistic mythology were most often misapplied and conflicting, as we have already indicated, and as such errors are germane to comedy and such conflicts to drama, and as the vague ideals required the concrete embodiment that theatre
can provide, so it is these aspects of home that most often find their way into the plays. If secular myth transposed the Golden Age, or Eden, from the past to the future and its creator from God to man, his desires and powers, its full possibilities could be entertained only by the visionary thinker or poet; the mass of humanity and its popular dramatists could do so only in terms of what in the present was still visible of happy homes of the past and could be glimpsed of the promised ones of the future. In the world of the plays under consideration the past or childhood home was identified with and represented by the natural, humble home of the farmer or artisan, and the future, protean one with the cultivated, respectable and comfortably elegant home of the rising middling, or risen, upper, classes.

These typifications were useful "stand-ins" insofar as they suggested the general outlines and directions of the popular mythology and loosely corresponded to current experience; to that extent they were treated with dramatic realism. But to the extent that, as compromise versions of ideals or dreams, they were perceived as flawed, insufficient, or inappropriate to the demands either of reality or myth, then they are treated in terms of the comic outlook and response: exaggeration of faults, critical detachment, and the laughter provoked by incongruity between the ideal and the actual. And to the extent that one or the other form of home approximated those ideals and/or appeared to be corrupted or threatened by the forces of reality and the claims of the protean myth, then they are presented in terms of the sentimental attitude: fond exaggeration of virtues, uncritical identification, sympathy and pathos. These treatments may also involve the opposition of the two symbols of home themselves, with the one found comically wanting in the face of the other sentimentalized version; they may even involve a similarly contrasted portrayal of different aspects of the same version of home in plays with a more complex and ambivalent outlook.

One or other of these conceptions of the happy home—or even both—
occurs in each of the plays already discussed. **Fortune's Frolic**, because of an earlier, pre-industrial social order and the notion of man's collective transformability into a utopian, yeoman meritocracy, is able to present mankind's humble home as continuous with, made over into, the protean ideal. In **Used Up** the "lowly farm" where Sir Charles' egotism is humbled and he finds a home makes clear that the convention was not meant literally and that the "humble home" stood for what was natural and good in anyone's childhood home (here it is the scene of Charles' forgotten childhood play, friendships, and youthful good deeds); even more broadly it stood for the ultimate, historical and historical and generic, origins of all humanity in an age searching for, or clinging to, its roots, and the aristocrat, by the same conventional language, represented life at its most attenuated, most drastically out of touch with those roots.

In the plays of love intrigue as the embodiment of the difficulties of discovering true human worth, the middle or upper class "happy home" is glimpsed or implied in the resolutions as the reward for right recognition and constructive self-change, in the announced marriage to be based on respect and conquered love. Nor are the contemporary incarnations of past and future happy homes always presented sentimentally. The real shortcomings of the lowly farm in **Used Up** are mocked in the figure of Mary's uncle, who unwittingly acts as a petty tyrant to his own master disguised as the ploughboy, though of course this irony cuts both ways. In **Two Heads Are Better Than One** the humble home of the artisan father has been corrupted by money as the old man scornfully rejects the self-improved and virtuous, but also penurious, young man loved by his daughter and tries to marry her off instead to the personally worthless son of a wealthy relative. Symbolically the father is ludicrously near-sighted and symptomatically the conflict is only resolved by the "deus ex machina" of the sudden inheritance. On the other hand, the middle class home of the once protean, but now inflexible, Barkins
Senior of Cool as a Cucumber, is just as narrowly materialistic and as confining of the aspirations of its younger generation.

It remains to consider two main groups of plays, not so far discussed, in each of which one of the conventions of the happy home, with its inherent difficulties and conflicts, is given central emphasis. The protean one is presented in mostly urban-centred comedies and farces, in which the hero is neither aristocrat nor peasant dramatically transformed in wealth or character, but rather the already established professional or business man, exemplars of accessible if unexciting self-made success; the heroine is a suitably attractive and refined mate. Stage directions invariably describe an elegantly or fashionably appointed scene and costumes. In keeping with what are essentially comedies of married life, home is personified not by extended family relationships but by the basic middle class unit of the married couple, harbinger of the modern nuclear family.

Despite this self-sufficiency and financial security, the felicity of "double blessedness" heralded at the ends of the love intrigue comedies is either prevented or threatened in these dramas by the inability of characters to strike a balance between their allegiance to protean strivings and to marital demands. This condition is aggravated by a too narrow definition of the claims of each and by an excessive Victorian concern with surface propriety and decorum at the cost of inflexibly masking or repressing valid needs and feelings. The assumption of the married role has itself become a form of disguise in such plays. The obsessive or "humours" character stands for the identity based on too restricted a sense of protean goals or home requirements, and the comic intrigues now revolve around the secrets, deceptions, and frustrations that are the flaws beneath the respectable surfaces of such homes and which hint at more serious underlying anxieties about marital fidelity and sexual security. Thus the tone of the plays depicting this "trouble in paradise" is lightly realistic and mocking, even
slightly cynical, with only a touch of sentimentality at the close, amid
promises of a happier home in the light of old errors repented and new
understandings affirmed.

A Kiss in the Dark is a typical example. Frank, a friend of the
Pettibones and a former fiance of the wife, has been leading a protean life
of adventure and bold enterprise in America, sending exotic gifts to her.
His visit now heightens the jealous insecurity of the husband, who worries
that his quite unglamourous business success must render him comparatively
uninteresting and unattractive to her. Seeing Frank kiss his wife's hand
drives him into an ill-concealed frenzy. Foolishly seeking "ocular proof,"
he puts out the light and in going out to relight it daubs some ink on Mrs.
Pettibone's cheek; she, well aware of his jealous intent and desirous of
teaching him a lesson, lets the rather lacivious Frank kiss her.

Returning and finding the spot on Frank's cheek, Pettibone reacts
predictably and drags his wife out to a mirror to confront her with the
"evidence." Frank then takes the opportunity of kissing the maid, which
leads to further outbursts and the final collapse of social decorum, signi-
fied again by an intended duel. Mr. Pettibone, returning with pistols, makes
a final error in thinking a strange woman, just arrived in cloak and veil, is
his wife about to run off with Frank, but she turns out to be Frank's wife--
a marriage he had kept secret for all too obvious reasons--and all is
cleared up. Mrs. Pettibone is glad to have a husband less dashing but more
faithful, while he vows to be more trusting and attentive.

To Oblige Benson treats similar themes in the home of a prominent and
ambitious barrister, who neglects his wife and his own personal development
and social identity by excessive devotion to his profession. He avoids his
responsibilities by allowing an interested male friend to be her social
escort, thereby unfairly redoubling her temptations. Poor Pillicoddy treats
the conflicts from the counter perspective: a successful but too complacent
merchant expends so much time and energy doting on his wife that even she finds it tiresome and his business is jeopardized; this extreme, like that in the previously mentioned play, leads to an insecure self and thence to jealousy.

The farcical ambivalence of social or domestic anxiety and the vicarious enjoyment of forbidden pleasures is related in these plays to Victorian sexual inhibitions, and, given their much lower threshold of erotic suggestiveness, it may be assumed that adultery is being implied in the stolen kiss, the stepping out of wife and friend, and the marital secrets and deceptions: "a nod is as good as a wink . . . ." How much winking went on in the largely male audience of Barkerville could only be conjecture, but the evidence of sexual licence or frustration common to the frontier, of the original desire of some to escape Victorian over-repressiveness at home, and of the gradual increase of family life and respectability in Cariboo all go to indicate that these plays had specific if variable meaning. Still Waters Run Deep, which also contains most of the themes and motifs so far discussed, can perhaps be most accurately placed with this group of one-act plays: it is a more expansive and serious dramatization of the same sort of domestic situation and social and marital problems, and the adultery is directly broached in the near seduction of the wife and the actual one of her aunt by Hawksley—the false and predatory protean man. Surface conventions and inhibitions more drastically disguise the characters' actual nature and value from each other in that play, and more dangerously isolate them and block communication.

It is in the domestic dramas that the humble home is treated most expansively and idealistically. Unlike the comedies of middle class marriage they embody the home in the extended family relations of parents and children, uncles, nieces, grandparents, and so forth. Even where the conflicts are centred in the family group, however, they are initiated and fuelled in these full-length plays by larger social forces beyond it and
directly impinging on it: economic circumstances, class distinctions, the
pernicious influences of the city, and the competing claims of the protean
mythology. Thus the common theme of the plays is the humble home threatened
from without and consequently weakened or divided within; nor is the threat
merely to its surface stability and felicity, but to innocence and security
and its very survival. The conflicts are worked out through the motifs of
natural goodness corrupted or impugned and exile or enforced separation.
Resolutions are dependent on chance contrivances, which, unlike those of the
comedies and farces, have an air of Providence (and perhaps did for desper­
ate writers too). And whereas the comic happy endings are at least partly
ironic, the skin-of-the-teeth resolutions of these plays are overtly
sentimental, and though they contain promised marriages the emphasis is on
the tearful family reunion with innocence and security reestablished amid
apologies and forgiveness all round. The sentimentality itself, however,
implies an awareness—less ironic than bittersweet—that the forces and
tensions that really were threatening lower class homes were in actuality
not so easily or often overcome. The tone of the plays is a mixture of sober
realism with elegiac affection and gentle humour.

In *Uncle Zachary* Saul Clench is the protean individual as the self-
taught and naively ingenious inventor, the industrial era's one genuine folk
hero. His older brother Zachary personifies the innate practical wisdom and
stability of the agrarian folk in the form of the natural, unimproved man,
vulgar but vital and good-hearted withal. The lure of the city and its
fabled opportunities for the "rising man" and the obstacles to his daughter's
marriage due to the lowly family origins—plainly represented by Zachary and
his "'old 'ooman"—cause the painful breakup of the rural home. But after
some misunderstandings arising from the citified airs assumed by Saul and his
daughter and the injured pride of Zachary, the play ends with Zachary
rescuing his brother (out of his depth in the urban world of sly finance) from debt and cannily exposing the false social pretensions and personal baseness of the haughty in-law. The two essential sides of man, nature and culture, are reconciled in a happy compromise of brotherly partnership and humble and protean home.

Chimney Corner and The Porter's Knot employ a motif suggestive of "the prodigal son." In the first play he is falsely impugned by the son of his employer, jealous of his upstart ambitions, for having stolen some money entrusted to him, and the family's little shop is threatened with financial ruin in consequence. Ultimately his innocence and the security of the humble home are rescued by the grandfather. In the second, the son, sent to London to study medicine by the cooperative endeavours of the family, is tempted by city vices and actually plunges the home into gambling debts which necessitate the return to heavy work of the retired porter. As the result of a sojourn in Australia, the son redeems himself and restores the family finances. Some erstwhile "black sheep" in Cariboo could have found personal relevance in this pattern.

Typical, too, is the use of biblical names and attributes. The old porter, who heroically shoulders his own heavy burdens along with that of his son's guilt (to conceal the truth from the mother), is aptly named Samson Burr. In Chimney Corner, Solomon Probity, the ancient grandfather, commits the only wise and purposive act: hiding the cash box, which can endanger the innocence of the young man and the safety of the home, in the chimney; thus he guards home and family against the uncertainties and pitfalls of the modern economic order from the corner to which he has been relegated, significantly the hearth of the home. Ostensibly senile, this symbol of atrophied folk wisdom can only be understood by the protean figure of the son, whose secular salvation depends on it. The father, founder of their new urban home, is named Peter, and the son, apostle of the new self-transform-
ing man, is John. More than the dramaturgy, often creakier than in the comedies, does this use of evocative biblical symbolism and archetypal motifs account for the force and popularity these plays had: it reinforces their quality of contemporary ethical parables; their affirming of the sanctity of the humble home and thus of man's original humility and the value of retaining it; and those natural continuities and the authority of the older generations as sources of morals, values and identities in a changing, unfamiliar, and skeptical social climate.

One last play is worth considering because it throws into sharp relief the desirable relationship, for the individual and society, of the claims of the two myths and the two conceptions of the idealized home; it thereby also clarifies the specific functions of the comic and sentimental portrayals of home for Caribooites. John Buckstone's *The Rough Diamond* begins where *Used Up* leaves off, with a marriage between the classes, and couches the above issues in the stock conflict of nature versus culture. Margery, a farm girl, has been elevated to the title of Lady Evergreen, Sir William having fallen in love with her sweet simplicity. Believing education to be "the panacea for every social ill," he "anticipated the pleasure of rightly directing her mind;" however, the strict, joyless regimen of hired tutors has left her little altered while his excessive preoccupation with abstract ideals and his unconsciously conventional attitudes have dulled his initial appreciation of her homespun virtues.

The plot turns on the visit of his uncle Lord Plato, who had opposed the marriage because "there must exist separate grades of society" and one cannot "make a silk purse . . ." But he is now smugly patronizing, having brought his new—and much younger—wife, and to Sir William's chagrin she is "accomplished" and "formed to adorn the rank she had gained." Margery's peasant earthiness and blunt honesty now drive him into agonies of embarrass-
ment. When he lectures Margery on the "usages of society" and how a "diamond in the rough" must be polished to be of value, she replies:

Well I speak according to my knowledge, and I know I always speak the truth, and what I want to say, without beating about the bush; and that's much better than being deceitful and making believe to be glad to see people when you really wish 'em at Jericho. . . . You may call it polish if you like, but I call it telling lies.75

As comic chance and convenience would have it, Lady Plato's original fiancé, Captain Blenheim, turns up as another guest; she had jilted him for her loveless "match with a title" ostensibly for her parents' sake. When the women, who had been playmates as children (though of different classes), are alone Margery's native wit detects that Lady Plato is not "happy in your mind." The cause is immediately apparent in an awkward meeting with Blenheim. Margery urges them not to conceal their prior relationship, but Lady Plato pleads social proprieties: "there are positions that exact great discretion from us;" and she leaves followed by the ever hopeful Blenheim.76

Margery, still uncertain, now receives a visit from her cousin Joe, who has left home on his way to a position in London and has "a kind o' sort o' notion of being a bit of a gentleman." She is hungry for news, for her husband had discouraged visits from her family "as he wanted me to forget all their ways." The scene that ensues, of reminiscence, reliving, and, finally, reenactment, epitomises the significance, regarding home, that much of the theatre, by analogy, would have had in Barkerville. Joe pours out cascades of images specifically yet typically redolent of home, and Margery several times invokes him, like a hazy image himself, to "come quite close and tell me." And he goes on to relate all the alterations in their village wrought by time, circumstances and emigration:

    Mar. And Harry Bacon, what's become of him?
    Joe. Gone to sea, because Mary Brown took up with a tailor what opened a shop from London. And you recollect Tom Hammer, the blacksmith?
    Mar. Yes.
Joe. Well, if he ain't gone and bought all Merryweather's pigs, I'm a Dutchman! And Merryweather's gone to America. . . .

Feeling "so free and easy again," Margery exclaims:

Oh, Joe, I can shut my eyes and see everything and everybody you've been talking about, oh, so plain! And to see you again does seem like old times! 77

Such a scene, with its mixture of mocking and sentimental references, of continuity amid change, was written for the sense of homelessness, separation and loneliness, together with irrational but undeniable and irrepressible yearnings for the old home and old times, which were increasingly symptomatic of the age. For the people of Barkerville, whose feelings of dislocation were explicitly magnified, the potential imaginative-emotional meaning through identification and association was explicitly doubled and paradigmatic of the general function of "auld lang syne" in their dramatic entertainments which symbolically began on a New Year's Eve.

Paradigmatic, too, is the subsequent reenactment of childhood memories, which, taking its cue from "old times," exemplifies the nature of the longing for home that was expressed in similar terms by many Caribooites. What Joe and Margery actually miss are "the twice told fields of infancy," the intangible innocence and security which the childhood home represents, and which it reawakens by concrete images capable of sentimental recall. The home she yearns for is gone or fast disappearing, irrevocably lost. But what is crucial to it is not the ability to physically return in presence, but the power to return in essence, in spirit, by imaginatively reliving that spirit and so keeping it alive in and through oneself; an identity with it by living out its symbols is a vital part of one's own identity, of the continuity (hence the stability) of the self.

Just as the real object of the yearning is to revive the spirit of innocence and security and a positive sense of self, so the source of anxiety and regret that prompt it in the play is the new home that isolates Margery
from all positive influences of the old one and, personified by her husband, seeks to change her form at the expense of her substance, to improve her by denying and repressing the sources of her personal worth, rather than enhancing and expressing it.

Their re-enactment of childhood games and relationships leads to a sentimental catharsis for the characters, and undoubtedly did so for the audience as well:

Mar. And were ever so happy.
Joe. Oh, Margery!
Mar. Oh, Joe!

(Joe catches her in his arms and kisses her.)

This is interrupted by her husband and Lord Plato, and just as they have misprised Margery's "being or its worth," so they misunderstand this sentimental renewal of innocence and security, as sentimentality is generally misunderstood by a society too concerned with superficial improvements and decorous appearances and by people excessively sophisticated and cynical. They mistake the embrace of a cherished soul ("like kissing my grandmother," Margery says) for that of a cherished body (ironically it is the cynical Lord Plato who is the likely victim of that). 78

Margery, however, has psychologically and morally validated her self for herself (and will do so later for her husband); that personal sense of uniqueness and value that stems from the mythic consciousness of an edenic childhood belonging and of one's original happiness as natural goodness, and which depends on her not forgetting "all their ways." She defiantly reaffirms all this by asserting:

I will be myself again, for since I've been married I feel as if my head, and my arms, and my legs were all put on the wrong way. And when I am myself again, if you don't like me I had better go back to my father—he'll be fond of me if you won't.

This reintegration of the self is symbolized and actualized by her putting on her "old country clothes again" and rejecting all the improvements that would personally impoverish her. 79
The healthy individuality and natural vitality that accrue from living out the myths and symbols of a happy childhood home are suggested throughout the play by her kindred feeling and care for flowers and animals and, more especially, by her contrast to the artificially constrained and unbending type characters who surround her—particularly the pallid Lady Plato—and who represent in context the stultifying and stunting effects of a society over-refined, too concerned with usages and positions, too superficially adult and artificially cultivated, losing its natural vitality and spontaneity, confusing true individuality with a conformable individualism; representing all that, in short, which Caribooites had left the homeland to escape from. Both Lady Plato and Blenheim, victims of a narrow social respectability, recognize this in admiring Margery's "natural gaiety of heart" and "animal spirits . . . proof against all temperatures." They, on the other hand, are "oppressed by sadness." 80

What the mythic-reality of an edenic childhood home also offers the individual and society is a reliable standard of ethical conduct. The middle class ideal of respectability and cultivation, by itself, only provides a surface gloss and a public morality which is relative and "situational." The difference from the absolute ethical standards derived from traditional influences, childhood lessons and natural goodness is indicated in the first scene in which Lady Plato rationalizes concealment. But in a second such scene Margery's re-adoption of her home-based identity now leaves her—and the audience—in no doubt of the moral superiority of her native wisdom. Lady Plato agrees to let Blenheim correspond with her as "a confiding friend to whom one may unfold the heart's dearest secrets" if he does so with "safety" and "propriety" and is "discreet," but with such words and in such a context it is clearly not a platonic friendship but a "discreet" love affair that is in the offing. 81

 Though she naively misses that implication, Margery is able to denounce
deceptive conduct in principle by identifying with and extrapolating from the old home truth, "O what a tangled web we weave. . . ."

Wouldn't it be better not to mind anybody knowing anything? Because it don't seem loving and cosy to be sly, and to be frightened every minute in case somebody should say something about somebody: that would make somebody else angry, and get everybody into trouble and set everybody quarrelling with everybody. I don't like it, Polly, dear! Where there's secrets there's no happiness, and no love—ah, and no goodness, if you come to that!

Honesty, happiness, love and goodness are all fostered and sustained, integrated into an ultimate value system, within the mythic unity provided by an edenic sense of home, of belonging, evoked here by the childlike syntax and sincerity. Margery's creed and code of conduct are vindicated—while Lady Plato's false "harmony" of inner and outer graces and the social discord they imply are shown up—by Sir William having overheard the whole scene.

In the final scene, after watching disgustedly as the other two go through the charade of a first meeting in front of Lord Plato, Margery and Sir William effect a new marriage contract, a union of nature and culture based on a mutual recognition of the claims of each. He admits that she will be "much happier" (and so will he) if "I leave you to follow the dictates of your own heart," whose "openness" he has come to respect. She will "try my hardest to be as you wish me, if you will but let me try in my own way" to improve without "forgetting all their ways," which is the only "sincere" improvement. Thus they plan the hopeful future happy home on the foundations of the childhood one.

There would seem to be an expressed ambivalence toward the influence of home in that Lady Plato's family had precipitated her loveless marriage. A writer of light comedy, by definition, will not wish to "go into that" too deeply. Still, it is clearly suggested that the constructive influence of home is defined to the extent that it encourages Margery to be true to the dictates of her own heart, and that its influence is seen as destructive and
to be resisted insofar as Lady Plato's home has led her to be false to hers, which in turn has made her social polish a mask for her heart's "secrets" (dictates repressed and perverted)--a falsification of a falsified self and a rationalization for immoral conduct. Nor is the distinction merely one of the literally humble home of Margery versus the status-seeking, middle class one of Lady Plato; the latter admits that she was tempted herself by the attractions of position and freely participated in the falsification. The dramatist obviously intends that the important thing is the "open" heart, which every child has at one point, when every home is "humble" ("Naked we come into the world") and "where the heart is."

There is a positive psychological acuity behind all this in that, unlike the psychoanalyst who urges one to rediscover the earliest, suppressed traumas of childhood, the popular mythmakers of this period encourage one to recapture and keep alive his earliest happiness, a primal experience derived from his natural goodness, or soul-essence, in an atmosphere of innocence and security; that time of origins in which home really is "where the heart is" and the dictates of the two reinforce and complement each other in a mythical unity. From that point of view what has been charged against sentimentality--its purely selective recalling of only what is best or most pleasant in childhood, family, home, to the exclusion of all else--is precisely what constitutes "sentimental value" and endows it, for modern, secular, economic man, with "survival value"--psychologically, imaginatively, socially, morally. Such plays as The Rough Diamond dramatize the secular version of the biblical injunction:

Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Without keeping alive something of the child of innocence and security, through sentimental identification with the mythic realities of childhood experience, protean man cannot be "happy in his mind" or hope to achieve the
earthly haven of a happy home; such is the valid and by no means unimportant 
message that runs through all the sentimentalism of the Victorian popular 
theatre.

The Rough Diamond, which the Sentinel called "an instructive little 
84 comedy," remains so for us as well, since it is emblematic of the value and 
meaning of the sentimental content of the Barkerville theatre. As the 
Cariboo poems and letters abundantly demonstrate, their longing for home was 
not a simple exercise in nostalgia (which is the purely aesthetic and amoral 
component of sentimentality); rather it was richly and unabashedly senti-
mental, as that term has been defined herein. It was a Cariboo poet who 
wrote:

As o'er these mountain wilds we roam, 85
How oft we think of early home!

In the light of the foregoing considerations and the paradigmatic 
quality of The Rough Diamond, one final assumption—though some may find it 
obvious and others undemonstrable—would seem to this writer both inescapable 
and essential for understanding the meaning and function of the drama in 
Barkerville. It is simply that in the Cariboo context—with both the absence 
that makes the heart grow fonder and the distance that makes for comic 
detachment immeasurably heightened—and with both dissatisfaction and longing 
expressed in their writings—every play was about home by virtue of being 
from the old country and being set there in locales more or less specific. 
Furthermore almost all were roughly contemporary or belonged to the recent 
and rememberable past. Most are set in domestic scenes, the rest in some 
common extension of man's social home: inn, store, village square, and so 
forth.

Therefore the simple dramatic embodiment of home thoughts from abroad 
in visual images, actions, dialogue—even a single familiar prop or costume, 
gesture or accent—would have inevitably been charged with associations,
general and personal. The variety of home settings in the plays as a whole—rural and urban, peasant, artisan, shopkeeper, decorously middle class and elegantly wealthy—ensured a multiplicity of vicarious experiences and models, whether of past homes longed for, future homes desired, or missing features which they sought to avoid or adapt for their adopted home in the new country.

Concerning character typifications and relationships we may assume a positive value for Caribooites in the familiarity of social roles, stock types and recurrent situations: this plus their sharp outlines and blurred features would have permitted easy projection of the spectators' collective archetypes. While the more individualized characters offered personal identification, the types allowed for the tendency, defined by Eric Bentley, of the spectator to substitute his own formative relationships for the figures depicted in the play. Nor should we ignore the potential for the vicarious enjoyment and substitution of features that could not be replaced in Cariboo life: thus, for example, concerning the figures of grandparents, there were no such roles or relationships in Cariboo. Indeed there were comparatively few parents and little family life; hence the added moral and emotional weight of the female character—wife, mother, sister or sweetheart—would have paralleled the use of such images in their poems.

As David Cole asserts, drama's unique power to bridge the gap of imaginative and physical truth resides in its ability to make present, in the production of a script, an "illud tempus" or "time of origins," a realm of eternally subsisting forms and relations. In the plays presented by the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association, the time of origins was that of the Caribooites themselves and their families; the realm was the home of their birth and of their ancestors. A significant function of the drama for them was as an extension of the best influences of those imaged homes, which were fondly sentimentalized and to be emulated, and of their worst ones, which
were comically ridiculed, to be banished with laughter from the new land.

Though it has only been possible to consider some of the general features of some of the plays, this has hopefully been sufficient to show the dramatic repertoire did have meaning for the lives of the people of Cariboo and to indicate some of the nature of that meaning. None of the plays is by any means a masterpiece, yet most of them, if not literary, are at least literate: they are coherent in language, plot and themes, and this very literateness, with what is known of the interest in learning and the varied social and educational backgrounds among Caribooites, must be counted among their pleasing and instructive functions. The Caribooites were not "thinkers" but they were generally thoughtful people, and similarly thoughtful were the plays they enjoyed.

Because the ears of the popular comic dramatists were close to the ground the plays as a whole enact the main creeds, codes and aspirations held out by the popular mythology of the time, which in its wider terms sought to provide a framework for a more balanced and happy individual and societal development. Drama alone could present these concretely and immediately while articulating them dialectically, allowing an evolving community consciousness to test out not only the claims of imaginative and physical truth, but also those within and between each of the common myths of concern, and to explore the practical consequences of their enactment in the comedically relevant terms of everyday social behaviour. The very use in many of the titles of traditional proverbs and Victorian commonplaces (The Rough Diamond, Cool as a Cucumber, The Head of the Family) suggests the folk art components and popularly accessible didacticism of the plays—modern parables for the secular ideology of economic man—as well as tensions between age-old and familiar elements and current aspects of a changing social scene, qualities which, as the next chapter will show, influenced those of the performances.
If the theatre is a place where "a society thinks in public in front of itself," then what the Cariboo audience thought about in their theatre, and how they did so, can tell us much about the nature, values and goals of their society. Thus the dramatic enactments of our past have important historical significance when viewed in an illuminating context; indeed the drama and the society each help to understand the other. As aspects of the formative myths which the popular drama celebrated and explored are still discernible in our culture, it may have contemporary as well as historical significance.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE CARIBOO AMATEUR DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION:
ITS COMMUNITY ROLE, PERFORMANCE QUALITY AND RITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

It must be most gratifying to the Amateur Dramatic Association to behold, that their endeavours to entertain the public are appreciated by them, and that their bi-weekly performances are so well supported. It is equally gratifying to the public to know that their support and confidence is not disregarded, and that the Amateurs strain every nerve to make their entertainments agreeable and attractive.

Tal O Eifion
February 27, 1869.
Having considered the nature, content, and meaning in context of the plays produced by the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association, we must now examine the organization, its general quality and significance, its community role and relationship. In early 1868 James Anderson referred to C. A. D. A. and the theatre in one of Sawney's Letters. This passage immediately followed one criticizing the lack of church services in the absence of a resident clergymen:

But if we hinna got a kirk,
We hae anither biggin',
(Altho' it may nae point sae clear
The way abune the riggin;)
That gies amusement to the boys,
An' brings them a' tegither
Ae nicht a week for twa short hours,
To laugh wi' ane anither.
I dinna ken what name to gie'd,
A "Play-house" ye despise,
Would "Amateur Dramatic Ha'"
Look better in your eyes? 1

In such a context—and in that of the Caribooites' secular creeds and ideals expressed in the plays—these sentiments imply that the theatre was the surrogate church of a secular faith, and that performances were regular rituals in which the communion was of men brought together to transcend petty issues and divisions or private concerns, and to affirm their shared humanity and common beliefs by laughing with one another. This impression is strengthened by the emphasis on the moral respectability of the "hall" and its civic connotations and on clearly dissociating it from professional theatres and the distrust and scorn they aroused in many middle class people of the old country.

Moreover, it would seem to be a pioneer precursor of Bernard Shaw's contentions that by the 1890's the theatre had become as important as the Church was in the Middle Ages and much more important than the church was in London in the years under review. A theatre to me is a place "where two or three are gathered together... ." Unfortunately this Christian Church... has become the church where you must not laugh; and so it is giving way to the older and greater church... where
the oftener you laugh the better, because by laughter only can you destroy evil without malice, affirm good fellowship without mawkishness.  

All that is quite in line with the psychic, social and moral qualities ascribed to laughter, fellowship and the theatre by Caribooites, with their secularized ethics and aspirations, and with the patterns of popular myth in the plays. The hypothesis that a popular theatre is an affirmative secular ritual, as well as a democratic form of rational amusement, would seem to have merit, and this chapter will test it accordingly in the course of discussing the main features of C. A. D. A. and its performances.

To that end, it is instructive to briefly define C. A. D. A.'s place in the larger historical context. Amateur theatre as a common activity was the creation of the Victorian Age: by 1865 a positive "craze for amateur theatricals" was noted—though less than positively—by Macready. They were a "favourite pastime of the upper middle classes," of "city gentlemen, lawyers, bankers, civil servants," who "were starting to fulfill their secret ambitions." Thus the impulse sprang naturally enough from the rising and socially mobile classes; acting, as "perhaps the most personal of all activities," and theatre, as the quintessentially protean art form, formed an apt and engaging means of expression for those living out the aspirations toward a richer, more creative existence and the individual freedom to play a greater variety of challenging social roles, to change one's given shape and enlarge one's prerogatives and participations.

Nor is it coincidence that in 1847 the Manchester Atheneum Institute—its bent on "the general edification" of the prosperous classes—originated the first organized "Dramatic Society," whose stated objects were to "cultivate a taste for Standard Dramatic Literature" and to be a "source of mutual improvement and amusement to its members." Moreover, the amateur theatrical craze was in the mainstream of "an enormous resurgence of amateur performance," of which "music, and especially vocal music, had no rival as a
middle class occupation." That too was motivated by awakened desire for improvement, cultivation, self-expression, and an enhanced sense of personal worth:

It was an era of delight in music, when people made their own pleasures. With the growth of education came an insatiable demand for the means to indulge newly acquired tastes and newly developed talents. . . .

Indeed the spirit of amateurism, powered by the self-help spirit of the age, expressed insatiable appetites for active participation in all areas of life and spawned its own legend: that the intelligent and ingenious amateur was best equipped to manage matters, including economic and political as well as social and artistic ones.

And again the other side of the Victorian dialectic to protean individualism was a moving and shaping force: the need for a renewed sense of domestic, community and collective belonging, of a happy home. Parlour music and theatricals became respectable evening activities—even for those who "despised" the public theatre—and were enshrined in the middle class home. Public amateur performances began at a time when the need for community living began to make itself felt in the rising tide of the Industrial Revolution. It was an age of intimate societies both reading and musical.

The same author sums up nicely a meaningful "paradox of acting" for modern man, involving as it does both the communal and cooperative and the individualistic; "teamwork" as well as personal "self esteem:"

The phrase "Community Theatre," on which the amateur movement of today was built, is an expression of this idea of teamwork and explains why the theatre is considered a socially useful activity. How then to equate this communal effort with that egoism which is strong in everyone who has a desire to act? . . . Maybe it is the resolving of this paradox that makes theatrical activity such a useful spiritual gymnasium. This paradox is only resolved by the play, for its own sake, seeming bigger, more important and more fascinating, than any individual engaged on it. At its best the theatre seems to be capable of exercising this discipline over its devotees.

It is socially and spiritually useful in that its paradox enacts in microcosm
the conflicts and dilemmas within modern individuals and society. The efforts of Victorian citizens to reconcile the larger contradictions within the theatrical arena made it exemplary of the love as socially channelled feeling inherent in all attempts to "live for something."

These impulses behind the development of amateur theatre, bound up with the animating myths and active tendencies of the time, existed in Cariboo more urgently and universally. There the expression of individual protean goals was not the prerogative of an elite few but was derived from the common motives and values of a democratically-minded populace. There, too, the need for community living was at once more fundamental and intense, the reconciling of the human and societal contradictions more crucial. In trying to fulfill those they laboured under both the hardships and advantages of doing so from the ground up; in this they could afford to take nothing for granted, and neither should we: that a considerable portion of their energies was devoted to establishing and maintaining a theatre and performing group says much for their importance and significance in filling such needs. As for the amateur spirit, that too was more pronounced among them: nearly all the miners were amateurs in the first instance; apart from a few practising lawyers, doctors, civil servants, and clergymen, and some--but not all--of the merchants and tradesmen, all human activities were likewise amateur; in fact without that spirit in such frontier areas there would have been little society or culture to speak of. For these reasons "amateur," like "sentimentality," is used here not in its contemporary, pejorative connotations, but in the best sense, as an activity undertaken by individuals not born to or trained for it, out of some strong desire or necessity rather than as an intended means of livelihood.

Therefore, while C. A. D. A. originated from kindred impulses to those of the "amateur theatricals" in established communities, it also departed from the pattern in several ways and went well beyond it in others, and
because the matrix of social and economic relations was qualitatively different so were its community role, relationship and significance. Formed from a truly pioneer society, C. A. D. A. itself was in some respects a pioneering organization and was, in fact, close in spirit and practice to the later "little theatre movement." In Britain the idea of a non-professional theatre group as an independent institution with "the desire to create something of its own as regards both place and policy" did not emerge till 1901, with the Stockport Garrick Society. This supposedly indicated "a pioneering spirit," but C. A. D. A., partly because of and partly in spite of the physical hardships and geographical isolation of Cariboo, out-pioneered them by 34 years.

Its contemporaries in Britain—as "theatricals" suggests—were essentially private clubs appearing before a more or less restricted and "already enthusiastic" (i.e. indulgent) audience. Even in Ottawa J. S. Thompson, as an M. P. during the 1870's, wrote of attending "private theatricals" with a purely "invited audience." As preceding chapters have indicated, C. A. D. A. was originally, and increasingly, a public institution, which artistically and financially both retained a basic independence and developed a responsible relationship to the broad range of the public from which its audiences were drawn. Reflecting the openness of frontier society, it was available to all who had the price of a ticket: $1.00, which, at one-eighth or less of a daily wage, was affordable by any working person. There is no record of anyone being excluded: it is not known if any Chinese attended, though they were permitted to use the theatre; the diary of Moses, the black barber, indicates that he did attend, and there is no evidence that the theatre was segregated by race as in Victoria.

In membership, as in audience composition, C. A. D. A. was no clique, but an open, free association of people of common interests and aptitudes who were drawn, like the whole population, from widely diverse social and
occupational backgrounds. A few brief examples must suffice. (For further information about some individual members the reader is referred to the biographical sketches in Appendix I.) S. Ormandy, who worked as the agent for Barnard's Express, came from a family of the landed gentry in Lancashire that had lived in Gleaston Castle for generations. H. Shirley Blunt, agent of the Bank of British Columbia, also suggests by name origins of some gentility. Dr. Carrall was a physician of simple Canadian parentage, who also worked his own claim "like any honest miner," while J. S. Thompson, a close friend, was an accountant by trade, which then possessed little social or economic advantage; neither did his nationality, which was Irish. Frank Perrett was a tailor from London and W. W. Hill, of Nottingham, was a house and sign painter with a taste for writing poetry and songs; both not only belonged to C. A. D. A. but served variously as managers and in other executive posts. 17

C. A. D. A. was thus a long way in spirit as well as distance from the Ingoldsby Club. Indeed its difference from even the Victoria amateurs is nicely (if unintentionally) articulated by Arthur Bushby, a member of the latter who served as a temporary magistrate in Barkerville in 1873:

> Asked to take part in charitable theatrical performance, deputation consisting of editor of the local paper, a London tailor and a professional gambler (aristocracy of a mining camp) waited on me with the request! 18

What Bushby, a dutiful representative of Victoria's pseudo-English hierarchy of "nobs, snobs and flunkies," could not realize was that in Barkerville there was no "aristocracy," that C. A. D. A. was not a clique, and that he was being invited for his performing experience, not his social position.

Whatever their prior or current occupations, virtually all the Cariboo Amateurs were involved directly or indirectly in mining operations. Some, like Neil Shaw, James Anderson, or Jack Hudson, were full-time working miners. Others sustained themselves by other employment or as store and saloon keepers and invested savings or profits in joint stock prospecting and mining
ventures. A few were successful claim owners who had the leisure time for social pursuits: Joseph (J. Z.) Hough, for example, had been one of three owners of the prosperous Sage Miller Company in 1866 and before that a shareholder in the rich Sawmill Claim; having made his fortune, he was the gambler mentioned by Bushby, but apparently was one by inclination rather than profession. Anderson, by way of contrast, never made more than a living and sometimes less, though that was probably his own fault: this extoller of learning to labour and to wait had also owned a share in the Sawmill Company but must have sold out before it struck pay. Again, then, C. A. D. A. was linked to the community in a fundamental way by the universal interests of its people in the means of production on which all crucially depended.

While the association's members were distinctly representative of Caribooites’ varied backgrounds and of their present and hoped-for economic situations, they were also exemplary of their social enterprise and aspirations. Not a few of them were active in other community organizations and concerns: the masons, the literary institute, the fire brigade, the churches; the decidedly pro-Confederation leanings and activism of most of its membership has already been noted. In fact there is hardly a public enterprise or meeting mentioned in which the names of C. A. D. A. performers do not appear, and often in roles of initiators and organizers: school boards, mining boards, grand juries, celebrations and ceremonies, demonstrations and dances.

This was not a matter of monopolising such participation and social roles: many whose names appear in such connections did not belong to the dramatic association, but the impression is clear that the men of C. A. D. A. tended to be among the social leaders by virtue of energy, enthusiasm and ability, examples of protean self and civic improvement, models of creative citizenship and public service, of community belonging and other-directedness. Whether there was a cause and effect relationship in this overlapping of visible stage and societal role-playing and how much one may have influenced
the other can only be conjecture, but it is nonetheless striking and an
indication of C. A. D. A.'s central place in Cariboo life that four of its
members were elected to political office: Carrall, Henry Havelock, and Edward
Pearson as representatives in the legislature, and J. S. Thompson as a Member
of Parliament for four terms; presumably their theatrical experience gained
them public exposure, confidence, and skills in speaking and self-presentation, and certainly analogies between politics and the stage were recognized.

It can be asserted, however, that in the context of an embryonic,
pioneer society and of its formative democratic myths and values, such
representative and exemplary amateur performers had a local resonance, a
personal and symbolic eloquence, that no itinerant professionals could have
(though Lafont and Ward during their long run had begun to exemplify locally
admired qualities and to take on a personal appeal of their own). Emerging
literally and figuratively out of the community and the audience; of them but
for the moment not among them; isolated within the imaginatively transformable space and time of the stage; his double aspect of "role possessed body
and embodied role" accentuated thereby, the locally known "lay" performer
articulated and affirmed, in an event that doubled as social ritual and
theatrical event, the protean possibilities of the individual and the group.
He was also in the best position to effectively incarnate for the spectators
the images in the plays that held past, present or future significance for
Caribooites and to give those a recognizable physical and social connection,
make them over, as it were, in the audience's own image. If the actor is
always a form of psycho-spiritual emissary of society, an ambiguous, shamanistic figure journeying on its behalf to the script world of "eternally
subsisting relations" and returning possessed by images meaningful and
necessary for its identity, continuity and sense of well being, then those
dimensions were enhanced by the amateur actor, who was recognizable and
representative as one of the community and at the same time rendered
remarkable by his display of personal worth, through skills, talents, and unusual qualities, "discovered" by the audience with a mixture of expectation and surprise, in individuals familiar in substance but changed in shape. The essential theatrical components and the old theatrical magic took on special relevance and appeal in the local context. 25

Another pioneer feature of the dramatic association was the presence of the amateur actress, presumably a contribution of such frontier societies since in established communities of the time either men played female roles in amateur productions or they hired professional actresses, and the same was true in Victoria. But though C. A. D. A.'s earlier performances at the Parlor Saloon had had recourse to female impersonation and those in the second Theatre Royal occasionally did so, this expedient was only resorted to when women were unavailable or some form of female caricature was desired. There were three principal actresses during the years from 1868 to 1875, all of them previously mentioned: Florence Wilson, Mrs. S. P. Parker, and Emily Edwards. The latter was the subject of C. A. D. A.'s only "backstage romance," marrying John Bowron in the fall of 1869, after which she no longer acted. (The little that is known biographically of the women is in Appendix I.) These were the only regular actresses; Mrs. Andrew Kelly and Mrs. Tracey, a saloon owner, occasionally helped out but were mainly singers.

If the actor in the first instance supplies "company"—that most elemental of human needs—of a special kind, "assuaging one's loneliness without imposing the pest of company," then in the lives of Caribooites, which were often lonely and yet also in flight from just such impositions, the regular appearance of local performers served as an intensification of this function—both as performers and as the various characters they portrayed, they helped to imaginatively populate a still rather empty and isolated land.

Considering the particularly small female population the actresses
would have been especially important in this respect. They allowed the mass of single men to enjoy some of the emotional satisfactions of feminine company without either the temptations of the illicit kind or the burdens of the married kind. (Perhaps this is also why many of the saloons were run partly or solely by women.) Just as the plays extended the influences of home, so these actresses, being personally above reproach, extended those of good women. Their presence, too, in the dramatic roles of archetypal female relationships would naturally have been crucial for the renewal, through sentimental identifications and substitutions, of the sense of home, its sustaining values, and the softer, feminine side of the male nature.

That they were the really indispensible members of C. A. D. A. is attested to by numerous references to "the valuable assistance of the ladies, who contributed greatly by their good acting to the success of the performances." Florence Wilson, the most constant member of the group during this period, was "a great favorite with the theatre going public."

Florence Wilson has for years been, we may say, the soul of the Dramatic Association, for without her assistance in the female parts, it would, we believe, have been impossible to keep the corps together.

Certainly the lack of actresses was a factor in the failure of earlier efforts to found a theatre. It is significant that only the women were ever accorded personal benefits.

In organizational structure, too, the association was no mere coterie of self-indulgent dilettantes, but a generally industrious and efficient civic institution. Indeed their financing and construction of two theatres in as many years under adverse conditions and the number of different plays produced are sufficient evidence of that and serve to distinguish them from the occasional performances of the Victoria amateurs in a rented theatre, and from the typical English dramatic societies of the time. It must also be borne in mind that C. A. D. A. retained the two distinct functions of
producing plays and managing the theatre building; while obviously interde­pendent, these could also conflict financially for a group with limited resources in a fluctuating economy. What alleviated such difficulties in the long run were the careful organizational structure its people set up and maintained and the efforts to develop a responsible integrity and an integral relationship within what remained the only viable Cariboo community.

That development is a longer story, but its organization was simple and fixed from the outset. It followed the democratic procedures and strict rules of order that characterized the other institutions, borrowed in turn from the self-help movement and intimate societies of Britain; the glue that held it together was the cooperative enterprise that had fostered and sustained the mining economy and the community at large. C. A. D. A. used a rotating executive elected from the membership at regular quarterly meetings, at which financial reports were made, general business discussed, policies proposed and voted on. Elected officers served for the ensuing quarter, but could be re-elected and often were. The executive consisted of a manager, a secretary-treasurer, a managing committee, and a casting committee, with each committee comprising three men. To ensure financial responsibility (perhaps in the wake of the Benrimo affair) the books kept by the secretary were audited when he left office.

Extraordinary meetings could be called and ad hoc committees set up for special events or contingencies: the building committee for the second theatre and committees for dances, celebrations or charitable benefits are examples. The women never served on the executive, and in fact no woman ever held a position of authority in any Cariboo organization even though they were capable of running businesses. In those pre-suffrage times they were still "the weaker sex" and not welcomed in traditionally male roles, and, though freer from restrictive social conventions, they were enjoined from any social or political responsibility even in Barkerville. By way of compensa-
tion the actresses did receive the aforementioned benefit performances, and plenty of frontier gallantry.

Caribooites were by this time quite adept at organizing almost any enterprise, so it is no wonder that C. A. D. A. seems to have run very smoothly and harmoniously. The delegation of powers and duties plus the cooperative spirit apparently got the tasks done with enthusiasm and dispatch. With the one man-one vote system and regular changes of authority there was no sign of the discord and power struggle that marked the Victoria group (who did not even have such vigorous demands placed on them). Nor does attendance at meetings and practices appear to have been a problem, as it initially was for the fire brigade. Individual performer discipline could become lax, but, as will be shown later, the public functioned to curb that. All in all, democracy would appear to work well enough, even in the theatre, when it demonstrably exists.

As managers of the theatre C. A. D. A. seems to have charged other organizations and performing groups a small rental fee. Rev. Reynard, without a church after the fire, definitely rented it for Sunday services, and though the Cambrian Society, its new building unfinished, was given free use of the theatre for a fund raising entertainment, there is no mention of this exception being made in other cases. Nor is there any record of what the usual rental fees were. The only indicator is a small account book of the literary institute, which apparently took over running the theatre around the turn of the century; rental was then $1.00 per rehearsal, $3.00 per dance, and $3.00 for each performance. Probably the charges were no higher in the late 1860's, perhaps less, and were obviously to help cover maintenance and other costs. This undoubtedly fostered the expansion of the theatre's functions, as C. A. D. A. had intended the building to double as a civic hall, which, as will be seen anon, it did.

That aim, together with the desire to make the drama a "fixed
"institution" providing a "pleasing and instructive" replacement for "dissipation" or "the games of chance," accounts for another main feature of C. A. D. A.'s management: the control of the tone and decorum of the theatre and thereby of public behaviour. Unlike theatres in other mining towns, no alcohol was sold and no gambling was permitted. This was in keeping with the "chaste and refined" nature of the touring companies and of all material locally performed, and presumably reflects a community consensus. Thus there were also no "box hustlers"—prostitutes—for which theatres as far removed as Tombstone, Arizona, Kaslo, B. C., and Dawson City, Yukon, were notorious.

Yet this is not to imply that C. A. D. A. was some kind of temperance society—not with all those saloon keepers in its midst, who surely enjoyed the business publicity. Indeed the evidence is that C. A. D. A. and the theatre benefitted the saloon trade and trade in general. It was not temperance in the puritanical sense, but moderation and "self possession" (a favourite word); no crusade against drinking, for punch was served at dances and men could have drinks before and after a show at the strategically adjoining saloons, but rather the desire to keep it in its place and discourage excess and rowdiness (frequent in other theatres on the frontier and elsewhere). As noted earlier most Caribooites were the last people to carry moderation too far, but they were also among the first to learn by experience that it is crucial in northern communities to foster constructive alternatives, especially those that relieve most effectively the dangerous sense of isolation, deprivation, and boredom by providing social and imaginative activity, as theatre does.

What is important here is that the tone and implicit standards of conduct set by C. A. D. A. would help to account for the extraordinarily good behaviour of the audiences for that time (as the Cariboo correspondent had boasted). Not a single report of rough or unseemly conduct mars the history of the Theatres Royal, Barkerville. This also meant that respectable women
and even children could and did both perform and attend, always an added encouragement to male attendance and further good conduct. Thus the context of theatre-going reinforced that of the plays in the concern for working out the most generally desirable norms of behaviour in a new society.

But for the same reasons it must be stressed that this context did not promote an atmosphere artificially formal or stilted and inhibiting. The audience wanted fun, and an air of relaxed informality and sociability was pre-conditioned by the nature of the society, by the fact that the theatre sprang from and ultimately belonged to it, and by all that the spectators held in common with each other and the performers. To further make them feel at home in an auditorium designedly democratic, intimate and attractive without being ostentatious, C. A. D. A. allowed the men to indulge the popular habits of smoking their pipes and cigars and chewing tobacco. Lively conversation naturally went hand in hand with such an ambience, and if these activities sometimes blurred the beginning of a performance the consensus was that it was the actors' task to speak up and catch their attention. Rev. Reynard wrote of conducting services in the theatre "with the floor strewed with cigar ends and crumpled playbills of miserable farces played overnight" (the minister had loftier tastes) "and signs everywhere of the want of spitoons." Ladies presumably looked the other way, except when walking.

Man's best friend being almost as numerous as man, some even brought their dogs along. Bishop Sillitoe's wife, who sang at several concerts there in the 1880's, remembered being joined by canine obbligatos. And, speaking of critics, human auditors were by no means indecisive, hesitant or indulgent about what they did or did not like and, though always within bounds, were cheerfully extravert and direct in their responses and judgements. Above all there was laughter, and a pleased audience did not merely chuckle or giggle; they were "frequently convulsed with laughter" and a good performance induced "a constant movement of the cachinatory faculties." A funny or emotionally
affecting scene or piece of business invariably drew "bursts of applause." 

But, as will be seen shortly, they were also capable of the opposite reactions. As Anderson's reference to audience "critics" and subsequently expressed opinions on matters literary and theatrical indicate, C. A. D. A.'s performances were important events in the life of the town and were seriously discussed afterwards. That C. A. D. A.'s management seems to have been calculated to promote such a balanced, spontaneous and critical audience relationship is expressive of its other dimensions of community theatre and of a developing awareness that such an audience is an integral part of the cooperative enterprise of a vital theatre; not merely the object or sign of it, but an essential means to its achievement. 38

Concerning C. A. D. A.'s practices as a producing organization, information is rather sketchy but nonetheless suggestive. The executive did double duty as an artistic and technical staff; there was not room for specialization, and here as elsewhere in frontier society men had to be prepared to play many parts, but then this was not only a vital necessity but also the moving force and positive appeal behind the existence of Barkerville and its theatre. The manager of the association became the stage manager, the casting committee selected and cast the plays, while the managing committee, aided presumably by those not cast, served as technical and front of house personnel. As these were full theatrical productions, as complete as finances and ingenuity could make them, there were all the usual tasks to be done: scenery executed when required, properties obtained, costumes fitted and maintained, the auditorium prepared, tickets sold and collected, and so forth. 39

Their concern for, and handling of, publicity are the most evident to us of their performance preparations and suggest a degree of organization and care that seem to have been extended to other departments. Newspaper advertisements, always large and emphatic and prominently placed on the inside
editorial page of the Sentinel, appeared in the two issues preceding each show. Surmounted by the English coat of arms and "Theatre Royal" in large block letters, they were usually accompanied by such endorsements of the announced plays as "laughable farce" or "the amusing comedietta" and underscored by lists of actors and characters (the latter often accompanied by amusing descriptions). Anything that might sell the performance was included. The newspaper ads were especially important for attracting people not living in Barkerville itself; they also got C. A. D. A. extra publicity in the paper in the form of little inserts reporting its doings and urging attendance.

Posters and playbills, the latter doubling as programmes, were also used, and though none survive their format was probably similar to the ads.

Costumes and properties had to be imported, San Francisco being the nearest source, or borrowed and adapted from what was locally available. These were clearly the major items of expense, especially with the road tolls, high freight rates and import duties that afflicted Cariboo. Since many plays were roughly contemporary some of the articles were undoubtedly made over from ordinary pieces of clothing. Indeed Frank Perrett, the tailor, may have made alterations or even whole costumes. Props were no doubt borrowed from hotels, saloons, or private individuals whenever possible.

Only two brief references to costumes appear in the reviews. Those for The Loan of a Lover were described as "being of a plain country fashion," and in The Vermont Wool Dealer the leading character, Deuteronomy Dutiful, sported "a pair of whimsical pantaloons." Since the former play presents relatively natural and subdued characters and action accompanied by gentle humour, while the latter is an extravagant low farce with the character a stock Yankee caricature, it would seem that costumes were selected with some sensitivity to the mood and style of each play and its degree of character exaggeration. Certainly the single photograph of C. A. D. A. members in costume corroborates that assumption in the range of costumes shown—include-
Fig. 8. Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association Outside the Theatre Royal. Dated 1872, but it may have been taken in 1871, during the Dominion Day celebrations. Only a few figures have been identified: J. S. Thompson (3rd from left), John Bowron (5th from left), J. Z. Hough (5th from right), Frank Perrett (3rd from right), Gomar Johns (right). Seated: Mrs. S. P. Parker (left) and Florence Wilson (right). Provincial Archives Photo.
ing J. Z. Hough as the Yankee figure in what were undoubtedly the whimsical pantaloons—and which also indicate some attention to historical social milieu—the unidentified actor on the left in knee breeches and stockings, for example. Otherwise the only critical comment on costumes was that they were "well got up and deserving of credit."

Scenery received a bit more attention. Until his death in the fall of 1869 it was locally painted by W. W. Hill. After that it is not known what was the practice; perhaps another local painter took over, or C. A. D. A. may have had enough stock scenery by then to make do with an occasional import. A photograph in the Provincial Archives of a production of Nevada during the 1880's shows that by then at least scenery was once more being locally executed.

A sensitive and talented man, Hill's best work was apparently found to be strongly evocative and painted with some taste and feeling for form and beauty of effect. Of The Loan of a Lover the reviewer concluded:

Mr. W. W. Hill has given us another specimen of his ability as a landscape painter, in the lake scene, which is most exquisitely executed.

In The Vermont Wool Dealer:

The drop scene, which is from the brush of Mr. W. W. Hill, and which was exhibited for the first time on Saturday last, does great credit to him as an artist and worthily merited the buzz of admiration with which it was greeted on being revealed to the audience.

The scenery in the C. A. D. A. photograph, though a bit blurred and obviously worn and tattered, does reveal a decorative background of a wood, plainly English and not British Columbian, with a stylized symmetry quite appropriate to that of the plays. The isolated references to single settings indicate that new ones were produced only as required for a locale not already represented, or as they could be afforded. The reliance on an accumulated stock of scenery was typical practice elsewhere and feasible in view of their mainly stock and specialized repertoire and its generalized, recurrent
locales and scenic elements. 45

Since there were apparently no slots in the stage floor and certainly no provisions for flying scenery, it is safe to assume that flats were held by stage braces and shifted by hand with a lowered curtain. Because most plays had either a single scene or changes that occurred between acts, this would usually have presented no problem. For those like Still Waters or The Ploughman Turned Lord, where they occur within an act, they were probably covered by songs and instrumental music, which were generally referred to by the term "interlude." Actual dissatisfaction with this expedient was voiced only with the suspense melodrama, The Charcoal Burner, "caused by the number of acts into which the drama was divided owing to the want of sufficient stage material." 47

Within these limitations some simple—and locally meaningful—stage spectacle was occasionally achieved. In The Charcoal Burner itself the murderer digs up his hidden gold in a wild mountain scene with a waterfall in the background (Cariboo afforded plenty of models) and is shot onstage. A Trip to Paris and Back For Five Pounds was advertised "with all its scenic and stage effects," which included a backdrop of a railway bridge, offstage sounds of the train arriving and departing, and crowd scenes of milling and scurrying passengers. One can easily imagine the local resonance of such images in view of the anticipated Canadian Railway.

Technical operations appear to have been efficiently run; in fact the only indications to the contrary concern, oddly enough, the raising or lowering of the curtain; on one occasion Mrs. Tracey, a rather nervous person, was about to sing an encore, when

as she stepped forward to the footlights, the curtain fell with a crash—a very unfortunate occurrence, and one which might have been accompanied with serious results; but as it was, she happily escaped more frightened than hurt.

Needless to say, more care was subsequently taken, and the incident was not
repeated. The relatively few mentions of costume and scenery imply that they were kept simple and were of less interest than the plays, the acting and the human presence—due partly to practical considerations and partly to social and theatrical inclinations and values. Yet the invariably positive references show that they were executed with the care that marked most Cariboo efforts and that they had enough visual appeal and truth to life to enhance both the credibility of the acting and the dramatic evocations of home.

Some inferences can also be drawn about rehearsal procedures. A brief account of those for the two charity performances in which Arthur Bushby took part is contained in his diary. The first, on February 8, 1873, included the one-act farce Catched By the Cuff followed by a vocal and instrumental entertainment:

Jan. 31. Theatrical practice  
Feb. 4. Band and Theatrical rehearsal  
Feb. 7. Rehearsal in town, dined with Hitch and slept as his quarters.  
Feb. 8. Rehearsal. Amusing. I'm supposed to accompany. No music and most of the things unknown to me—the fact of the "Judge" taking his seat at the piano is supposed to suffice! Specimen of my programme and guide. 1 M. F. 6/8 time. 2 in 3/4 time, etc. Key and time—the rest left to chance.  

"Local Hits" refers to humorous lyrics directed at local people, issues or institutions. Bushby received favourable mention but was hardly outstanding, and with the Barkerville talent much better than he had expected his account of the second performance—a concert and minstrel show—is more restrained, less condescending, and finds him looking to his own laurels:

Mar. 6. ... Deputation waited on me ... and presented me with a very flattering address to which I responded in due form.

Such courteous displays of gratitude were customary with guest performers and
departing members. 50

These diary references suggest four rehearsals for each performance, though Bushby, as accompanist and singer, may not have attended all that were held. The date he was asked—January 20—indicates that preparations for the first show were already underway. In any case, only one play was given and that was a revival of an earlier production. A new production had a rehearsal period of two weeks at least; that would indicate, even from Bushby's record, eight or more rehearsals, which would seem adequate for the time and for plays that were not subtle or psychological. Furthermore, his surprise at the quality of the actual performances suggests that if a certain amount was "left to chance" or some energy and spontaneity saved for "the night," the performers had also worked up much of their parts on their own. Accordingly rehearsals were probably used mostly for stage business, coordination, finishing touches, pace and so forth. All that is otherwise known about rehearsals is that hand-copied sides were employed, some of which are preserved in the Provincial Archives and contain general descriptions of the character and costume and some brief entrance and blocking notations. They may have been partly employed to save money on scripts, but the different coloured inks for lines and cues indicate that sides were also found useful for actors—as indeed they are. 52

While the stage manager supervised rehearsals as well as technical aspects of the productions, it is difficult to estimate how many directorial functions he actually fulfilled. An outsider noted in 1871:

An Amateur Dramatic Association gives entertainments once or twice a week at quite a creditable theatre, which had been erected by subscription. Mr. Thompson, editor of the Cariboo Sentinel, is the stage manager and has drilled his company with a very fair proficiency. 53

Though he no doubt "drilled" the actors in pace and tempo and helped to create order, discipline and ensemble, the periodic changes in the person occupying the position would suggest that the manager's authority and
personal influence could hardly have been absolute or even very decisive, that these rather inhered in the organization as a whole, and that the manager reflected and upheld, rather than initiating, C. A. D. A.'s group efforts and values, which in turn derived from the community. This is borne out by the Cariboo sources: from the local viewpoint the manager is very rarely given credit for a good performance, and is seldom even mentioned by name.

Most often the casting and other committees, invariably the actors individually, and C. A. D. A. as a group, and also, significantly, the audience are praised or blamed for the result:

The happy cast of characters made by the committee, the application of the actors during rehearsals, and the great delight of the audience united in making and declaring the performance a decided success. 54

This is typical—and unmistakeable. Cooperative endeavour in the ranks of C. A. D. A., the hard work and abilities of the actors, and a responsive and supportive audience were considered the decisive forces in virtually all the reviews. Certainly this reflects what has been said of the association's organization and workings, its representative relationship and shared concerns with a representative audience, and, behind that, the cooperative and democratic basis of frontier society and its preoccupation with finding new and positive relations between the claims of individuals and the social group.

The sense of the audience as crucial participants, actively helping to shape the stage events according to a mutually satisfying consensus, conventions and values will become more apparent in what follows. It extended the cooperative efforts of C. A. D. A. into a collectively-willed, community-informed theatrical event. The ideal of a performance as such a "united" creation, with the theatre most frequently bringing together people representative of the social body on both sides of the footlights to reaffirm the value of the human energies and means crucial to the community, implies
that underlying the surface amusement was an important ritual enactment—at once fictional and actual, both something made and very much in the making—of their common aspirations and social dialectic.

These and similar implied sentiments are as close to a programme of consciously stated goals as the theatre in Barkerville came: a frontier idea of the theatre for an emerging democratic society. Though these impulses were not always fully or satisfyingly realized, still they help to explain what all the fuss and activity were in aid of, what attracted people to it in the long run, which was in fact one of the longest runs of any theatre and acting group in the history of British Columbia and is consequently entitled to a little serious consideration, perhaps at some profit to ourselves. Theatre must therefore have been necessary to their lives and meaningful for their community, and their own perceptions of it best help to explain why and in what ways this was so, and, again, might possibly still be so for us.

This brings us to the nature, quality and significance of their theatrical events, which were conditioned, prepared and prefigured by the aforementioned factors, and it also serves to remind us that just as beauty—or any other quality—"is in the eye of the beholder," so much of theatre history is really the history of perceptions of theatrical performances because, unlike painting or literature, the actual phenomenon that once sparked the responses or had the significance is long gone. Good or bad, realistic or stylized, meaningful or frivolous are vague value judgements in themselves, useless for us to make in retrospect, useful only in context. To estimate the quality and define the nature of performances past in any absolute or precise sense is impossible; there are only the perceptions of the beholder, or rather the terms of them, the criteria he applied, the values (his values) by which he judged what was put before him. To do other than to understand and apply those is a bit like trying to judge the quality
of a dinner eaten by someone else without consulting him or the menu.

Thus we can only try to infer the event, deduce its nature from this critical perspective, formed by the recorded perceptions of individual spectators and especially by those of the reviewers, who hopefully reflect the experience and responses of the audience and thereby express through its salient values the salient features of the performances. This is not science nor can it be, but at least the initial assumptions would seem valid, and, if inconclusive, may at least prove correctly suggestive. As a check against contemporary mental biases or a priori theorizing there is the context of the community's myths, ethos, interests and way of life, and it is on that empirical foundation that the following observations are based.

Concerning the reviews, which form the primary source of information about Barkerville's theatrical activity, Michael Booth makes a major error (and perhaps a reductio ad absurdum of much theatre history) by refusing to take them seriously. First he states inaccurately that "hard to beat" was the reviewer's stock critical phrase, though it was actually used only twice by the 1868 reviewer, as a familiar bit of frontier slang—itself quite revealing in context. Then, since the paper is the indispensible source of information, he is left to make some unsupportable generalizations and unwarranted assumptions about performance quality and supposed audience taste. As responsible and useful historical research this sort of thing will simply not do, and it should not be good enough for our ancestors or ourselves.

In fact, there was no single "reviewer" as he suggests: like the editorship of the paper, the position changed hands at least five times over the years. Moreover, the reviews were usually far more detailed than he implies, and are certainly as well written as those in Canadian newspapers today, and in some ways much better. They are definitely more reliable and revealing for the historian since they always discuss audience response and take their cue from it; therefore when carefully read (like the paper itself)
they offer valuable indicators of the Cariboo critical perspective and the nature and meaning of the performances, and they are the more valuable in this respect because all the reviewers, like the actors, sprang from the mining community and because the same criteria and key words are employed by all of them. Indeed, considering that there seems to have generally been only one performance of each production, their main function could only have been as a form of audience spokesman to articulate its reactions and expectations.

Unfortunately all wrote anonymously or under sobriquets. Tal O Eifion, local poet and miner and an occasional correspondent from outlying creeks, was the critic from the opening of the second theatre to the spring of 1869. Thanks to some lucky "digging," it can now be stated that this was the pen name of Taliesin Evans, who had arrived in '63 with his father John Evans (later an M. L. A.), the latter having led an initially unfortunate party of 56 Welsh miners. Apparently largely self-educated, Taliesin was remembered by Harry Jones as "a clever fellow, had more brains, I think, than any in our party." He also developed journalistic ambitions and in the fall of 1869, he and his father—despite their similarly outspoken, moralistic natures—no longer getting along, Tal Evans borrowed $500 from Harry Jones and left for San Francisco where he soon got a job as a reporter for the Bulletin.

Taliesin later became editor of the Bulletin and afterwards, I think, its principal owner. Later he founded the Oakland Tribune. . . . He wielded considerable influence in Oakland and is reputed to have amassed a fair sized estate. He died in Oakland about 1928.

That is "hard to beat" as an example of a protean individual and as a demonstration that the reviews may safely be taken seriously as historical documents.

The criteria most frequently employed to judge and define the performances are contained in a vocabulary of recurring key words and phrases, touchstones that directly or indirectly connoted the values and ethic that
comprised the Cariboo outlook. They thus carry a double significance,
linking the ethical-value judgemental and the critical-aesthetic categories,
quite in keeping with Caribooites' mythic and analogical imaginations and the
morally-informed utilitarianism of the frontier both of which tended to make
such categories inseparable. They also clarify and substantiate the vital
relationship between theatre and community through its animating myths of
concern, and they do the same for the theatre as affirmative ritual and the
very explicitly doubled function of the actors, representing the Caribooites
and their aspirations within imagined roles—indeed representing each in
terms of the other. The critical terms form an open mental circuit from
artistic intention and method through artistic result, and through audience
response to the life outside the theatre; they are both causative and nomic,
symbolic and actual, means and ends in themselves.

Most constant and all-embracing of these, summing up the goal and
evaluation of individual performers and whole productions, are "success" and,
less frequently, "failure." Such grayer shades as good, bad or indifferent,
satisfactory or inappropriate, are sometimes used for isolated elements, but
the ultimate judgement is invariably pronounced at the beginning or end of
reviews and often sounded several times in the course of the longer ones.
Success and failure run like leitmotifs from the first account by the
Colonist correspondent in 1867 to the last one in the Sentinel in 1875. An
1869 review by Tal O Eifion contains seven mentions of success, or "successful;" and two of failure. 58

This preoccupation with success and failure in the theatrical
performance is of course understandable given the "make or break it"
imperatives in many gold seekers' original motives and aspirations, and the
years of mining experience with the deeply hidden worth of Cariboo usually
confirmed the sense of bilk or bonanza with little middle ground. The polar
possibilities of success versus failure occur often in Cariboo utterances and
formed the imaginative-emotional realities of gold mining—"the glory of the
game"—as well as the common material ones. It is the business of the theatre
to bridge the gaps between such realities.

Of course this obsession continues in post-capitalist society, with
success and failure as its universal operative words. But they have since
assumed the narrowing terms of "winners" and "losers," of the competitive
"rat race," and of a conspicuous success available only to a few at the
expense of the many and to only a few faculties at the expense of the whole
human being. Such connotations were not so influential within the wide-open
spaces and the optimistic and cooperative spirit of Cariboo. More important,
their notion of success was more variously and broadly definable and their
human horizons were wider within the holistic myth of man's protean
possibilities and the faith in the efficacy of the work ethic. These wider
terms had begun to reassert themselves under the impact of the struggle
against nature—without and within—rather than against each other; and that,
in turn, tended to bring them together to share risks, failures, and, hope-
fully, ultimately, success.

Both the more balanced and humanistic conceptions of success as
"character-building" and the cooperative efforts toward shared material
success had been fused and channelled into socio-cultural activities and
institutions for mutual mental and moral improvement. These transmutations
of success—"the great life problem of every man"—had also begun to forge a
creative social idea of the individual's self-interest and betterment merged
with and vested in those of the group, of everyone having an equal, personal,
stake in the development of the country, and which was writ large in the
collective goal of a Confederation that would "increase the general prosper-
ity and improve us all individually." 59

To the miners quoted earlier theatrical "funseeking" was "a lot like
gold seeking," with the discovery of human worth rewarding the alert and
faithful seeker, the theatre serving as compensation for the failures of mining and the vicissitudes of fortune and providing vicarious enjoyment of successful self-determination, of the power to change the shape of one's existence. It would seem to have functioned not only as an analogy to, but also as an analogue of, success, translating it into desirable and realizable human forms. The plays stood as reminders of those, as well as of their necessary relation to the values of home and the good, which were essential to complete success: personal and societal happiness. The locally identifiable actors, by their playing of roles and within the roles they played, enacted on behalf of the audience both an actual and a virtual triumph over human difficulties and limitations to achieve the image of a protean success of which all could partake.

That this partaking was not merely passive and vicarious but also active and formative, that the audience played a role in "making" as well as "declaring" a theatrical success had already been adduced. This is more understandable in the light of their definition of success, their identification of the interests of the individual with those of the group, and the need to create beneficial mutual interactions between the responsibilities, efforts and advantages of each. This was logically extensible into a theatre in which many felt a personal stake, of which one could "say 'I built it,' and he builds his fame!"

Therefore the sense of a living inter-relationship and mutual responsibilities between audience and performers was crucial to the success of the theatrical event, and firmly defined as such.

The Amateurs are no doubt perfectly awake to the fact that the success or failure of their entertainments depends entirely upon their own exertions, for as long as the public receive ample proof of their doing all within their power to gratify them, they will not be behind hand in giving them the necessary support, and so long as they continue to give such entertainments as the last, they are well worthy of that support.

The distinctive, evocative and engaging "power" of the stage actor, who
"carries the destiny of his performance in his own hands," accounts for only a part of the appeal, quality and meaning of the theatre in Cariboo; the actor's success or failure was also conditional on the power of the audience and its spokesman-critic as ultimate shapers and arbiters of that destiny, of the very notion of what constituted success, and this accounts for another part. The resultant reciprocal interaction of these powers, each with its defined efficacy and independence, as well as its dependence on and responsibility toward the other, accounts for the rest. All this constituted their theatrical consensus (derived from the societal one), including the establishment of a clearly defined social distance between actors and playgoers, appropriate mutual expectations, and a common definition of the situation. It was all essential for any meaningful theatrical conventions, for any operative standards and criteria, and for any notion of performance quality and success.

The theatrical situation is clear; what made the social distance possible, the expectations appropriate, and success attainable is implied in the phrase "ample proof of their doing all within their power" and the key word "worthy," which soften the either/or and set reasonable, achievable expectations of success (such as many Caribooites had to do with life and mining); a working compromise. Thus success was neither an abstract or arbitrary category nor some lofty artistic goal, but the reward for a genuine, honest effort, a form of approval which the audience had the power to bestow and the actors to earn. "Worth," then, qualified the terms of success and is often explicitly attached to it: the review with the seven mentions of success contains three of worth and its derivatives; performances are often described as "worthy" or "deserving" of success, and merit is a synonym for it, as are references to performers having "won laurels" and to C. A. D. A.'s "well deserved reputation." 62

Of course this plainly echoes earlier quotations from miners, who, if
uncertain of success, "at least tried to deserve it." As noted already, successful prospectors and miners were regularly lauded, not for the fortunate result, but because they had earned fortune's favours, developing and revealing their own worth in the process by acquiring such manly virtues as pluck, perseverance, industry, skill and ingenuity. Such myth-making boosted morale, encouraged the more complete and laudable success of character-building and held out the ideal harmony of moral and material well being. This was not naivete; faced with positive and negative examples and their consequences for the individual and society, they simply sought to affirm and emulate what should be, for the good of man and the community.

In the theatre, where what should be could be, success could be granted to those who tried to deserve it. This rendered the notion of performance success relative and flexible by emphasizing effort more than result, and yet specific and concrete by emphasizing criteria equivalent to their own human values. That seems to have defined an agreed on theatrical convention and also the role and responsibility of the audience as alert and discerning "discoverers" of human worth. Thus it also permitted a balanced critical perspective that could "grant indulgence to inexperienced amateurs" and still insist on the demonstration of performance values and encourage or demand new standards when those were met. Therefore the criteria of the worth and success of early and later performances were fairly consistent in their basic features while showing a general progression in others.

Though the worth of performances was emotionally validated by the laughter and sentimental feeling they provoked, the central critical criterion was expressed in such terms as "natural" (or "unnatural"), "natural as life;" "truthful" or "true to life;" "faithful description;" "accurate representation," et cetera. It may be summed up as an increasing concern with, and evidence of, verisimilitude. This of course reflects the main theatrical tendencies of the time; in particular that "stream of dramatic
life"—specifically of lifelikeness—discussed in the previous chapter as flowing from the democratic public to theatrical practices and the popular dramatic forms.  

Caribooites, with their strongly progressive impulses, their materialist and utilitarian biases, and their societal concerns, also favoured art that was definitely representational (in keeping with their representative theatre) and socially and morally useful, applicable to the practical problems of modern living. Furthermore, the gold mining way of life was predicated on the pragmatic belief that hidden worth or the lack of it were eventually deducible from the sensory apprehension and rational comprehension of physical signs. Its extensibility to human nature was borne out in a small isolated community over a period of years and under often trying circumstances: sooner or later one showed his true colours. At the same time their popular ideology was predicated on an idealistic faith in a potential harmony of outward shape and inner essence. Finally, the relevance of the plays in providing role and character models and much-needed images of past associations, hopes for the future, and the anxieties and regrets of the present, would have required (influenced by their intimate auditorium) that these be embodied in vivid yet convincingly lifelike forms.

Verisimilitude is used here rather than "realism" because the latter is vague, relative and misleading, and is better applied to subject matter than to form and style. Watson admits that the greater realism in comic acting of the time was only "comparative." E. H. Gombrich has eloquently demonstrated that in fact all artistic illusion is entirely relative to, and dependent on, a given society's particular perceptual values, biases, even prejudices and taboos, which determine relevant selections, omissions, emphases, and "distortions" or "stylizations." Artistic conventions and illusions of reality are gradually shaped by a continual process of "making and matching"
according to agreed on perceptual schemata and to what reality is the object of the imitating. Finally, any complete illusion is impossible, but is only made to seem so at the time; completed, in fact, by "the beholder's share," by his projection of the missing features or unstylized elements from his personal and collective associations, triggered by the stimulus of suggestive signs, clues, and outlines. This ties in with the indications of active participation by the Barkerville audience, the representative-responsible roles and relationship of actor and spectator, and the demand that portrayals be "in accordance with the wishes of the audience"—with what was crucial to their "mental set" and most relevant to their reality.

What was the object of their imitating? the basis of their making and matching? the nature of the schemata applied? The answers can only be approximate and partial, of course, following the tracks and clues that remain. It is safe to assume that "natural as life" or "true to life" refer to outward, physically verifiable, and socio-logical similitude; inner psycho-logical truth was presumably restricted to whatever could be inferred from that. True to life meant, in the first place, true to observed or remembered life, to externally determined and recognizable roles, motivations and consequent modes of behaviour, gesture, speech and movement. In addition to the socio-material interests of Caribooites verisimilitude was thus further qualified by the generic characteristics of the plays and their tendency to embody topical concerns within typical forms, situations, and figures.

True to life in this context, therefore, meant not just externally true but specifically true to type. Natural meant an "accurate" and "correct" "conception" and "representation" of the appearance, attitudes and behaviour that could reasonably be expected or deduced from the social hypothesis of the fictional type character, which is based on popular premises and convenient societal conventions; it constitutes a deliberately over-simplified
generalization about human beings as known quantities within such self- or role-defined categories as physical traits, sex, age, cultural or national origins, occupation and social class, "humours" or dispositions. Thus the quality and lifelikeness of C. A.; D. A.'s performances were functions of the actors' selection, emphasis and mimicry, according to an existing vocabulary of popular preconceptions--actor-audience schemata--and conventionally understood signs that supported the generalizations and made apprehensible, justifiable and convincing the typifications of their roles. It was verisimilitude at a double remove: a conception of a preconception, a conventional representation of an already conventional figure.

This is not to denigrate the quality and significance of the performances for the people of Cariboo. Though type characterization has often been scorned, more recent critics like Eric Bentley have observed that there is truth in types: a type is "a creature of habit. But appallingly most of us are creatures of habit; and it is legitimate for any writer to picture us as such." The comic dramatists, "instead of trying to reduce you and me to a dessicated formula . . . put much of the affective life of you and me into their types." In the context of Victorian Society and in particular that of the gold mining community, moreover, the type character took on the significance of the constant or fixed, predetermined and predictable, role and identity in an age of protean social and personal change, of self-made individualism. The typical and typifying characteristics could be traced to such obvious influences as tradition and the family, social and economic determinism, and the given role and status of the intensifying modern class system; or, more personally, to eccentricity or ego-centricity, habit and self-complacency, acquired follies and vices.

The type was thus ambivalent in itself: it could stand for those characteristics to be valued and trusted in others and cultivated or held to in oneself; or, for those to be mistrusted or criticized and personally
avoided or discarded. They could be a necessary foundation for healthy individuality and self change, or an obstacle to them to be overcome, a prison to be escaped from. The figures in the plays vary from old to quite current types; and from common stereotypes (the Yankee, the Irishman) through a wide range of negative exemplars and positive models or mixed types (therefore more individualized) of positive and negative attributes, that represented the more universally human attributes, to the virtual archetypes of the kind mother, the wise old man, et cetera. Just as the type had truth in terms of the realities of Caribooites, so the actor's conventionally correct imitation had a definite "realism" for them.

The existence of a ready-made vocabulary of actor-audience schemata against which to make and match the representations of human types is implied or referred to continually in the reviews. Thus on the 1868 opening night, George Grant as the typical self-educated pedant "seemed to understand the true rendering of his character." By contrast, J. Z. Hough's casting was "a mistake" as he was "too unyielding for the true representation of a servant in the English sense;" that is, for the popular stereotype of the unctuous, mercenary cockney." The 1869 reviews evince an increasing specificity and enlargement of this vocabulary. For example, Mrs. Parker's "coquette" in The Waterman was not according to my idea of a flirt—a lively, laughing, mischievous-eyed maid, either all smiles or all frowns—while acting the part exceedingly gracefully, she was too motionless and statuesque. Again it was not according to the conventional idea.

On the other hand, in The Head of the Family the performances were more in line with popular notions and were therefore more successful:

especially Florence Wilson, whose representation of Cousin Charity was very lifelike and the requisite volubility was well maintained. Edgar by Mr. Bennett was rendered in strict accordance with what we would suppose were the characteristics of the person in real life. No spasmodic effort at display nor awkward assumption so frequently manifest in the acting of amateurs characterized Mr.
Bennett's efforts and his make up showed a correct taste. In *Uncle Zachary* the audience's idea of two character types—one age-old and the other that of the newer economic speculator—was portrayed.

A very faithful description of the character of the affectatious and aristocratic Houghton Highbury was given in the person of Mr. E. D. Howman. His general acting and foppish drawl of voice would have been difficult to excel by a more experienced actor. The lively business chat, and the restless, grasping, selfish manner of the "man of change" received just treatment in the hands of Mr. Grant.

Speculators were often referred to with scorn and resentment in the pages of the *Sentinel*, which also saw fit to print articles on "Gentlemen vs. Snobs" and "The Effeminate Man." Local satirists in the Horatian manner mocked the follies and duplicities of uppity cockneys, "heavy swells," boring ex-militarists of self promoted rank, medical quacks, know-it-all Americans, and sundry other local types that also figure prominently in the plays. Apparently the concentration of human diversity created by a gold rush provided, in addition to memory and imagination, visible models for the making and matching of type characteristics and a social and moral relevance in doing so.

There were not a few typical characteristics among the members of C. A. D. A. as well. The emphasis on "the fortunate cast of characters made by the committee" and on stock figures within the plays indicates that an important ingredient in lifelikeness and success—initially in most cases and a continuing factor in others—was what the film age has termed "type-casting." C. A. D. A.'s membership certainly reflected the diversity of the Cariboo populace; the photograph also shows a wide range of physical traits, barring of course extreme bulk or old age. It was said of a production at the second theatre:

In these two plays a very judicious selection had been made in the representation of the various characters; each individual appearing very well suited for the character allotted him or her.
This suitability could apparently be according to any of the kinds of type characteristics outlined earlier, or a combination of them.

It has already been shown that unsuitable casting could mar the verisimilitude and success of a performance, even where the actor "threw a great deal of life and fun into the play by his humourous expression and gestures;" these were not sufficient in themselves if they were not logically consistent with--true to--type. Hence the reliance on committee casting, three heads being better than one, here as in mining, and more likely to choose appropriately. For the most part this method seems to have worked well. Dr. Carrall, for example, who was "tall, dark and quite a dresser," was usually cast in aristocratic roles--no doubt also because of a refined and dignified manner evident in his photographs--and was invariably an "excellent representation of the type." Nor is it surprising to read that John H. Sullivan in Irish parts was "Irishman to the backbone;" nor that Hough's "native independence" made him "better adapted to represent a real live Pike County Yankee," at which he excelled; nor that, as a pert young ingenue and daughter of hotel keepers, "Miss Emily Edwards' forte lies in the impersonation of a servant maid. . . ."78

Casting to type is common enough after all and is especially useful with "inexperienced amateurs." It also served to strike a balance between the individual's impulse to change his shape, to play a greater variety of roles, and the collective ethic that a man should not try to represent himself as something more or other than he innately was, or to assume a role for which he was unsuited or incapable. This was a particular danger on the free and open frontier and as much a comic theme of the plays as the personality chafed by an imposed role: A Fish Out of Water was equally ludicrous in the play of that name, on the stage, and in Cariboo life; "the right man in the right place" and its contrary were catch phrases in the meritocracy of Cariboo and were applicable to performers also.79 In respect to the actor as
both representative of *dramatis personae* and protean player of roles, it provided a minimum sense of conviction and audience credibility, a secure foundation in his given, familiar, typical traits and known capacities for further character-building. Again their aesthetic reflected their ethic.

This does not mean, however, that they "just played themselves."

Typage in the theatre can never be as complete or sufficient as in film; hence the superiority of theatre as a histrionic medium, and the existential resonance of its actors who must still "carry the destiny" of their performances. Besides, the C. A. D. A. actors, being well known members of the community, could hardly have seemed merely identical with their stage characters: the multi-faceted activities and individuality of Thompson, Carrall, Hill, or the others transcended any typical feature. This means, first, that they did not exhaust their own exploitable characteristics in one kind of role and there was therefore a potential for enlarging their range of suitable parts. Nor did the public "type" them, but manifestly delighted in seeing their surrogates display other qualities—especially unexpected ones—in new roles. Expectation and surprise, familiarity and difference were pronounced theatrical dialectics in all the elements of their theatre.

Second, they had to do more with the role to create interest or verisimilitude, to be worthy of success, than simply exhibit their own familiar traits. The application of terms like "just treatment" and "faithful description" to the portrayal of the extravagant figures of a fop or a speculator, or to broad stereotypes, indicate that the nature of the natural, the true to life, was further modified by varying extents of humourously pointed exaggeration—-even distortion—of type characteristics and by the gestic emphasis and stylization of conventional or unconventional manners, in terms of what was considered "just," or deserved, treatment of them according to the local consensus. That could only have been accomplished,
on the primary level of "judicious casting," by the performer selecting, emphasizing or distorting, and stylizing the appropriate features and propensities in himself and by repressing others that were inappropriate.

Irish roles furnish a good example of the general approach:

Mr. J. H. Sullivan, as Terry O'Rourke, was the life and soul of the whole play. The accent, the movements, and looks of the son of "Erin's Isle" were in their minutest details correctly rendered.

Now these would hardly have been worth remarking on had they been equally evident in the actor's offstage life; in fact, Sullivan himself was by no means the transplanted Irish misfit or incompetent, but a respected figure of public trust and authority who was subsequently promoted to Superintendent of Police and Gaols for British Columbia. Furthermore, he played other kinds of stage Irishmen: the low Dublin scoundrel in Still Waters and the lovable rural prankster Paddy Miles; in each case the actor must have exploited certain elements of his own personality to the exclusion of others, while also drawing on observations and experiences accessible to him from his Irish origins.

Such contentions are further supported by the C. A. D. A. photograph, which shows several of the costumed actors striking appropriate attitudes: the unidentified person second from the left is clearly assuming those of a crotchety old man; Frank Perrett is exhibiting those of an arrogant authority figure, with the actor next to him responding with those of a servile role. That such gestic elements were conscious, specific, actor choices even in the type-cast performer is forcibly illustrated by J. Z. Hough in his specialty of the Yankee: the insouciant stance, the rakish tilt of the head, the sly twinkle in the eye, the "get up" and his use of it, all are marvelously evocative of the type. An ordinary portrait of Hough indicates that these were an embellishing and channelling of purely latent qualities and a somewhat dandyish taste in clothes. For the broader farces
and burlesques an actor might be cast against type deliberately, that he might exploit a salient feature for an effect of ludicrous incongruity: to such purpose the diminuitive J. S. Thompson played the title role in the mock-heroic *Bombastes Furiosa*.

Obviously the exaggeration or stylization was less emphatic for the less extravagant characters and situations of the comedies and domestic dramas, while for the more positive types and sentimentalized archetypes "just treatment" would have been a matter of the performer selecting and emphasizing, or idealizing, those typical qualities and tendencies that were taken seriously or elicited responses of indulgence or approval in the community. Such extensions of the actor's own personality and physiognomy suggest in all cases a prerequisite self-awareness or self-irony which would have added to the appeal and social value of the exercise, made it a demonstration of human worth essential to actual, as well as fictive, character-building.

Thus even the type-cast actor was expected not only to till the role suitably but also to interpret it; like the miner with his claim, to make "the most that could be gotten out of his part." Whether in the wildly farcical types and situations of *Cool As a Cucumber*, or the relatively subdued and subtle "marivaudage" of *The Loan of a Lover*, or the rosy-hued goodness of *The Ploughman Turned Lord*, the rules of play and the making-matching process were basically the same: controlled and justified selection and exaggeration reasonably proceeding from a conception of the type that was compatible with the preconceptions of the community, with the prevalent socio-moral attitude toward such a type of human behaviour and the treatment it deserved, rendered all the varieties of characterization equally compatible with the notion of verisimilitude and with "pleasing and instructive" entertainment.

All this is borne out, and was further effected, by some other critical
concepts, which similarly doubled as audience criteria and actor's approach, as means of success and as worthy ends in themselves, as both theatrical and socio-moral values. A fundamental, ongoing concern was implied already in "the application of the actors" and success as dependent "on their own exertions." The general term most frequently used for such efforts is "study." As late as 1871, in a capsule history of C. A. D. A., the Sentinel editor affirmed its significance:

All of the original members were novices on the stage, but by dint of perseverance and study their first performances proved sufficiently successful to encourage them in carrying on the scheme.

Just as it is linked here with perseverance, so it is elsewhere given an implicit or explicit connection with other desirable, efficacious virtues of their self-help ethos. Actors were praised for having "labored and studied" or "labored hard" to be "worthy," thus evoking industry and hard work, or for having "carefully studied" and being "well up in their parts," suggesting self-education. "Evidence of study" was a prime requisite of success:

The piece selected, "Perfection," or "The Maid of Munster," was one that required good acting and careful study to render it successful, and the manner in which all the performers sustained their several characters showed that they had not been negligent in preparation.

"Negligent" marks it as part of the actor's public accountability.

As a catch-all term study refers at its simplest to the learning of lines, though that was more a minimum demand than a positive virtue of performances; no credit was ever given for knowing them, and quite the opposite if someone did not. As generally used it was applied to the whole preparation of a role and the learning of it. Study included studying the "peculiarities of their characters"--the motives, eccentricities and typicalities--in order to arrive at a "good conception" and "to understand the true rendering of the character" according to the relevant schemata and commonly held idea of the type, and then devising and practicing "voice," "gesture"
and "action" that were justified in seeming to proceed logically and understandably from them. It also comprised studying "the points of the piece," its intended stage business and its effects of humour and pathos and how to achieve them; here private study of an individual's role overlaps with mutual preparation and practice at rehearsals, and study of the character with that of character interactions and group situations, for the term is applied collectively as well as personally. 85

It was the responsibility of the actor to appreciate these and also to discriminate among the varied requirements of the different character types and dramatic styles previously alluded to. Toward that end "taste" and "judgement" are two qualities that were regularly discerned in a careful study. As general social values the former is bound up with the urge to propriety and cultivation, the latter with the judicious and skillful comprehension and conduct needed for mining and business operations; as aesthetic ones they are in keeping with the emphasis on entertainment that was "refined" and "rational."

Consistency, within the character portrayal itself and with the character's "supposed behaviour," was not surprisingly the most readily apparent effect and evidence of careful study. A fictional character, like that of a person, was expected to "add up" under scrutiny, and the actor was often judged by how well he "sustained his character" (another favourite critical phrase) over the long haul; those who failed to do so were seized upon:

Mr. McNaughton . . . commenced well, but his representation did not seem so complete at the end; it seemed to lack study.

In The Charcoal Burner Henry Havelock, who had acted professionally in Victoria, became careless; he was applauded in the first scene, through which he carried his role somewhat in accordance with the author's intention, but in the succeeding scenes he seemed to lose the proper personation of the old man Esdale, and evidently played for the sake of effect rather than development of character.
Given their notions of verisimilitude and moral purpose and the occupational experience, outlook and ethos that informed them, Caribooites had a natural antipathy for effects without causes, and, as with unmerited success, they distrusted a too easy laughter or sentiment that did not proceed from character and touch some understanding of it.  

With the absence of extant records or performers' diaries this is all that can be ascertained about the approach and process implied by study. Yet perhaps the significant point is precisely that it does suggest some efforts in the direction of a conscious, systematic actor's method, an impression reinforced by the codifying tendencies of the reviews and the praising of the interpretive actor who entered with "energy into the spirit of the character" and "realized the intentions of the author to the letter." Indeed the phrase "what we would suppose were the characteristics of the person in real life" implies that study included a simple, pioneer version of Stanislavski's "magic if"—"what would I do if I were this character in these circumstances?" except that the emphasis was less psychological and the "given circumstances" were the schematic ones of the conventional socially determined type. Let those who might object that too much artistic seriousness of purpose is being imputed to an amateur group remember two things: Stanislavski himself began as an amateur actor with an amateur group; and he never claimed to have invented a system, but only to have discovered one naturally inherent in the process of acting. Considering that the early amateur performers sprang from the same public to which Watson traces the new "stream of dramatic life" and that these were spurred in part by a dissatisfaction with much professional acting, it is safe to attribute to the pronounced emphasis on study and preparation in the C. A. D. A. productions an attempt to define a systematic method of stimulating the actor's imagination to inventiveness that was logically consistent with, and truthful to, the fictional conception.

In their own time they were certainly not in the tradition of
"unnatural clowning" still represented by performers like John Buckstone, who made character "quite subordinate to mirth," but were close in spirit and intent to the growing concern with moderation and method of someone like Charles Mathews Jr., for whom: "my acting is the result of art and study and not that of mere accident." And equally certainly their awareness of acting as a craft, which those with a basic aptitude and an honest, intelligently-directed effort could learn to do with some competence, was a natural outgrowth of their belief in self-education and the self-help potential. The results of it will be seen shortly.89

What study was to preparation and rehearsal "self-possession" was to performance: the fundamental theatrical value, comprising components that were means and ends, causes and effects, technique and result. Self-possession is supplemented by such terms as "self command," "control" and an actor being "thorough master of himself." In their simpler contexts these meant to master any nervousness, to control any actor tension or personal diffidence. The self-possessed performer kept his composure and presence of mind in the midst of any "confusion" and did not get "shaken by a contretemps in the dialogue." These emphases echo the prospector and miner's virtues of "indomitable pluck" and courage, necessary to persevere and overcome difficulties or remain cool in a crisis or misfortune. If Caribooites had learned early that "circumstances trained or created men to master them," they had also learned--sometimes more slowly and painfully--that one must first be "master of himself."90

If an actor was criticized for losing self-possession he was equally encouraged and praised if he managed to regain it. In the revival of Still Waters Run Deep:

Mr. Howman was far from being as happy in the character of John Mildmay, as he was on opening night. Calmness and self-possession deserted him to a great extent in Scene I; but at the breakfast table he appeared to considerable advantage, and exhibited improvement from thence to the end.
The importance of this attribute to the desired effect of natural acting was well recognized, not only in the immediately apparent "calmness" and "ease of manner" but also through those as a cause of further lifelikeness in portraying and sustaining the character; the actor who "was thorough master of himself" "personated the character he represented with credit" and had "the part . . . completely under control." 91

They also appear to have recognized a complementary and reciprocal relationship between study and self-possession. On the level of performance ease there is a form of common sense anticipation of another Stanislavski discovery: that concentration promotes relaxation, which then results in additional concentration. Here it seems to have been grasped in terms of careful study creating confidence and security by focusing the actors' attention on "being well up in their parts"--and away from inhibiting audience-consciousness. It was also felt to work the other way: Emily Edwards on her début proved herself "on the score of self-possession and ease of manner quite equal to any task that may be assigned to her." Another actor was said to have appeared "unprepared, and uneasy" in his character. 92

Thus they were complementary and reciprocal, too, on the level of characterization and acting that were true to type: while study provided these in kind, through justifying what was selected, invented, or exaggerated, in the conception and preparation of a role, self-possession did so in manner and degree through controlling the "how" and "how much" of their performance. J. S. Thompson, who had a "tendency to extravagance" that was not "unsuited" to characters of that sort, was advised in other cases that

his acting would be improved by keeping it somewhat more repressed. Where voice and gesture are put forth to their full extent from the commencement there is no room for further effort when the situation requires it; the effect on the audience being nearly the same as regards lack of light and shadow, as if the result of underacting, only accompanied with a painful sense of effort.

Lack of self command and technical control were more often manifested in per-
formances that were under-played than "overdone," but since mastery of self and character was ultimately a matter of moderation, therefore either extreme was felt to misrepresent the idea of the character through the actor's insufficiently harnessed and directed energies. 93

Because the use of his own energies is, at bottom, all the means an actor has at his disposal, study and self-possession were again felt to vitally influence one another as principal determinants of the overall success or failure of a character portrayal. In the revival of *The Chimney Corner*, for example, John Bowron, "being backward in his study, represented John Probity"—a very impulsive and emotional figure—"as the most diffident of youths." Even in performances where these attributes were in evidence the actors were encouraged to cultivate them even more:

The female characters, by Miss Emily and Florence Wilson, could not have been played much better by regular professionals, except that the correct reading and clear apprehension of character displayed by both ladies might have been made more effective by additional energy, the result of practice.

The results of study and practice were enhanced by controlled and channelled energy, the result of self-possession, which in turn were further enhanced by still more study and practice. 94

This sense of the vital interdependence and creative interplay of these theatrical means and values reflects the similar relationship of pluck, perseverance, industry, and other virtues of common mythology and ethos, inseparable from the efficacy of each other and equally crucial for success. In the theatre it balances the earlier impression of systematic conscious efforts and indicates an element of comprehensiveness and synthesis of approach to acting and to the critical appreciation of it. It is understandable, therefore, that standards of what was worthy of success should have gradually progressed, and that the reviews evince an increasing concern with improvement in individual performers and in C. A. D. A. as a whole.

From the beginnings in 1867 to 1868 signs of progress from one perform-
ance to another had been lavishly praised as virtually "professional"—probably over-praised, for professional standards were themselves highly relative and variable at the time and may have been locally revised in light of the Lafont and Ward visit, which seems also to have spurred C. A. D. A.'s efforts. In any case, it was after the second Theatre Royal opened in 1869 that improvement became a critical byword, itself a regular criterion of performances' worthiness of success.

This was no doubt partly influenced by the new building—much more like a formal theatre—as well as by the sense of community investment in it. Still more important was the social context and climate of which those were a part. The 1868 mining season, the fire, and the rebuilding had left the community shaken into a sharper sense of permeation by change and of the fragile thread of its existence, and, at the same time, in conjunction with the Confederation movement and the need for mining development, more dedicated than ever to the means of progress and improvement. The latter, in fact, were no longer just socially and personally desirable accomplishments, but were crucial for survival, as practical, concrete processes with tangible results. For C. A. D. A. and community it was either progress or regression ("retrogressive progress"), no stasis; complacency, self-indulgence, or laziness were no more desirable in actors than in miners, both of whom were taken to task for them at times by the Sentinel, guardian of the public weal.

From the very opening night performance of Still Waters Run Deep reviews and audience expectations became more demanding, more alert to technical and artistic faults as failings according to the critical criteria and the Cariboo ethos. That first evening deficiencies in the projection and clarity of speech (and of emotion in some cases) caused dissatisfaction. At the second performance the opening play was successful, but while Emily Edwards was "wonderfully self-possessed,"

it was impossible not to notice the serious defect in her voice,
which may be a natural one—nevertheless I believe it can be improved, with a small amount of exertion on her part. It seriously affects her character as an actress, besides being a great loss to an attentive audience.

Having deftly appealed to the lady's self-interest and identified it with that of the public, Tal O Eifion went on to castigate the second play:

The concluding ballad opera, "The Waterman," was not given in the style that might have been expected, especially as most of the performers had acted it before.

Not only were individuals "uncomfortable" or inappropriate in character:

The finale, "Rule Britannia," was miserable, and the frequent demands for the prompter, throughout the piece, were inexcusable.

Only "the songs were well rendered" and but one actor had progressed:

Florence stood alone, and acted the part of Mrs. Bundle excellently. She has taken the hint thrown out by my critique on the opening night, and improved wonderfully; speaking so that everyone in the house could hear her distinctly. 95

It was "far more pleasant to praise than to censure—to admire than to deplore—to mark improvement than to point out defects, and to record success than to announce a failure," wrote Tal O Eifion of the following performances, Boots at the Swan and B. B., on February 13, 1869. Several new members made successful debuts, and the actresses showed evidence of progress:

Florence Wilson, as Miss Moonshine displayed her usual talent; and Mrs. S. P. Parker's rendition of Emily Moonshine exhibited a decided improvement, compared with her previous appearance before the public. Too much praise cannot be given to Miss Edwards for the manner in which she impersonated Sally. The great improvement in her voice must have been evident to all, as she spoke in a distinct tone, ... giving ample evidence of having labored and studied more than any of her fellow actors, and which was appreciated accordingly by the audience. I am glad to see that she has taken censure and advice in the same spirit in which they were given, and thereby obtained a complete mastery over her chief defect.

From then on she continued to improve steadily "in elocution and manner of action," invariably "suering the character she represented to perfection." But others did not take "censure and advice in the same spirit," which brought matters to an issue which we might call "the Barkerville critical controversy." 96
Its immediate cause lay in the erratic quality of performers and productions which continued through the winter and spring of 1869 and provoked some harsh responses. Thus an otherwise good production of Chimney Corner was marred by John Bowron's portrayal of the falsely accused son, which

in Act 1st was in my humble opinion a decided failure. His manner was entirely devoid of emotion, which ought to have been the most prominent feature in the representation . . . Mr. Bowron also spoke in an undertone, which called forth the disapproval of an injured audience. It would be well for those who are addicted to this evil to consider that they not only rob themselves of laurels which they would otherwise win, but also rob their patrons, the public, of their legitimate property.

Bowron was one of the most respected and popular men in Cariboo. That he was actually booed is indicative, first, that the reviewer did indeed speak for the by no means indulgent audience, and, second, that the public role and responsibility of the actor was being taken more seriously and kept strictly separate from his private personality and associations. The moral terms ("rob," "evil"), the linking of personal and public interests, the "injured" audience, all relate theatre to the social ethic and substantiate much of what has already been said on this topic.97

That Bowron pulled himself together in Act Two and appeared to considerable credit was appreciated but no doubt also confirmed the sense that some of the C. A. D. A. members were becoming self-indulgent and careless, aggravated, perhaps, by putting on too many productions in too short a time. Even a subsequent revival of Still Waters, though an "improvement" in some respects (Emily Edwards' Mrs. Mildmay and Blunt's Hawksley being "vividly displayed"), "still as a whole, it seemed in manner far inferior." J. S. Thompson's performance was "much below his ordinary standard of acting," some smaller roles were "overdone," and Florence Wilson had become

addicted to a very bad habit of smiling when she ought to be serious, or to be flushed with passion; thus her looks belie her words.

Mannerisms also plagued Thompson, who was "very good in the afterpiece. . . ."
Although a certain individuality in gait and manner, which exhibits itself in all of Mr. Thompson's representations of character, was easily discernible throughout... These evidences of lack of study and practice and resultant poor concentration and actor tension were clearly read as such. 98

Alongside definite improvements by other actors, or even by the same people in different scenes or productions, and with simultaneously rising audience standards, such inconsistent or "retrogressive" progress was bound to strain the public patience; it finally snapped on March 27, when C. A. D. A. hit its lowest level. The controversy was sparked by the review, which began with the charge that C. A. D. A. was letting the community down.

The interest which the public took in the entertainment of Sat. last was manifested by the manner in which the house was crowded. . . . Their expectations were great, but alas! doomed to be ungratified. In the comedietta "Change of System," Mr. E. D. Howman . . . and Florence Wilson were much inferior to their usual manner of acting, and betrayed a great want of study, keeping the prompter continually employed, who thus became so inured to his situation as to prompt in many instances when utterly unnecessary.

The sense of trust and support "betrayed" is reinforced by the judgement that the "singing in the interlude, which was looked upon as one of the most attractive features in the programme, was a total failure." The second play, The Vermont Wool Dealer, was successfully introduced to the Cariboo public:

The impersonation by Geo. Moss of the Irish boot-black, Con Golumby was excellent, and frequently convulsed the audience with laughter. . . . The leading character of Deuteronomy Dutiful was very ably represented by Mr. J. Z. Hough. This is a character in which Mr. Hough excels. The loud call for his appearance before the curtain was deservedly won, but he would have acted wisely had he retained his little extempore speech.

Thus even in success there was a note of "hammy" self-indulgence and an overstepping of the bounds of the defined theatrical situation and actor--audience distance. 99

This review provoked a lengthy attack signed "J. S.;" who admitted that it agreed with the audience consensus but nonetheless claimed it was
"deficient in that discrimination which one expects in an authoritative critique." His first argument is, in essence:

That an audience should look on a performance . . . as friends being entertained by friends, and receive their efforts to amuse as cordially as they are tendered.

He echoes Anderson's "And now kind friends. . . ." but that had already been anticipated by Tal having prefaced an earlier review with "Nor hide displeasure when you see just cause."

He then blames "a cold and unappreciative reception" for the loss of "self-possession, even memory;" the audience being more intent on the discussion of a matter of more immediate interest to some of them, the piece opened to a subdued hum of conversation and an unsubdued cloud of tobacco smoke.

Conceding that the singers "may fairly be sacrificed to your correspondent's just wrath," he then goes on to argue that the critic failed to discriminate between "the comparative difficulties of the respective roles."

Thus excessive commendation is bestowed on the gentlemen taking the characters of Deuteronomy Dutiful and Con Golumby. Now, without wishing to underrate these performances, . . . I would merely suggest the consideration as to how many points in the former were aided by a pair of whimsical pantaloons, and in the latter by a number of Irish comicalities of somewhat liberal breadth.

These roles he calls "pointed" or "assisted" by virtue of inherent laughter-provoking devices or possibilities, which supposedly render them "safe" for the lucky actors who are cast in them. To safe versus unassisted parts he attributes the relative judgements of the critic. Though his premises may be valid, the inferences he draws from them undermined the consensus, conventions, criteria and standards that were the workable basis and vital principles behind the Barkerville theatre.

Not surprisingly he was attacked in turn by "An Old Amateur" for taking the "laurels so deservedly won by some . . . to adorn the heavy brows of others." No doubt aware that they are the sort of mischievous, indulgent rationalizations that give amateur—or any other--theatre a bad name, he
demolishes "J. S.'s" arguments: "the more an actor endeavours to identify himself with the character he is studying and the more he studies to develop its peculiarities," the more "safe" he will feel and "therefore would lose neither his self possession nor his memory." Thus reaffirming the critical perspective, he does so with the critic's role of spokesman as well:

A critic will seldom fail in doing justice to our amateurs, or any other theatrical troupe, by criticizing according to the approbation given by the audience.

Hough and Moss "deservedly won" applause because they had "studied the peculiarities of their characters," as shown by the pantaloons and comicalities they had devised, and therefore "personated" them "truthfully." He also refers to the success of The Loan of a Lover on a previous occasion, "though devoid of Irish comicalities." In A Change of System, he concludes:

The actors did not show us that they were up in their parts by their very frequent stoppages, and therefore neither did justice to themselves nor the audience; ... in the absence of which their acting would have elicited the applause they have so often been greeted with, on former occasions by "J. S.'s" very cold and unappreciative audience.

"Act well your parts, nor fear the friendly scold
'Tis careless playing makes the audience cold."

There were no safe parts, only unprepared actors. Both they and the audience were deemed capable of distinguishing styles and requirements.

Tal O Eifion did not reply till about to "quit the critic's bench" for his mining claim.

... I decline to make any comment on "J. S.'s" letter, from the consideration that every whelp has a right to bark, and that they who make themselves objects of public notice, at once lay themselves open to public criticism. This holds good in reference to the Amateurs, "J. S.," myself, and "any other man." I thank him for the tribute ... to my judgement in admitting that it agrees with the majority. I also thank "An Old Amateur" ... for his letter in my defence, and feel happy in knowing that some of the Amateurs consider that I have dealt justly towards them. If I have done otherwise, it has been a fault of the head, not of the heart.

The majority ruled, the consensus and critical perspective were re-established on a firmer basis, its codified values and criteria were virtually re-
formulated. Perhaps this was doubly necessary since they had previously been implicit assumptions, for the most part, and since C. A. D. A. had evolved gradually out of occasional, informal entertainments. This controversy—which apparently also sparked considerable vocal discussion—is a fine example of Caribooites' community spirit, social democracy, keen enjoyment of their prerogatives as citizens, and extraverted love of public argument and debate, as well as their characteristic mixture of formality and familiarity, courtesy and blunt outspokenness. For us, too, it demonstrates the vital role and relationship of the theatre in the community, and some sources of that vitality. It was certainly efficacious in doing so at the time, and C. A. D. A. never sank so low again.

On the contrary, the individual improvement and general progress that had been discernible as erratic tendencies in isolated productions or particular performances appear to have been stimulated thereby just as the earlier virtues had been rekindled. Afterward standards were more carefully maintained and advances more steadily and consistently achieved, both within and between productions. In keeping with this, one of the notable new criteria that had entered the critical vocabulary was a concern with unity of effect. This was first observed in the composing of the stage picture, suggesting that the coordinating function of the stage manager was becoming more important.

In The Chimney Corner:

The curtain, on rising, revealed a scene, which, for excellence and completeness of arrangement, even in the minutest details, gives great credit to the good taste and skill of the manager, Mr. W. W. Hill. 103

Presumably the visual sensibility was stimulated by Hill's work as the company's scene designer and was no doubt also influenced by the production of such full length plays with a larger number of scenic, plot and character components requiring such arrangement, especially in the domestic dramas and the more subtle social comedies, which required greater attention to milieu,
atmosphere, and the minute details that composed them.

Such factors were probably as operative in the development of more unified, ensemble acting. Even during the controversy, after the review of *A Change of System*, this quality was observed in *The Loan of a Lover* and its afterpiece, which were "unusually successful. The general acting was superior to anything of the kind which has taken place before on the Cariboo boards," and even the formerly berated John Bowron's performance as Captain Amersford, the romantic leading role, "was more creditable to him, and more in accordance with the wishes of the audience, than any of his previous characters." At the subsequent performance the trend was yet more marked:

In no instance, during the season, have the performers, collectively, pulled so well together. Had they been otherwise, their performance would, undoubtedly, have been a miserable failure, on account of the tedious nature of the plays.

How much of this was directly due to C. A. D. A. pulling itself together in the wake of the critical fray is suggested by Tal O Eifion's remark that some of the members at least considered his criticisms fair. Apparently the divided views were reflected within the group, and, it may be assumed, so were the reassertion of the social-theatrical consensus and majority rule. If that mandate had not been sufficient to sway the recalcitrant, there was an undeniable (though temporary) decline in audience support to back it up.

Whether the pulling together actually resulted from the will of the group or additional authority delegated to the stage manager is not known, but that the differences were resolved amicably is indicated by the absence of any resignations or hiatus in the performances. That the imperative to resolve them and unite the haphazard, individualistic efforts within a still more cooperative endeavour and a larger common purpose came from the audience is indicative of its demanding, shaping influence as the real "artistic director," and reflects not only the original cooperative spirit that the dramatic association had lost sight of, but also a community whose social and
economic survival were ever more dependent on that same spirit.

Nor was it merely a value in itself, another component of a success-worthy production; it also further extended the standards of performance quality. In *The Charcoal Burner*, in July of 1869, "none of the performers showed any hesitancy or want of confidence so usual to amateurs," while the actors as interpreters began to show more appreciation for the functions of characters within the play and its other dramaturgical elements:

Mr. Ormandy's Jeremy Hackle was the good natured character intended by the author to afford variety and contrast in the composition of the comedy.

By the opening of the next winter season it was noted with satisfaction that "all the roles were exceedingly well represented." And if teamwork could make a "tedious" script entertaining, it could enhance the values of a good one:

It was gratifying to notice how well the audience understood and enjoyed what authors and actors call the points of the piece—the laughter and applause coming in at the right places.

The critic concluded:

The Amateurs are rapidly attaining the proficiency of regular professionals. A little more confidence, which will come with practice, and a more careful study of character—altogether apart from the words—will render the Cariboo Amateurs as good a theatrical troupe as is to be found anywhere out of the professional world.

Once again a new level of achievement appears to have drawn not only appreciation, but also an inducement to further efforts, and once again it involved the reciprocal interaction of study and self-possession, with the former now directed specifically toward silent acting and interpreting between the lines.

While a stronger ensemble spirit helped C. A. D. A. to develop and sustain a higher and more consistent standard of group performance, oft referred to as their "usual good style" or "their best style," individual effort was by no means lost sight of or de-emphasized. It would probably be inaccurate in any case to assume that they practised what we would think of
as ensemble acting or unity of style. Their aesthetic was a series of workable frontier adaptations of popular notions and values in line with what was locally congenial or required. What they presumably meant by collectively pulling together was an equivalent to the frontier concern that everybody "pull his weight," to help fulfill the requirements for success, which then constituted the unity of style. This was commendably democratic and sensibly pragmatic. Combined with the casting from typical qualities or personal strengths, it created a framework within which success was accessible to all who worked for it according to the common criteria of socially analogous theatrical values of study and practice, taste and judgement, self-possession and control, individual improvement and general progress. It was ultimately achievable, as we saw, by those like John Bowron who were not actors by native ability, or by those like Frank Perrett who had a practical grasp of the craft but no striking talent: "his part was as usual in a character to which he is well suited, carefully studied and well performed." This was a qualified success, success as competence and character-building, as enlarging or altering one's role. 106

But within the established framework of what could be learned, acquired, and improved, mutually collaborated on and achieved—and indeed precisely because of it—there was equal scope for the unqualified, conspicuous success (just as there was within the social ideal of cooperation and general prosperity); this was the success of complete identification with the character, the transformation of the whole shape of one's ordinary existence as well as of the customary role and behaviour. This effect seems to have sometimes occurred as a result of a fortunate individual being cast in a role that was especially congenial and sparked a more inspired effort, but most often it was ascribed to talent and personal improvement.

Again, the first references to this greater verisimilitude belong to the first months of 1869. At the February 13 performance Jack Hudson was
described as "entering with energy into the spirit of his character," while "the impersonation of Pippin, by Mr. Wm. Fraser, elicited the laughter and approval of a delighted audience." With the production of The Chimney Corner a few weeks later, the effects of transformation were even more striking:

Mr. J. S. Thompson's Peter Probity was excellent, self was lost sight of entirely in the representation of the character. The extremes of pathos and passion, despondency and joy were truthfully portrayed, and most worthily received the unreserved and enthusiastic approbation of the house. Mr. George Grant proved, without a doubt, that his forte as an actor lies in the representation of old age; and, as the aged and infirm Solomon Probity, his ability was shown in its true light. In the scene of the extraction of the box from the desk the representation of the ideal appeared to be actually transformed into the real. The tottering steps, shaking frame, trembling hand, and cracked voice were true to life. . . . Florence Wilson was quite competent to represent Patty Probity, and at times entered into it with such enthusiasm as to cast herself entirely into oblivion.

This new level of identification and truth to type may have been triggered by the domestic dramas with their more realistic subject matter and milieu, their more down-to-earth dialogue, restrained tone and idealized, empathetic types.

These invited emotional as well as imaginative identification—as the reference to Thompson's performance shows—and because the figures were close to home and family experience they no doubt called forth the amateur's natural sincerity. In The Porter's Knot Florence Wilson, in the sentimental scene "where she returns to her custom of twenty years previous in carrying her husband his dinner, was much admired," while Mrs. Parker as the "sweetheart" in the reunion with the prodigal son was "very interesting and pathetic." Pathos, indeed, was another addition to the critical vocabulary from this point on.

Yet the identification seems to have been equally the result of accumulated skills and the developing of consciously-directed talent. The evidence of technique and accurate mimicry in Grant's imitation of a nonagenarian was exemplified, too, in Thompson and Wilson's old rustic couple in
Uncle Zachary and the transformation equally complete; her representation of the "old 'ooman," Tabitha Clench, was excellent. I have never seen her act so natural before and so devoid of self. The Devonshire dialect was rendered by her and by the gentleman representing her husband "old Zachary" in a manner worthy of a native.

Of course this protean aspect is generic to theatre in any case, and constitutes much of its magic, but it had specific appeal and significance for Caribooites, both for its analogy to their own common aspirations and for its embodiment by the amateur performer as one of them, sharing their ideology and values. This last point indicates that the changes must have been striking in degree and convincing in manner to have drawn such audience response and critical praise. Yet the conscious making-matching process was still very much applied—if not more so—to this enhanced verisimilitude.

Their "realism" was not simply illusion as an end in itself: the enjoyment centred around, and grew out of, a keen awareness of, and interest in, the whole process of acting and a delight in the actor's protean powers, his role-playing methods, and his displaying, and the spectators' discovering and assessing, of hidden worth in the form of "forte," "skill," and "ability" shown "in its true light." These ends were equally attainable within a burlesque drama like Don Paddy de Bazan, with Mrs. Parker's pursuit by the soldiers and the attempt to force her by fraud from her lover affording a chance of exhibiting her ability to take a character in tragic drama with credit and success.

In a farce like The Area Belle Florence Wilson in the title role "was thoroughly at home and was loudly applauded," while even with the outlandish figures of The Vermont Wool Dealer Hough and Moss were adjudged to have "personated" their characters "truthfully by good acting."

Nor does it appear to have mattered in an individual performance whether the actor adapted himself to the character (as in those of Grant or Wilson) or the character to himself (Hough's Yankee roles), for both phrases were employed on different occasions. In the latter approach ad libs and
local puns could even be interpolated as long as they were "well timed and well given" and true to type. An actor like Thompson seems to have used both approaches, losing his individuality in some roles and exploiting it in others (though not always appropriately at first). Such eclecticism was in keeping with theatrical practice of the time and entirely congenial to the frontier, where adapting oneself to circumstances and circumstances to oneself were equally essential for success, or even for survival. In the theatre the ends to which various means were adjusted were truth to type, the display of human worth, the affirmation of the protean freedom to effectively enlarge or change one's role, character, or whole identity.

Over the long run, therefore, versatility was valued and encouraged, insofar as it was consonant with verisimilitude; it was expressive of the other dimension of protean man to that of sudden transformation: the sense of the multiplicity of human potentialities and the ability to play a variety of roles, display a range of personal worth. The best actors, including Thompson, Grant, Jack Hudson, and, later, Henry Havelock and Gómar Johns, seem to have exhibited considerable versatility within the spectrum of comedy, farce, and domestic drama. Grant not only played old man's roles and sly schemers with conspicuous success, but in The Charcoal Burner he "made a decided advance . . . in identifying himself with the juvenile hero." Except for the latter role, for which he was physically incongruous, Thompson played practically every character type from Samson Burr in The Porter's Knot to the eccentric old Potter in Still Waters and many of the frenetic man-about-town figures in the urban farces, sometimes appearing in two plays an evening, as did George Grant. Though the price of Thompson's versatility was that he was not always successful in repressing unwanted characteristics or in "being natural," still he was "unequivocably acceptable to the public" and "inimitably droll," perhaps as much a "personality" and comedian as an actor, and some of his "personations" were "quite masterly." Jack Hudson was an
extremely popular comic singer who began acting in 1869 and continued through the 1870's, showing "histrionic capacity" in a variety of different roles. Johns and Havelock were also singers who became actors, and whose "versatility" was commented on.

But it was the women who proved perhaps the most versatile—and consistent—performers. They would almost have had to be, given the large number of roles they played over more than half a decade, and this experience was certainly conducive to development. After Emily Edwards, herself often praised for her talent and for "winning fresh laurels," left the group, the female characters were almost all shared between the other two, who continued to demonstrate unexpected ability in new roles, which always delighted the audience. Indeed, they alternated in soubrette and leading roles as well as in eccentric character types like Florence Wilson's "Tabitha Clench." The latter actress, soon forgiven for her temporary lapse from public favour, was also credible as the snobbish spinster or the "sweet young thing," while as a Mexican heiress her "change from wayward, passionate girl to the subdued and affectionate wife displayed much artistic ability." In another case Mrs. Parker, "as the ancient lady's maid of a past generation, looked and acted the character, which is entirely of a different style to what she has been accustomed, to perfection." 113

These performers, then, became the "general favorites," and, along with newcomers and old reliables, seem to have maintained the standards set by the end of 1869 and even advanced them, until by the 1873 production of Caught by the Cuff mentioned by Arthur Bushby, the Sentinel referred to Florence Wilson playing Mrs. Pryor with a spirit and energy strongly recalling to our minds Mrs. Keeley in her best days. Frank Perrett, as Job Heat, capitally delineated a London policeman whose mind never wavered between love and duty, but surrendered himself without a struggle to the attraction of the charming widow and oyster suppers. Jack Hudson, the Paul Bedford of the amateurs, played Mr. Butt the commercial traveller, in a manner worthy of his great prototype. Comar Johns . . . is deserving of the highest praise; the scene at
the close, where he emerges from the cellar in a bewildered state, was a little bit of splendid acting.

Mrs. Keeley, who retired in 1869, had been a leading London actress, known indeed for her spirit and energy and "at her best in pathetic and appealing roles;" Paul Bedford had, like Hudson, begun as a comic singer and later made a reputation in London for low comedy acting.\textsuperscript{114}

Were C. A. D. A. performers really as good as this suggests? Was this true only in their own context and perspective--what of the larger one? It must be first remembered that many of the Caribooites were quite cosmopolitan and, as the reviewer indicates, had seen such professional actors in London and other metropolitan centres. The comparison with Mrs. Keeley also struck Bushby forcibly enough to record it in his diary, and so did Gomar Johns' quality as a performer. And there are other objective indicators. An erstwhile \textit{Sentinel} reviewer wrote from San Francisco, having seen \textit{Still Waters Run Deep} at the new California Theatre and comparing the acting of the same piece by the Cariboo Amateurs. The character of Mrs. Mildmay was better performed by Miss Edwards in the second production of the play than it was by the lady who represented it here, and Blunt's Hawksley was far superior to Mestayer's. As to the other characters, there was not much difference between them and I came to the conclusion that the Cariboo Amateurs, providing they had the machinery and scenery which are possessed by the California Theatre, would be able to produce plays as successfully as they do here.\textsuperscript{115}

Yet the California troupe was professional, and the Cariboo amateurs had made definite progress since they had produced that play. There is also the reporter from the \textit{Alta California}, who was impressed by C. A. D. A.'s "very fair proficiency," and James Hamilton, a Caribooite, remembered that "plays were given that would do credit to a town of larger scope." It would seem accurate to agree with Gordon Selman:

The fact that the Amateurs continued to function successfully into the 1870's when the community generally was on the decline, is a tribute to the energy and, possibly, talent of the performers and an indication of the strong support they had earned in the community. \textsuperscript{117}
That there was genuine talent in the leading actors and at least a basic aptitude among many of the others is suggested not only by such comments from diverse viewpoints, but also by the nature of the Cariboo people. The very fact of their uprooting themselves for uncertainties, risks, dangers, and unfamiliar situations and associations indicates a desire and an ability to imaginatively extend themselves and their horizons. The primary impulse to change their roles and alter the course of their lives was innately histrionic. Moreover, it was often those who felt their talents and potential stifled in their native societies who left on such quests, and those who remained in a land like Cariboo over the years were inevitably those who had the capacity to change, adapt, compromise and improvise, which are fundamental to the comic outlook.

One might also cite the inventiveness required and encouraged by mining and frontier living, and their isolation from established society as a source of both comic detachment and identification with what was missed. Finally, there was clearly present among them talent for many forms of activity: social, cultural, political. Their relatively specialized repertoire suggests a largely comedic brand of histrionic capacity, and no doubt such concentration fostered its development; yet that should not be taken to denigrate their abilities, as Booth seems to imply, for anyone who has tried to act in comedy and farce knows how difficult—and different from each other—these genres are to perform effectively. Besides there were other factors that restricted their repertoire.

But latent talents and aptitudes by themselves do not a living theatre make, or they would have had one earlier. It was their common myths of concern and collective ethos, the willingness to cooperate in living them out through their component values and in the wider terms of the whole individual and the balanced society, together with the community consensus and mutual support they produced, that unlocked the talents and energies, channelling
them into constructive, creative activities, of which the theatre, as both protean and communal art, was a natural consequence and central agency. The social consensus, as we have seen, produced a theatrical one which was viable, practical and meaningful because it was warranted by the very myths and values that motivated, animated and shaped, in the context of Cariboo experience, both individuals and community. These in turn supplied the creative interplay of audience support and actors' efforts, as well as a framework of cooperative and collective involvement by C. A. D. A. and the community at large--each representative of and responsible to the other--and a set of actor-spectator goals and criteria for the making and matching of artistic imitations.

That the use of means and ends central to their ideology and scheme of values should have had an equivalence and applicability to theatrical standards and acting methods; that they were not simply imposed on theatre but were organic to its workings; that they actually inspired and directed the actors toward performances of increasingly high quality--objectively so as well as subjectively within their own critical perspective--is understandable. For all meaningful standards of performance quality must derive from those ideals and goals most operative in the society and the beliefs which sustain it, all living theatrical conventions and values from socio-moral ones, all effective means for truthful character conception and portrayal from its dominant mental set, perceptual habits and field of human dealings (even if these are not directly shared and participated in by a majority within the society, but then the theatre will be a minority art form as it is today). In Cariboo these elements were not original or unique, any more than the plays were, but were borrowed and adapted from those of the age. What had generally made the theatre a popular medium was precisely that its own defining values and capacities--what it does best--made it best suited to express the popular, secular mythologies that now dominated the consciousness of the
mass of people and informed the workings of modern society. Part of the
significance of the Cariboo theatre for us in that respect is that it high-
lights some of the meaning and raison d'etre, and the very basis for the
appeal, of the popular theatre in general.

In theatre and drama, as Esslin says, context is everything. What made
the Cariboo context unique was what elements they selected and emphasized
from the larger one, how they adapted and applied them, and what connotations
they acquired within the particulars of the physical and human environments
and of the Caribooites' own heightened tendencies and sensibilities: their
pioneer spirit. The vigour and appeal of popular drama resides largely in
its own adaptability to the demands and needs of new audiences and environ-
ments; the very simplicity, crudeness and sketchiness of its forms, charac-
ters and content, its lack of literary pretensions or biases, give it a
flexibility in these respects, and thus it, too, had the pioneer spirit. The
conjunction of this drama and this context gave the Cariboo theatre a unique
role, relationship and significance within the community, which could be best
summed up in terms of the hypothesis advanced earlier: a secular ritual
enacting the community's beliefs, values and aspirations, affirming and
strengthening its people's awareness of their common humanity, social bonds
and identity.

The warrants for such a ritual and its conduct inhered in the myths of
concern and the mythic patterns in the plays, and in the intensified and
localized reality these had for Caribooites. The interpenetration of
aesthetic and socio-moral concerns; the strict criteria evolved therefrom for
the proper conducting of performances; the efficacy within their social and
and economic realities which the equivalents to their theatrical values were
felt to have—or desired to have--beyond the fictional enactment; the sense
of importance vested in the successful consummation of the event; the active
participation of the spectators and their mixture of strong identification
and critical detachment; their keen interest in the whole process of the enactment—all these elements suggest both a ritual significance and the nature of it.

Hopefully they have also been suggested in the course of discussing the main features of C. A. D. A.'s organization and practice and of the critical perspective, and may be briefly summed up here. First, the whole nature and conduct of the theatrical event would seem to have constituted a ritual enactment and reaffirmation of the bases and goals of the industrial and social democracy and evolving community identity: cooperative capitalism and social enterprise, the sense of common cause and the felt mutuality of interests, equality of opportunity and citizenship, and the desire—and positive need—to find a constructive balance between freedom and restraint, respectability and informality, the claims of the individual and the group. It celebrated their myths of protean man and happy home, of progress, democracy and lands of opportunity, and their cooperative, self-improving, character-building ethos. The theatrical ritual was conditioned to reflect and make present these imaginative truths by virtue of a theatre in which all could feel a stake, a personal and community investment; a classless, informal auditorium in which all were welcome and could feel at home; a standardized repertory which was a compromise between the respectable and the popular, good taste and good fun, and combined pleasure and instruction, mythic content and patterns with typical and topical forms.

The enactment of the social order and its desiderata included the representative composition of the audience and of C. A. D. A. as a free association of equals; the socially derived theatrical consensus of a collectively-willed theatrical event, with defined roles, powers and responsibilities for its success (in which everyone again had a stake) that characterized the actor-audience relationship; the cooperative efforts of the dramatic association; the deserved success publicly bestowed on individual and group
for honest effort and genuine merit, according to commonly held values; and
the critic as audience representative and spokesman pronouncing the verdict
according to the judgement of the majority, articulating its demands, criter-
ia, and responses for the guidance of subsequent enactments. The represent-
ative and responsible features also made the theatrical event an analogous
ritual testing of the processes and viability, within and for the community,
of the desired political democracy.

More specifically, within the performance itself, there would seem to
have been, by virtue of the intense interest in the processes of enactment,
the consciousness of making and matching and the employment of criteria felt
to be valuable in themselves and worthy of success in life as in the theatre,
an exploitation of the implicitly double nature of drama, making it explicit
and locally meaningful. There were thus two interlocking dramas going on
simultaneously. There was of course that of the virtual, fictive interaction
of characters within the play, themselves representing elements of the secu-
lar mythology and common outlook. But there was also a heightening of the
actual interaction of the actor with the role and with the audience, the
performer striving to win success from the latter by demonstrating his own
intrinsic worth as well as, and by means of, that of the fictional role,
according to standards that were analogues of both actual and fictive
character-building.

A successful performer "made the most that could be gotten" out of
himself by doing so with his stage role, was "thorough master of himself" and
therefore of the role. Whether he deserved success in terms of an earned
competence, as appropriate and truthful character-building, or the more
conspicuous success of the self-willed transformation of the whole shape of
his existence, his recognizable "self lost sight of," the performer in any
case played an important community role by symbolically acting out and
validating the efficacy of its sustaining values and mythic aspirations in
the form of a personal success achievable in socially desirable terms, and in harmonious relationship with his fellows.

In the relationship of actor and type character, the more he identified himself with his role (or vice versa) the more the locally known amateur resolved a double conflict. The juxtaposition affirmed the superiority of the self-determining individual to the typical, to the given, externally determined role and circumstances; he demonstrated his control of them (in himself and in the character), rather than his being controlled by them, and revealed his essential separability and independence of them in the more complex, individualized figure, the larger self within, who reappeared at the end of the play: the mobile face behind the self-made mask. He dramatized not only the fixed type and social conventions of the play, but also the victory of the alterable individual over them, and this had much to do with what had brought people to Cariboo, had kept them there, and informed their economic and social order.

But, on the other hand, that same order inevitably required compromises, laid certain claims, demands and norms on the individual, just as he depended on it; a community, after all, needed some givens, some fixity, some conventions and defined roles, and some recognition of the limitations of the individual's capacity and autonomy. And here too the actor not only allowed the audience to test and select these from within the play, but by his very ability to accommodate himself to the demands of a role, to fit in with its limits and conventions, he also affirmed a potentially freer, more constructive and happy relationship between self-assertion and the claims of the societal order, the self-determined and the given, the alterable and the fixed, and the individual and the typical. The protean freedom of the actor-individual to play a variety of roles was reconciled with personal capacities and limitations and with the needs of the community through the "wishes of the audience" that he "appeared thoroughly at home" in the role and that the
altered shape did not seem incompatible with his substance. A successful performance balanced these diverse and potentially divergent realities.

In the Cariboo perspective the actor, as a distinctly double representative of characters to the audience and of the community to itself, brought together in himself—as "role-possessed body and embodied role"—images crucial to both the myth of protean man and the myth of a happy home: he simultaneously altered or transformed himself and brought to life the unchanging social and domestic relations of the script world by imaginatively journeying to that world and returning clothed in those relations. The audience laid on him the demand that those images be made present in its own terms. The theatre was a secular ritual—indeed the only common ritual in Cariboo—in which the society in the making could entertain itself by entertaining the possible fulfillment and resolution (in relation to the "how" and "why" as well as the "what") of its competing myths of concern, could test the local validity and applications of their various claims, and could reaffirm and enlarge in laughter and sentiment, identification and critical detachment, shared values and a common humanity. If the social consensus shaped the consensus for a community theatre, theatre in turn enhanced and solidified the basis of community.

But although the dramatic performances formed the principal part of the theatrical ritual, they did not constitute the whole of it: to gain a sense of that before concluding this chapter, and our understanding of C. A. D. A.'s community role and significance, it is worth considering the "interlude" performances. The latter were mainly musical, but by no means entirely so, and, as time went on and depending upon the availability of performer skills, they were apt to become little shows in themselves, aggregations of separate, seemingly incongruous acts bound together not programmatically but merely by the loose logic of contrasting moods and the variety and effectiveness of the diverse specialties. And therein lay their function: apart from
filling the scene changes in the plays, they also complemented them in extending the range of audience experience and of the celebration of their common myths, local concerns, and Cariboo's human resources. In their forms and contents they similarly extended expression of common values, and longings and the enjoyment of laughter and sentimentality. And they evince an interesting blend in the choice of material: of the respectably middle class and the "vulgar" proletarian; of a continuity with polite parlour entertainment on the one hand and with informal saloon entertainment on the other; with the old home and the home away from home.

Though music as such is outside the province of this study, some of the songs at least are accessible through their lyrics (those that are extant in published form). In fact there are very few specific references to instrumental music in any case. As already suggested, there was a small "orchestra" during most of this period, actually a four or five piece band, led by one of the players, but it is not very clear what they played apart from "God Save the Queen" and accompaniments to the songs. Prof. Wilson, who led the band at the first theatre, wrote polkas, schottishes and marches in his employment at the Fashion Saloon, and most likely similar music was played at the performances--indeed his "Muggletonian Schottish," inspired by the play D'Ye Know Me Now?, must almost certainly have been, and the same may be said for his New Dominion March, written for the July 1, 1868 celebration. Under his tenure the band was said to "discourse music that will stir the soul of anything human." This suggests both the rhythmically stirring qualities of the catchy march and dance tunes and, considering the Victorian use of "soul" in regard to music, sentimentally affecting melodies; both connotations are also in line with the age's emphasis on the moral influence of music--especially that appealing either to patriotic and socially extroverted sentiments or to the softer, "finer" feelings and the melting mood. It also indicates that music functioned similarly to laughter in the Barker-
ville theatre as something that brought people together and appealed to their basic common humanity and satisfied a psychic and emotional hunger.  

Daniel Whelan, who took over the band after Wilson left, was an excellent violinist, probably a professional: "Cariboo has never seen his equal, and it would be a difficult task to find one to excel him on the Pacific Coast." He played solos at some of the performances, and one of them was a "magnificent" violin arrangement of the beautiful tenor aria "La Mia Letizia" from Verdi's *I Lombardi*, which was as close to "serious music" as the Theatre Royal seems to have come. It was immediately followed—incongruous to us perhaps but not to them—by Whelan's "imitation of the bagpipes," which was considered "very truthful." On another occasion he played "The Valley Lies Smiling Before Me" and "The Sprig of Shillelagh," and such popular and folk tunes were undoubtedly the usual instrumental fare.

Music, as in Victorian Britain, meant mainly vocal music, no doubt further encouraged on the frontier by the voice being the only truly portable instrument. It is also the most personal and individualized and the most inherently theatrical. Similarly the song, especially the ballad, which was the chief Victorian form, lends itself to theatrical, even dramatic, treatment. The popular song, because of its universality and familiarity, also had stronger personal and collective associations than the plays: that is, it not only evoked them; it possessed them in itself. All these factors would have been influential on the choice of songs and their performance, and since "everyone sang" in that period, and was thus also something of a "connoisseur," there would have been plenty of singers in Cariboo, only the best of whom performed in the theatre. Thus, except for the one lapse, already noted, the singing was invariably a major attraction.

Most of the songs can be grouped into four main categories. There were songs of ethnic or folk character, Victorian parlour ballads, comic songs of a generally lower class and music hall origin, and, most important in this
study, locally written songs adapted from one or more of the existent popular forms. These are only rough distinctions and often overlap, and the actual source of many in the first two groups was the popular theatre. Except for a few French songs performed by Monsieur Lecuyer at the first Theatre Royal, they were all British or American—mostly the former and reflecting, like the plays, the dominant British population and affinities, and expressing the desired identity with "brother" Canada and "Mother England."

Among the folk or ethnic tunes the Irish and Scottish—especially those set to lyrics by Robert Burns and Thomas Moore—were particularly favoured. While there were large contingents of Irish and Scottish, as well as Canadians of celtic descent, among the population, yet just as the Irish and Scottish had become especially identified with emigration in general, so their songs had begun to have universal meaning in Britain and North America as expressions of "homesickness and regrets for the days that are no more." They also gave the frontier community a borrowed sense of continuity and tradition, of folkloric and cultural roots, just as they still do, to a surprising and revealing extent, for many Canadians whose connections with those countries are remote or non-existent. Moreover, the lyrics to most such songs had even then become so thoroughly commercialized, bowdlerized, or just plain prettied up, that the ethnicity remaining was just enough to be appealing and invite sentimental identification or substitution from people of many nationalities. They were like the humble home in the plays, universal symbols imparting a common feeling of longing and belonging in the face of separation; songs of innocence before harsh experience.

Among the popular purveyors of such pieces were Mrs. Andrew Kelly, Mrs. Tracey, Mrs. R. H. Brown (wife of a miner) and James Anderson; in songs of sentimental value the women, not surprisingly, outnumbered the men. Mrs. Tracey on more than one occasion "thilled the audience with her masterly execution of 'O Weel May the Keel Row:'''
As I came down the canongate, the canongate
As I came down the canongate I heard a lassie sing
O weel may the keel row the keel row the keel row
O weel may the keel row the ship that my love's in.

The words are eloquent of the typically childlike appeal of such songs, and it also says much for their adaptability that this one was universally thought to be Scottish throughout the century, even in the face of proof that it was actually Northumbrian English. Typical, too, in these respects is the blessing of the faithful sweetheart on the emigrant, the latter suggested by the interpolation of "ship" for "keel" (which was actually a small boat).

Another favourite in Barkerville was "Ye Banks and Braes," a traditional melody with a text by Burns, which was "sweetly and faultlessly given" by Mrs. Kelly:

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary fu' o' care?
Thou'llt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons through the flowering thorn:
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed never to return.

Though specifically a lover's lament, its sentiments are general enough, the images at once so precise yet widely evocative, the tunes so poignant in itself, as to make the song seem to express any individual's particular "departed joys"—as it still does, for who has them not? and Burns' songs are surely among the greatest in the English language. In the same vein, Mrs. Kelly also sang Burns' "Farewell Bright Bay" and other Scottish and Irish songs. Anderson, who had an attractive light tenor voice, sang such pieces as "Bonnie Bessie Lea" and "A' the Airts the Wind Can Blaw," as well as his own songs.

At least as welcome as the folk songs, and loaded with more current sentimental appeal, were the Victorian parlour ballads, favoured in Britain by the rising and respectable middle classes:

The rude melodies of the street and the farm were naturally
ignored in favour of the polite forms of music formerly the preserve of the moneyed classes in the previous century. A fresh public, bringing from its nonconformist origins a muscular morality and distaste for both vulgarity and aristocratic libertinism, developed from that polite music an original and refined type of melody unlike anything before it.

Their common characteristics were that these songs were "absolutely singable, usually easy to memorize and in tune with the ideas expressed in their lyrics." Since the latter were invariably sentimental or nostalgic and dealt with such themes as the longed for past, the old home, the pangs of separation or disprised love, gentle courting and idealized conventional virtues, they employed "an unsophisticated harmonic language." The hearer could be "faintly reassured . . . by modulations to the dominant and subdominant" and at the close could "revel in the absolute security of the perfect cadence and the home key." Thus the music matched the sentimentality of the words, complementing their identification with objects of innocence and security, supplementing the catharsis of any anxiety and regret they aroused.

This was undoubtedly the effect produced on Cariboo audiences by such songs as "Memory Dear" and "Mother Will Comfort Me, Mother is Near," sung by Mrs. Tracey in a way that "was charming and threw the house into a perfect ecstasy." This was a sentimental "ekstasis" that took them out of themselves and took them home in feeling and imagination through the stage figure of a surrogate mother--for such identifications would have been inescapable in such a context. It took them out of themselves, too, "wi' ane anither," allowing them to share and acknowledge an emotional life and moral influence that could seldom have been made so public outside the theatre.

Love and parting were eloquently evoked in songs like "Kathleen Mavourneen" with its mournful cry of the emigrant:

Ma-vour-neen, Ma-vour-neen, my sad tears are falling
To think that from Erin and thee I must part. . . .

which is given even more musical and lyrical finality at the end of the phrase, "It may be for years, and it may be forever," with its dying fall.
Music hall sentimentality, popular in lower middle class parlours, was a specialty of Mrs. Parker, who sang as well as acted and was sometimes joined by her husband in duets. One of the reviewers concluded that her character as a vocalist is so well known to the Cariboo public, that any praise I can give her is but an inferior tribute to her ability. The estimation in which she is held... found expression in the loud encore which her rendition of the ballad "Why did she leave him? because he was poor" received... This was a typical "jilt song" of the time:

O why did she leave her Jeremiah?  
Why did she go without saying 'adieu'?  
When trouble came she look'd much higher.  
Isn't it funny what money can do?

Here sentiment is mingled with a bitter economic realism, not to be lost on a gold mining population, and this was accordingly a "favourite song." On this occasion the encore was "Blind Boy," "greeted with deafening applause," which is a reminder that sentimentality was much bound up with Victorian charity and concern with social problems. 130

But the women did not have these ballads entirely to themselves. William Fraser, who acted with C. A. D. A., was also "one of our best amateur singers" and "warmly welcomed as an old favorite" in more masculine songs of the wandering life, like "Ten Thousand Miles Away" and "The Sea:"

The Sea, the Sea, the open Sea!  
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!

But the connotations of innocence and of freedom were balanced by more anxious ones:

And Death wherever he comes to me,  
Shall come, shall come, on the wild unbounded sea.

Another favourite of the male performer was "The Village Blacksmith" with its hymn to the industrious artisan, a noble figure from the yeoman dream:

His brow is wet with honest sweat,  
He earns whate'er he can,  
And looks the whole world in the face  
For he owes not any man.

This of course was very close to the ideals of the "free miner" and the
"rough but honest miner." The use of Longfellow's poem in this song is also a reminder that sentimentalism was in essence a popular—though sometimes downright degenerate—form of romanticism, and a number of such songs were derived from Victorian poets. 132

But enough of sentimentality—a sentiment with which the Caribooites would have readily agreed, for comic songs, from the music hall and the popular drama, were regularly interspersed in their performances, thereby keeping the pathos in perspective. These were, like the farce, among Victorian Britain's vital creations, although they were decidedly unacceptable to the middle classes for the most part. In Barkerville they were a source of great delight; their juxtaposition with the sentimental ballads is an index of the comparative catholicity of taste and democratic openness of the frontier community, of the varied moods of its inhabitants, and of their tendency to seek a balance between bourgeois and proletarian culture, between the overly vulgar and suffocating propriety. Accordingly, none of the comic songs they performed was of the coarser mode.

They were often presented in character. Thomas Harding as a comic singer was "unequalled in Cariboo," and at one performance of "The Mousetrap Man" he appeared, like its famous originator George Leybourne, "in the character of a 'Mousetrap Vendor';" it was "excellent, and really such a treat as we seldom get amongst these mountains. In response to a vociferous encore Mr. H. convulsed the audience with 'Isabella with a Gingham Umbrella.'" The latter song mocks the sentimental love ballad ("Her eyes were as black as the pips of a pear") and feminine duplicity ("And her father keeps a barber's shop at Islington.") The songs of men jilted by socially ambitious women because of poverty are parodied in "Polly Perkins of Paddington Green; or, The Broken Hearted Milkman," who, "with a tear on my eyelid as big as a bean," enjoys the last laugh:
In six months she married, this hard-hearted girl,
But it was not a 'Wi-count,' and it was not a 'Nearl,'
It was not a 'Baron-ite' but a shade or two 'wus'
'Twas a bow legg'd Conductor of a Twopenny Bus.

Again, the pretentious airs of the socially ambitious are mocked. It would seem, in light of the songs they performed, that sentimentality and the comic were not incongruous or contradictory for them, but were opposite sides of the same experiential coin—equally valid and necessary, emotionally, psychologically, and socially.

Just how theatrically effective and dramatically "in character" some of the singers' performances could be is indicated by a reference to "Pat Malloy," a comic counter to the usual Irish immigrant song; the words were by that eminent theatrician, Dion Boucicault:

Oh, England is a purty place, of goold there is no lack—
I trudged from York to London with my scythe upon my back;
The English girls are beautiful, their loves I don't decline,
The eating and the drinking too is beautiful and fine;
But in a corner of my heart which nobody can see,
Two eyes of Irish Blue are always peeping out at me!
Oh, Molly, darlin', never fear, I'm still your own dear boy—
Ould Ireland is me country, and me name is Pat Malloy.

After a trip to America he is forced to return to "Ould Ireland" "as poor as I began." Caribooites needed to be able to laugh at such misadventures. As the reviewer described the performance of it, the song brought down the house:

Our power of musical criticism fails in attempting to describe the singing of Mr. Mills in "Pat Malloy." His deep chest notes are simply wonderful, and rose with a magnetic volume of sound from above the vociferous cheers of the audience, and the more perfectly to sink his own individuality in that of Mr. Malloy, in one of the pauses of the song he spat upon the carpet. The whole thing was perfect.

Apparently that last touch was not considered to be excessively "natural" for their taste. In keeping with the discovery and assessment of hidden worth, audiences relished exhibitions of unexpected talent or multiple skills:

... a new amateur singer, Mr. W. W. Dodd, made his debut as "Billy Barlow" in an original local adaptation of that individual's well-known song. It is to be regretted that the gentleman in question has so long allowed his light to be hid under a bushel, as his acting and singing on this occasion showed him to
possess talents of no mean order, calling forth from beginning to end the rapturous acclamations of the entire house.

Just as C. A. D. A.'s well deserved reputation was felt to enhance the reputation of Barkerville as a whole and its success to be a success for the community, so such public acclamations of the worth of constituent individuals seem also to have represented affirmations and enhancements of the self-worth of the community at large. Other comic singers whose debuts received similarly "rapturous acclamations" were the aforementioned Gomar Johns and Jack Hudson. 135

Though the "original adaptation" of "Billy Barlow" seems not to have survived, it brings us logically to a consideration of locally written songs. Most of these were new lyrics set to familiar and traditional tunes, and reflecting the Caribooites' common experiences, hopes, regrets and follies. This was a typical practice in mining areas from the Klondike to California. Constance Rourke has ascribed it to the miners being "incurably interested in themselves," and in some ways, as we have seen, they certainly were; this was no doubt a factor here as it was in their histrionic and poetic impulses, and yet, generally speaking, what group of people could not be said to be self-interested? Another writer is more insightful, observing of the California miners' songs:

The mode of composition of these songs, like the way of life of their subjects, was adaptation. No forty-niner was born in California, nor were his songs ever so strange or new as the gold he sluiced from the placers or crushed out of quartz. He mended his tunes to suit his life, and as that life was hard, the songs were rough. Parody was the chief result.

This is equally true of Cariboo, its people and their songs. He also concludes that "the miners' taste for the familiar-with-a-difference may have been more basic than has hitherto been suspected." Indeed it was, as this study has attempted to show, and it implies once again the whole set of dualities, of contradictory and ambivalent driving forces inherent in their two myths of protean man and happy home (especially if we keep in mind the
original source of the word "familiar" in "familial" and the personal applications of the word "different").

Like the poetry, then, the songs are only partly self-regarding. The pressing of new or different contents into old or familiar forms was an attempt to contain their strange or unsettling or insufficient experiences within secure, intelligible and satisfying form, to make order and sense out of the disorder and anomalies of the present and place it in perspective and continuity with the past, to resolve--or dissolve in parody and laughter--the tensions within and between the two orders of personal impulse and experience and between the respective claims of the two myths of concern. The use of songs, more social and universal in their associations than poetry (though even the latter had been disseminated in print) suggests a more collective effort to fulfill those needs.

Of course the song-making activity in British Columbia goes back as far as the 1858 gold rush, as "Miner's Song on the Fraser River" has already indicated and which also shows that the habit was indeed brought from California. No doubt this and subsequent efforts were used as work songs and for "sing along" entertainments in cabins or saloons. The earliest recorded theatrical presentation of one in Barkerville was at the very first performance in the first Theatre Royal, on New Year's Eve, 1867.

"Young Ted Brown" is an anonymous reworking of "Riding on a Railroad Car," to a text that spoofs the follies and naivete of many young gold seekers. It was sung by Jack Hudson:

Young Ted Brown was a fine young man,
At Westminster he staid--
He used to attend the The-a-tre,
And ran with the Fire Brigade.
Ted, he took the Cariboo fever--
Folks said he was a fool--
But he rolled up his blankets,
And started up the river,
Riding on an old pack mule.

Chorus--"But he rolled," etc.
He learns the hard way (as not a few in the audience had done) that a fool and his money are soon parted if he stakes it on the gambling tables. Then:

Next day he got to Williams Creek,
Though he had ne'er a dime—
But he made a pile within a week,
And left in double-quick time—
Now you may see him at the play any night,
To enjoy himself is his rule;
He wears boiled shirts, and I saw him yesterday,
A riding on his old pack mule.

The humourous incongruity of the last two lines lightly refers to the ideal of the successful gold seeker transformed in shape but not in essence. In an encore verse the singer cannot resist pointing out the moral for any who might still be tempted to reckless follies:

I've staked and lost, like Teddy, too,
And many another fool—
For the man who bets at the Faro-bank,
Will ne'er ride on an old pack mule.

He leaves it at that, bids all a "happy New Year," and expresses a wish that "I were in old England:/ With a good wife me to rule. . . ." That is typical of the very light hint of sentimentality that marks most of the local songs. 138

More specific and topical issues or even individuals and groups are satirized in other Cariboo songs, like "The Young Man From Canada:"

I landed here without a dime,
In 1863;
But being raised in Canada
'Twas nothing new to me! 139

This was (and ought to be for us) a realistic counter to all the grumblings about being broke, the miserable country, and wanting to go home. Based on "Young Man from the Countree," the song also makes jibes at Canadians, who were locally felt to amusingly typify the "green" country boy, the "hayseed."

Another one, "I Belong to the Fire Brigade," was sung by Hudson in the spring of 1869, presumably in uniform:

Oh! I belong to the Fire Brigade,
"And don't you think I ought to!"
A prettier boy was never made,
My uniform I bought too!
My shirt of wool in scarlet dyed,
   And pants and belt agree—
With helmet hat, and badge on that
   Of the W. C. F. B.
Chorus—"With helmet hat," etc. 140

Besides making wicked sport of the brigade's fussing over their uniforms, which were debated at some length in their early meetings, the piece also defused a serious current issue:

   We have an engine house for show,
       A stable— but no 'oss—
   Which grieves me very much indeed,
       And makes me rather cross.

Having built an engine house, they had now found it was cheaper to build water tanks on the hillside than to import a fire engine. But some members were not willing to do without the engine and threatened to quit. A public meeting was finally called to settle what Taliesin Evans termed "a family squabble," and another citizen accused them of only wanting an engine "for a plaything," which of course was hotly denied. One man resigned; the rest grudgingly went along with the majority. The "fireman" in the song, "Tho' I don't like the 'tank'," urges the resolving of personal differences in the spirit of cooperation:

   But still I'll muster with the boys,
       For we should pull together,
   "No Frog nor Mouse" shall burn a house,
       Our Fire Brigade forever!

A compromise was finally reached, and they settled for a new hose carriage. How much the song might have helped is not known, but it does suggest a practical social value in the theatre's bringing people together to laugh with, and sometimes at, one another, and the audience did call for an encore.

The sentimental muse was largely outweighed by the comic, and, as Constance Rourke observes, miners' longings for the old home or weepings over misfortune were similarly countered by optimism, or, as we have seen, debunked by comedy. It is misleading to look at only one song or even to take it merely at face value; their moods were more variable, their attitudes more
ambivalent, their natures more complex than has often been properly appreci­
ated. A positive and revealing use of the sentimental song of home is "The
Emigrant's Canadian Home," with music and words by W. W. Hill. After
beginning with "we'll ne'er forget our native land, / Our childhood's happy
home," he shows the function which those memories had begun to take on for
many in the new land:

Our thoughts will love to linger still
Round homes where fathers rest;
The shamrock, rose and thistle, all
Have glorious laurels won,
Which ever sheds a lustre on
Our own adopted home!

The value and continuity of these preserved and extended "belongings" in the
new protean home is given further application in the collective becoming of
"The New Dominion," also written by Hill:

May wisdom, strength and power combine,
To make thee a giant so grand

Then, say come with us, thou land of the West,
We'll make one great fatherland.

Written in 1868, this song was apparently published in Montreal. Others in
this vein were composed by James Anderson and Cornelius Booth.

By the same token, those songs that sentimentalize the miners' hard­
ships and misfortunes are often balanced by others that encouraged them to
"persevere thro' all," or by implied associations with the original from which
the adaptation was made. The most popular song on the Barkerville stage was
Anderson's "The Rough But Honest Miner," to the tune of James Ballantyne's
"Castle's in the Air." It brings together images of the dreams, trials and
disappointments of the gold miner with recurrent quotations of Ballantyne's
metaphor:

The rough but honest miner,
Wha toils night and day,
Seeking for the yellow gold,
Hid amang the clay--
Howkin' in the mountain side.
What does he there--
Ha! the auld "dreamer's"
"Biggin' castles in the air."

He describes the miner's tendency to see signs which are but "his fancy's whim," his dreams of going home someday, his hopes rising and falling with the seasons, while each year brings new "castles." He closes with the only really lasting hope of reward:

Tho' fortune may not smile
Upon his labors here,
There is a world above
Where his prospects will be clear—
If he now accept the offer
O' a stake beyond compare—
A happy home for aye,
Wi' a "castle in the air."

Thus the miner's condition is redeemed from the special case of his own lonely discouragements and placed in the wider, more balanced perspective of the human condition and the end of all human effort, all the insubstantial castles of this world.

This is made even clearer by the song's quoting of "Toiling and sorrowing on through life he goes" from Longfellow and by association with the original, whose title was often substituted for Anderson's in printings of or references to the song in the Sentinel and which Anderson himself published alongside his version in Sawney's Letters and Cariboo Rhymes. Anderson's "There's miners mair than ane," for example, deliberately echoes Ballantyne's "There's mair folk than him / Biggin' castles in the air." The implications behind the local adaptation are that this is, after all, the way life is. By contrast, however, Anderson's miner is at least more heroic and purposeful than Ballantyne's idle dreamer by the fire, and he certainly has more chance of realizing his castle, or at least a scaled-down compromise version. The real function of the song, like most of the established forms and materials—musical and dramatic—of which Caribooites made use, was a means of distancing or being philosophical about their situation and experiences, a strategy for living, coping, keeping faith in "this silent land."
Though the songs were the main feature of the interludes and have been emphasized because of their quotable content and the local compositions, there were other forms of entertainment. One of the most common was the recitation, another borrowing from the middle class parlour. J. S. Thompson and Gomar Johns particularly excelled in this type of performance, and the pieces seem to have been usually comic or parodic. The most enjoyed of these was "The Knight and the Lady" from the Ingoldsby Legends of Richard Barham, an English prelate and popular poet:

The Lady Jane was tall and slim,  
The Lady Jane was fair,  
And Sir Thomas, her Lord, was stout of limb,  
But his cough was short, and his eyes were dim,  
And he wore green "specs" with a tortoiseshell rim,  
And his hat was remarkably broad in the brim,  
And she was uncommonly fond of him  
And they were a loving pair!

When the absent-minded scholar-knight drowns in his own pond and is hauled out with his clothes full of fish, the lady, having meanwhile consoled herself with the attentions of a handsome cousin for her husband's neglect, promptly makes the best of it:

They're a fish, too, of which I'm remarkably fond—  
Go—pop Sir Thomas again in the pond—  
Poor dear!—HE'LL CATCH US SOME MORE!!

Barham was a master rhymster, and his word play, his linguistic dexterity, his grisly mocking of both sentimentalism and sensationalism (with some very sly hints of adultery), his burlesque of literary convention and of learning out of touch with reality, all made him enormously popular with all who were or wanted to be even moderately sophisticated. He also demands considerable skill from the performer:

In this piece, which from its length and varieties of style is very trying to the memory and requires great versatility to ensure its successful rendition, Mr. Johns acquitted himself admirably and afforded the audience much amusement and gratification.

This performance feat of learning, of mental and verbal dexterity, was
repeated by him on other occasions, at least once by popular request.

Other specialties included the "Comic Yankee Impersonation in Grotesque Character" by J. Z. Hough, which "was loudly applauded, and was varied by another equally amusing...." This was a solo number, a monologue in costume featuring character eccentricities, which had been inaugurated decades earlier in the United States by James H. Hackett, and which permitted Hough to shine by himself in his favourite role. Dancing was occasionally provided by H. Galder, who specialized in the highland fling and the sword dance but "showed good judgement in confining himself to the less exacting steps. . . ." Devotees of "Ethiopian Minstrelsy" performed short skits at rare intervals, though their energies were chiefly confined to their own performing group, to be discussed in the next chapter. Locally-directed "stand up" comedy was sometimes performed in the forms of facetious addresses, satirical reviews of election candidates, and conundrums.

Some of the local conundrums, usually playing on the names of people, places, and groups or on social or political issues, have survived. An example: "Why is the Cariboo Hospital like Race Rocks Lighthouse? Because it has a Bell in case of danger." Dr. Bell was the physician at the Cariboo Hospital. International affairs could also serve: "Why have the Parisians, as an audience, the best view of the Theatre of War in France? [The Franco-Prussian War was then raging.] Because the scene (Seine) runs through Paris." One probably had to be there. But again they seem to have taken great pleasure in any sort of verbal skill and being "in the know." This was symbolically fitting in members of a new and multi-cultural community and in an age of growing literacy, faith in education, and belief in the power of manipulating information by seeing "all the angles." Such puns are probably similar to those which the actors inserted into some of the plays to increase the laughs and give local point to the humour.

Thus the structure of the C. A. D. A. performances had both a consist-
ency and a diversity. While the common pattern was of two one-act plays separated by an interlude, there were several variations. In the case of a longer play, or of one-acts with more than one scene, the interludes were more dispersed, as they were with Still Waters and The Charcoal Burner. Sometimes a full length play was followed by a short afterpiece, in which case there would be little or no interlude entertainment between them. On other occasions there might be a single one-act play with the interlude expanded accordingly to fill the bill with a miniature variety show, in which performers or groups not directly affiliated with C. A. D. A. helped out. Of these others, who also performed on their own, more will be said in the next chapter.

Therefore the quality of "familiarity-with-a-difference" ascribed to the local songs can be said to have permeated the whole performance and its overall structure, compounded as it was of both a fixity and variety of forms and contents enclosed within a fixed yet variable format; just as these elements permeated Caribooites' social and psychological realities. As variety is the theatrical spice of life it enlarged their feeling of participation in a wider, richer range of experience, providing missing features of Cariboo life in collective and vicarious substitutions, and it renewed their imaginative-emotional connections with the world beyond their confined community, salutarily reducing the problematic sense of isolation and deprivation. In this sense the familiar elements facilitated such links, and the theatre was as much a "medium" for them as the newspaper, less topically immediate but physically more so.

The shifting variety of subject, mood, and outlook also reflected the differences, strangeness, uncertainty and particularity of their present lives within forms that gave it a familiar sense of order, comprehension and control. This was, as shown earlier, more specifically accomplished by selecting and adapting from known or traditional modes or even by enclosing
local content within them. The whole effect would seem to have been that of a vital interplay of continuity and change, form and flux, convention and spontaneity, tradition and the new, protean impulses and dreams of home, and so forth; again, the theatre was employed to do what only it can do: to express concretely and immediately the dynamic forces and imaginative realities operative in the individual and the group.

It also offered the resolution or moderation of the tensions between those multifarious forces and realities by objectifying them, making the claims and values of each tangible, testing them out metaphorically, and placing each in proper perspective in light of the other. It served a similar function with tensions between individuals and within the community; by bringing people together to "unite in making and declaring" and by sharing basic affirmations of commonly held beliefs and concerns, accepting or rejecting values, codes and ways of behaving, the Caribooites as a social group thinking and feeling "in public in front of itself" established more firmly and elaborated and applied more flexibly and extensively their common cause, ethos, cooperative spirit and community identity. The ceremonial close of everyone standing while "God Save the Queen" was sung concluded each performance not only by ritually voicing mutual allegiance to the existing, and preferred, British sovereignty and law and order, but also with a final imaginative enactment of the future merging of individuality and collectivity, of tradition and freedom, continuity and transformation in the New Dominion, motherland and protean homeland in one.

As a secular ritual of community spirit, identity, and pride, the C. A. D. A. performance simultaneously offered a window on the world and a societal mirror—though the window was a selective one, by a combination of circumstance and inclination, and the mirror a deliberately multi-faceted one that both idealized and distorted, reflecting not just how they saw themselves but also how they did or did not wish to be seen. The amateur performers
formed the crucial nexus, the living images of continuity between the old and
the new worlds, linking past and future in their presence, personifying
memories and hopes in identifiable figures. By virtue of their familiarity
and exemplary qualities they endowed their embodiments of imaginative forms,
relations and events with credibility and local relevance, the mythic and
symbolic contents and ethical truths with a persuasive actuality and achiev-
ability in the here and now (the more so, perhaps, given the genuinely
protean roles and abilities among the men, the domestic ones among the women).

Behind their aesthetic aims of "the ideal transformed into the real"
and the performer "thoroughly at home" in the unchanging world of the script,
lies Cole's definitive definition of theatre as the experiencing of imagina-
tive truth as physically present truth, by means of manifesting a mythic time
of origins, a realm of "eternally subsisting relations," and of the performer
taking on a new or altered life. And underlying those quintessential
elements of protean transformation and happy home (or its opposite), realized
by imaginative identifications, are the ritual sources and essence of theatre
in archetypal human patterns of death and rebirth, continuity and renewal,
and the vital connections of the survival, health and integrity of the indivi-
dual with those of society. In the theatre's spirit-realm we can vicari-
ously live twice, can live anew or relive and revive. In the popular theatre
of the nineteenth century and its democratizing public these archetypes were
particularized through the universal motifs of becoming and belonging,
historically cast in the secular forms and contents of popular myths condi-
tioned by the material, economic and individualizing tendencies of modern
societies in formation. In the Barkerville theatre they were further partic-
ularized in the contexts of the Cariboo environment and experience, of the
Cariboo society and its living symbols, its collective ethos, and of the
Cariboo theatre that resulted from them, with its known yet alterable per-
formers and its familiar yet varied and adaptable repertory.
It is understandably in keeping with the pioneer spirit ascribed generally to the Victorian Age and more specifically and literally to the Caribooites that they should have rediscovered these universal roots of theatre's existence and value and, equally important, have adapted them to forms and contents and placed them in contexts in which they had a universally accessible human appeal and relevance for the first time in centuries, and that they accordingly made the theatre once more an important, popular public institution, which now served a freer, more democratically-minded people. These were greater achievements in the living history of theatre (as distinguished from the history of dramatic literature) than has yet been properly appreciated—if, in fact, we have not largely lost sight of that theatrical democratization and the pioneer spirit behind it.

As with most pioneer societies the continuing value of the Caribooites lies not in anything they founded or invented, but in what they found and adapted; it was less a matter of cognition and discovery than of re-cognition and re-discovery, and not merely in the material world but within themselves and each other and as a human community. In the theatre of Barkerville, as in its gold mines, they brought to light, according to their own lights, what had lain there since time immemorial, eternally valuable but seldom so accessible and beneficial to so many in a society. In going back to the source, personally and collectively, historically and archetypally, their theatre was, in that sense, original, and in making it so representative of and responsible to a free and self-determining people they broke new ground.

All these connotations are clearly discernible from the context of the organization of, and the performances by, the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association, which provided the only ritual that regularly brought people together in significant numbers to such purposes. They suggest that the theatre occupied a central role in helping to keep the community together too; and they imply that the community desired to be kept together.
CHAPTER SIX
REACHING THE CROSSROADS:

THEATRICAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS 1869-1871

Though fortune frown and crush us down,
   We'll raise the standard of the mind,
And bravely scorn a life forlorn—
   To bitter discontent be blind.

L. M. Troup
Jack of Clubs,
July, 1869.

15--And they assembled in the upper room of
   the house which they had builded.

From "Chronicles of Cariboo,"
Book the Second.

Cariboo Sentinel,
April 10, 1869.
In the years following the opening of the second Theatre Royal, Barker-ville saw an expansion of theatrical and musical activity, with the regular offerings of the Dramatic Association supplemented by the occasional entertainments of other groups. By consequence the variety element in C. A. D. A.'s performances was augmented by the emergence of new performers and cooperation with the other organizations. The role and significance of the theatrical event as secular ritual was also expanded by increasing civic and ceremonial connections, symbolic and practical functions in the life of the community. So, too, did the functions of the theatre building fulfill its role as social centre and meeting place. This suggests that the theatre was bound up with a continuing development of cultural activity, social institutions and community identity which reached its peak during the years 1869 to 1871, and in fact it was.

To gain a sense of what shaped and what limited those developments it is first necessary to sketch the prevailing political-economic mood and climate, the conditions that dominated the all-important mining operations. The mood was ambivalent, compounded of faith and skepticism, of optimism and resolve with increasing discouragements and uncertainty. The climate was an insecure mixture of "general prosperity" amid fragile instability, of erratic progress undermined by continual setbacks and continuing obstacles.

Concerning the actual mineral resources of Cariboo, the confidence of its inhabitants was unshaken and in some ways even magnified. Gold production had remained relatively steady, averaging about $2,000,000 worth per year amongst a mining population of about 1,500; this meant average earnings of $1,000 to $1,300 per man, twice the comparable figures for California. Even with the still higher cost of living—now reduced to about a dollar a day—there was a comfortable margin, providing mining expenses were not excessive. On outlying creeks partners or small companies could often make at least "wages," which remained, in consequence, relatively high even for
employees of larger concerns. The "free miner" was still free. ¹

While Williams Creek still yielded largely by any standards except its own remarkable past, it was now recognized that it was no longer the centre of mining activity. Discoveries on new creeks, like Davis, Harvey, and Sugar Creeks, and the successful working of the deep deposits on others—most notably Antler and Lightning—gave new impetus to prospecting and to the values of industry, pluck, patience and perseverance. The finding of quartz reefs in the vicinity of Barkerville was a common occurrence, and rich indications of lime and prospects of silver, copper, manganese and other minerals suggested great promise for future industries. ²

Yet the inevitable problems—how to get at this undoubted wealth? how to get it out?—continued to be more difficult in Cariboo than elsewhere and were increasingly exacerbated by political and economic obstacles that would ultimately prove insuperable and, as so often in this country, made the mere physical difficulties appear so as well. With its gold deposits in increasingly less accessible locations, Cariboo was reaching a fateful crossroads in its social and economic life, for, as noted earlier, there could be no question of stasis for an isolated, resource-based community, and its inhabitants were well aware of the fact. The issues that aroused the most attention at this time may be easily summed up: for the mining interests the question was how to continue the transition from scattered efforts and quickly exhausted placer diggings to a long term mining industry based on more expensively and intensively worked deposits, and if that transition could not be made with gold there could be no hope of making it in terms of less valuable minerals or of secondary industry. For the Barkerville commercial interests the crucial transition was from fragile boom town to stable centre of business and industry, the aspiration symbolized by the transformed town arisen from the ashes.

Caribooites were well aware that the one set of interests depended on
the other, that they were in practice inseparable. The flow of goods, services and cash between the town and the mines was the nexus that sustained the economic structure, and to generate money supply for further operations merchants continued to support mining companies that barely broke even.\(^3\)

Equally inseparable and interdependent in keeping up morale, making efforts and hardships seem worthwhile, and retaining a settled population, were the various community bonds and socio-cultural activities in which the theatre was a central force, and there was no progress and prosperity without the preservation and development of the gains made in these areas.

The major obstacles to Cariboo's well being may also be easily summarized in three words: transportation, technique, and capital. Concerning the first, Cariboo not only suffered from the circuitous and poorly maintained wagon road from Yale, with the continued high tolls and freight rates and the erratic mail service; now the lack of roads and trails within the district was an ever more frustrating barrier to mining and commercial development:

> From the scarcity of trails, and the impassable nature of the country, which is mountainous and thickly wooded, the mining district of Cariboo has been limited ever since its discovery, to a radius of about fifteen miles.\(^4\)

Even in that area it was difficult to maintain and extend communications and supply lines between Barkerville and the various other creeks and gulches. Miners' and traders were "left entirely to our own resources."\(^5\)

Thus, in the winter of 1869, for example, a group of them joined forces to make a trail to Sugar Creek, northeast of Williams; the government contribution was $25, and even that was only tendered when the applicants hinted that otherwise they would not take out the proposed mining licences "amounting to a larger sum." Yet at this same time $5000 had been appropriated for trails by the legislature at the demand of the Cariboo representative, but which the Department of Public Works (!) had declined to make available.\(^6\)
Obviously miners and merchants could not spend much time and money in making and maintaining such trails—for which they already paid large revenues—and still develop the district's economy. The consequences of this governmental abuse were that systematic and extended prospecting was discouraged to a great extent, and when isolated new discoveries were made merchants and miners were put to a considerable loss of time, energy and profit in transporting supplies and equipment. By fragmenting mining activity and isolating people within the district as well as from the outside, these conditions jeopardized the continued existence of Barkerville as distribution, commercial and social centre.

In mining operations, despite the changing nature of the deposits and the greater challenges of prospecting and working them, methods remained largely unaltered and still reliant on the primitive techniques available to "bone and sinew:" the pick and shovel, hand-made wooden pumps and water wheels, hand-operated windlasses and sluice boxes. There appears to have been general agreement on the crying need for the intensive application of steam machinery and mechanical pumps to keep down both the underground water and the operating costs that ultimately drowned many an enterprise, or at least much of its profits. Steam power was needed, too, for the enormous volumes of earth that often had to be moved. For the development of quartz mining still larger and more elaborate machinery was indispensible for crushing and concentrating ore and retrieving the gold and silver. The common denominator for the necessities of both forms of mining was technique, the increasing efficiency of means that was becoming paramount in any industrial order, and the common prerequisite for that was increased working capital.

Here was the rub. Surplus capital could not readily be lifted from that required from financing and sustaining current enterprises, themselves the only means of generating further money supply within the district. There
was also the question of initial outlay—augmented by import duties, shipping costs and a government that taxed them on expenses as well as profits—and miners and their mercantile backers realized that, however sensible mechanized methods were in the long run, in immediate terms the old methods allowed them to "pay as you go" in "comparatively light weekly or monthly installments," enabling them also to limit their liability and, if necessary, to cut their losses. 8

To some extent, though, the Sentinel thought the Caribocites were at fault:

There is no lack of enterprise or energy in Cariboo. If all the colonists were equally energetic and enterprising we should soon see a very prosperous colony in British Columbia. But these qualities are misdirected or wasted. . . . Instead of concentrating their means and combining to obtain the most powerful appliances and limiting their operations to one piece of ground at a time, prospectors fritter away their money by taking shares in too many companies. 9

There was probably some truth in this, and yet given the high risk nature of all mining, and especially in Cariboo, to diversify those risks, not sinking everything in one or two ventures, was a lesson that had been learned the hard way in the early days. Moreover, such directed efforts were in fact already being made where possible, with the joint stock sponsoring of prospecting parties, companies combining to tap new sources of surface water (always in short supply) and public subscriptions to sustain bulkheads, drains and flumes. Then, too, a cooperative venture was organized in 1869 that subsequently imported a test mill from San Francisco to aid quartz prospecting, the government having refused, as usual, to help provide such a community resource. Indeed the Sentinel itself admitted by the spring of '69 that the "liberality of the citizens" had "lately had frequent calls" and often referred to money being "scarce." As noted earlier, this was only an apparent paradox in a gold producing community; the time, and circumstances, gave it proof. The truth was that the limits of what "enterprise or energy"
could accomplish among a couple of thousand people had been well nigh reached.

What was becoming more and more urgent was outside investment, cooperation on a larger scale, and governmental support, and these were regularly advocated in editorials, letters, appeals in the legislature and petitions to the legislature, all to little avail. The key problem in British Columbia was the old Canadian story of geographical isolation used to further mental isolation and regional jealousies and resentments, breeding apathy and fatalism instead of a spirit of unity, challenge and resolve. "The population" was "like an ill managed crew, not all pulling away together."

Extent of territory and scant population are gnawing at the roots of all the efforts made for the common good. Each part or district of the colony has some particular or sectional object in view, to accomplish which all other objects for common good are made subservient. A want of unanimity to accomplish any one thing, resulting in the accomplishment of nothing, is the great checkmate to the progress of the colony.

The people of the interior and the lower country were constantly reminded, in the spirit of enlightened utilitarianism, of the natural identity of their interests and those of the mining industry on which all depended and were encouraged, in the spirit of enlightened capitalism, to reinvest some of the capital they were deriving from Cariboo's gold production, for everyone is directly or indirectly interested in the promotion and success of mining, and we are convinced that no better way can be found for increasing the market for the farmer, the freight for the teamster and, indeed, for generally increasing business everywhere . . . than assisting to introduce machinery for quartz mining. . . . If quartz is to be thoroughly gone into, everyone must lend a helping hand, and not trust to Cariboo alone for the development of the mines.

The success of such mining in California and Nova Scotia was credited to the "speculative enterprise of men who furnish the means and not alone to the energy of the miner," and the people of B. C. were urged to emulate them and "take a chance just to try their luck." Only thus could mining efforts be encouraged to move beyond "alluvial deposits, . . . so widespread and
abundant in proportion to the population." 12

But such advice, at once pragmatic and ideal, based on hard practical experience and environmental and economic realities, was literally and figuratively a voice crying in the wilderness. Not only had the old antagonisms of New Westminster and Victoria festered; they had produced larger schisms of mainland versus island and coast versus interior. Indeed the "croakers" of the New Westminster and Victoria press united in taking a perverse satisfaction in constantly decrying Cariboo as "played out," in spite of—or perhaps in resentment of—their economic dependence on it. The efforts of interior farmers were similarly denigrated, which discouraged settlement, while the island and lower mainland continued to import food from California at higher prices, presumably for the benefit of importers, wholesalers and jobbers. Such sentiments were hardly calculated to attract either capital or population to B. C., and Americans pointed out that such excessive imports robbed the colony of money supply.13

This spirit of boosting their section at the expense of others and, ultimately, to their own cost, was thoroughly ingrained in the two ports. The predilection for real estate speculation was noted of Victoria in particular as late as 1871 by a California writer, who also observed the "Micawberish temperament" of the population; its reliance on mining excitements and its "cliques each jealous of the other;" the acres of unused farmland held in anticipation of rising prices; and the moneys unproductively tied up in lots for which there was no demand in that vaunted "San Francisco of the North" that would never be. As for the prevailing attitude of the moneyed class to the Cariboo mines, that seems to have changed little since a Victoria lawyer had cynically advised a prospective miner to remain there and speculate:

"A miner," said he, "is but a means of conveying money into other people's pockets; he is simply our agent, though he wouldn't acknowledge that position. . . . We townspeople have nothing to
do but sit on our beam ends, and wait for these hard-working, deluded creatures to come and pour wealth into our laps.

The chartered banks, with which we are still saddled, as the major sources of investment capital set no good example of faith in the country—when have they ever?—and refused to invest or even lend money for mines where no risk was involved. The cash flow they reaped from the Cariboo mines continued to be entirely one-way.

Caribooites employed similar arguments to encourage, or shame, the government—its "beam ends" bloated on the wealth it had skimmed off the top—into facilitating development, fostering investment, attracting much-needed immigration. Numerous concrete proposals were made over the years, as in an article by Henry Havelock, "The Connecting Link," insisting that a road should be built from Barkerville to the Yellowhead Pass:

... and make a bold stroke toward accomplishing two things necessary to lift the country from its present depressed condition—establishing communication across the continent and opening new gold fields by the way.

This vast area east of Barkerville had never been prospected, and the gold mines were "still the mainsprings of all the wheels of business and industry," and "every effort to make them accessible and increase their known extent ought to be made." Besides, "British Columbia is unpopular on the Pacific slope and will never receive a population thence." Nor would it receive much capital thence, for the deadly mixture of bad government and the lower country's alternate fomenting of baseless mining excitements and of self-fulfilling prophecies of Cariboo's "waning importance" caused Californians to automatically discredit any news of genuine mineral discoveries in B. C. When a sample of rich gold quartz was finally sent to San Francisco for assay it remained on the dock, ignored.

Sage advice, practical suggestions, eloquent appeals, all went blissfully unheeded by the self-styled nabobs of commerce and politics on the coast. So did the demands of the miners, voiced by Dr. Carrall, that the
mining laws be amended to permit clear title to claims, the absence of which left them no collateral to offer potential outside investors. If boldness and imaginative vision could sometimes run to excess among the Caribooites, both the government and the coastal towns seem to have attracted people with a far more dangerous lack of such qualities, a shortsighted boom or bust mentality, and a "philosophy" of comfortable exploitation. As F. W. Howay would say, whose spirit "have we caught?" Certainly our history shows a strong continuity and consistency: time present and time future are both, perhaps, contained in our colonial past.

Despite their frustrations, Caribooites on the whole retained their incurable optimism and set their hopes on Confederation and its promise of the railway, population and capital, and responsible government. Meantime, although the future remained uncertain and progress severely checked, "probably no part of the colony . . . so well maintained its share of the prosperity which the colony generally enjoyed in former years. . . ." But the issues did not go away, nor were they ignored; on the contrary, they formed ongoing nagging concerns and real, frustrating obstacles. They formed the ostinato theme in a minor key, in sharp counterpoint and frequent dissonance with the major one of continued social and theatrical development, and they help to understand its significance, limitations and subsequent decline.

In respect to social institutions, too, Barkerville was left largely to itself to maintain them. Without the municipal status of the ports it could not raise local revenues and could only apply to the Legislative Council. In a particularly farcical session of the latter, when Carrall asked the Colonial Secretary for aid to the literary institute he was told that "sums had been contributed" and direct aid would set a "bad precedent." The "contributions" could only have referred to John Bowron's salary as postmaster, for which the government got free use of the Institute building,
originally built by local subscription and then rebuilt at Bowron's expense. 
(When Bowron later tried to get the government to share the costs of the 
building he was summarily fired, but immediately reinstated when Caribooites 
rallied around him in large numbers.) Carrall's request for a grant to the 
fire brigade was vaguely referred to the gold commissioner, who had little 
money to dispense; another for increased allowance to the hospital was 
evasively answered to the effect that its finances "were in better condition 
than any other similar institution," but that was only because the physician 
often went without his salary, made up at intervals by public subscriptions. 
That was essentially how all of these institutions were kept alive, with the 
additional periodic assistance of the theatre. 

In that respect, unfortunately, the intended usefulness of the theatre 
was curtailed because C. A. D. A. had problems of its own, which also 
hindered the expansion of its repertoire and production facilities, despite 
the simultaneous progress in the overall quality of performances. These 
difficulties were concurrent and mutually aggravating; they were also related 
to those afflicting Cariboo in general, and it may be said that C. A. D. A.'s 
frustrated attempts to make the transition to more complex, sophisticated 
productions and a permanent existence paralleled, and were closely bound up 
with, those of Cariboo as a whole. 

To isolate them for the sake of clarity, the first to become apparent 
was a debt incurred in building the second Theatre Royal. Though "the public 
generally lent every assistance; . . . . Still, when completed, the cost was 
found to be far in advance of what had been anticipated, and a heavy debt 
hung over the concern." How far and how heavy were not mentioned, but a 
report of a fire brigade meeting shows that the lumber bill for the whole 
building totalled $4,219.96, which, shared between the two organizations, 
would have left C. A. D. A. owing more than $2,200 for lumber alone; but the 
total debt was probably much larger than that, for C. A. D. A.'s use of wood,
for the stage, seats, finishing, and so forth, would have amounted to more
than half of what was purchased and in addition:

A considerable amount of money had to be paid on account of
labor and material other than lumber, required for the building,
which . . . was something larger than is usual in Barkerville.
No inconsiderable expense has also and necessarily been incurred
in getting up and purchasing dresses and scenery for use on the
stage. 29

The scenery and costume expenses were in large part necessitated in order to
replace those lost in the fire. Were the other expenditures then unneces-
sary? Had C. A. D. A. been carried away by pride or unrealistic ambitions?

Such assumptions would not seem accurate in view of the facts: public
dissatisfaction had previously been expressed with the size and appearance of
the first theatre; C. A. D. A. received no criticism for the second building
from a public that was readily critical in other respects; and, on the contrary,
there was much community encouragement and approval for making each new
building "a credit to the town," especially the theatre, which was a civic
effort and a "public institution." In the wake of the fire and at the end of
a decade--the end of an era, really--there was no turning back to the condi-
tions or outlook of the gold rush. The most valuable interpretation of
C. A. D. A.'s financial situation is that it is one of the few indices (along
with the personal bankruptcies that ensued) of how great was the cost of the
fire and the necessary transformation of Barkerville and its theatre; of how
much was invested in the larger transitions they were meant to prefigure; and
of how strained were the resources and vulnerable the circumstances of community
and theatre as a result.

By July, 1869, it was noted that with "the exception of the lumber
bill, everything has been liquidated," and "a ball in aid of the building
fund" was scheduled for July 16. At this point the association made a
conspicuous blunder by giving E. D. Howman, who was leaving B. C., a purse
of $100. This was no doubt in compensation for his labours in designing and
supervising construction of the building, but some did not see it that way, or had not been informed, and the dramatic association was "the subject of some sarcastic comments with respect to the disposal of the proceeds of their entertainments." In response it was announced that "a financial statement would soon be submitted to the public accounting for every dollar having been legitimately and judiciously expended;" this was apparently posted or circulated, for it did not appear in the paper. How much this hurt C. A. D. A. is difficult to say, since "A Citizen," urging public support for the ball, observed that it was a bad time for one because of the recent holidays and "the numerous subscription lists our residents of late had to fill up."

Considering those facts, in addition to the advent of another dry, frustrating summer—all of which might also have provoked the temporary suspiciousness—the dance did not do badly, netting over $250, though this was less than desired.

It was appropriate and perhaps necessary at such junctures that the integral relationship, social value, and representative nature of C. A. D. A. and its performances within the community were most concretely and explicitly defined. "A Citizen" spoke of "the public necessity in upholding a public institution" like the dramatic association:

The Amateurs as a body—and, in fact, individually as amateurs—are a great boon to our small community. As a proof of this, during the winter previous to the disastrous fire . . . it was noticeable and often remarked that our population was larger. I, for one, know several parties who, if no amusement had been offered, would have spent their winter out of Cariboo. I am of your opinion decidedly, that it is a great advantage to all. . . . Men in staying here on account of such pastime would have at the same time a great advantage should any new mining discovery occur. . . .

Unanimity like this will do more in such a community as ours for the furtherance of any good object than any effort I know of. Let us therefore join hand in hand and endeavour to do something for our self-denying, hard-working Amateurs, who have so long tried, and succeeded too, in doing us good by their public performances.

This is really the bottom line—the "bedrock"—of the place, functions, and
importance which the theatre had for Cariboo society. That each needed the other in the obvious sense that there was only one theatre and one small public is not surprising under the circumstances: "Men," said the Sentinel of the theatre, "do not like to be perpetually isolated—no matter how well they may be doing—from the pleasures of civilization," which theatre both represented and actually supplied. 31

What is more significant in such deceptively simple passages (and there were several others written over the years) is just how basic, vital and directly efficacious was the felt interdependence of the theatre and the mining community, of their mutual well being, and the Sentinel similarly credited C. A. D. A. with such an efficacy for business enterprise, which of course was interdependent with mining operations. C. A. D. A. had become fundamentally organic to a whole way of life, built into an integral social and economic structure; cause and effect, aesthetic and ethical values, and responsibilities, private advantage and public good, analogy and equivalence, theatrical and societal unanimity, had all become so thoroughly identified, their distinctions so dissolved, as to seem identical. Did theatre emerge because there were more year round residents, or did its emergence result in the larger population? The point is that the existence of theatre and community were inextricably fused; the theatre was both subject and object, instigator and recipient, of the "unanimity" and other values that held everything together; its performers' virtues and success were literally exemplary and practically inseparable from those of the societal fabric and its constituents. It was not merely an indicator of the health of the community, but was considered essential to it, and, even more crucial than that, the health of the one was the health of the other.

This health was, as noted, precarious: the organic structure was sufficient in itself, but not of or by itself, and precisely its delicate balance was vulnerable to exigencies and disruptions without and within.
Thus the moral, as well as artistic, integrity (honesty, soundness, and wholeness) of C. A. D. A. and the integrity of public support were closely connected and were vitally linked in turn to the integral and interdependent working of theatre and society. C. A. D. A., therefore, was quick to become more open and accountable in financial matters, as it had been in artistic ones, and the "self-denying" status of its members was reaffirmed; audience attendance was large at its next performances, and later fundraisings were well supported. The most integral relationships, fundamental realities and vital needs are seldom self-evident after all, and are easily lost sight of in human societies, especially pioneer ones; they require regular recognition, redefinition, and readjustment, and such was the case with the Barkerville theatre.

C. A. D. A. attempted to pay off the remaining debt over the next year and a half "by the proceeds of their performances alone." Their independent resolve and its object reflected those of Caribooites: "Should they succeed in paying for the building, and they are determined to do so if it is possible, the drama will become a fixed institution...." But under the same circumstances further social efficacy and larger ambitions were similarly frustrated:

When their liabilities are discharged the utility of the corps will be highly beneficial. Whenever a charitable or other institution of service appeals to them for help they will then be free to devote to such objects the proceeds of their performances. At present they are compelled to confine their energies to the production of such plays as involve the smallest amount of outlay.... but when free from the incubus of debt we shall see them in all the tinselled glory of a regular dramatic company. They have the natural but not the artificial means to do justice to the Prince of Denmark, Macbeth or Richard the Third, and the production of the tragic drama is only a question of expense.

And the progress of Cariboo was only a question of capital and responsible government; the questions would remain, alas, unanswered, but the dreams were still compelling.
By October, 1870, they had reduced the debt to about $1,200, by which time their creditors either needed the money or would wait no longer. The theatre seemed threatened with foreclosure, but such crises usually brought out the best in the people of Barkerville. Someone proposed a liquidation scheme whereby sixty tickets at $20 each could be bought by individuals or groups, with a $100 prize adding spice to the proceedings. They were all "promptly taken," which was interpreted as showing "that the people of William Creek understand and appreciate the value of the Theatre and Amateur corps as a useful institution," and a "grand ball" was held in the theatre, at which the lucky number was drawn. Since they felt "bound in honor" to redeem the pledges "expeditiously" from performance receipts, they were still unable to "present dramas of more pretentious character." Not until the end of 1871 was this accomplished, by means of a fund-raising dance, and the theatre finally free of debt and owned outright by the community. 34

That delay was caused in part by another problem that afflicted C. A. D. A.: erratic attendance. It would be tempting to attribute this simply to a decline in popularity or audience support, but the evidence will not substantiate it. Attendance was, as stated, erratic: there was no downward trend; in fact, the problem is noticeable as early as the spring and summer of 1868, while some of the smallest audiences belong to the earlier years and some of the largest to the later ones. Sometimes there was a succession of well attended performances, and at others a slump of several small houses suddenly followed by one that was "crowded." There were still other occasions when the variations seem even more unaccountable: the performances of December 10, 1870, was "one of the most successful artistically and financially" that had been given for some time, and that of December 24 was similarly "well attended and gave general satisfaction;" but on the thirty-first the house was "but small and by no means calculated to afford encouragement to the amateurs after their untiring efforts to afford
amusement," and yet previous New Year's Eve performances drew big houses. 35

That it was not a question of losing popularity is shown by the descriptions of audience response, which became, if anything, more enthusiastic; by references to individual performers as old favourites; and by the fact that audiences liked to see successful plays repeated, which substituted for an acquaintance with the text. If there is a pattern it is simply that of fluctuation, and suggests that attendance followed the fluctuations in mining and business operations, always present by the nature of the placer deposits and the physical and climatic features of Cariboo, but aggravated by the external conditions discussed at the outset of this chapter.

Considering, too, that the theatre both celebrated, and was inseparable from, the health of the community, it is logical to see attendance as a barometer of the prevailing economic and psycho-social climate, and specifically of the relative scarcity or availability of ready cash which tended to run in cycles of good or "dull" times, most directly attributable to such local factors as a late or early spring, summer droughts, or flash floods, and the presence or absence of new discoveries.

Such dull times marked the late winter and opening of spring, 1870, and caused sharp extremes of attendance, followed by two performances that only "gave receipts about equal to expenses." Then on April 9:

The attendance at the theatre . . . was slightly larger than at the previous performance, and indicates how readily an improvement in mining operations affects the circulation of the precious."

This was followed by a string of large houses through September, reflecting a profitable summer and the stimulus provided by the arrival of the test mill and the renewed interest in quartz, and by a California-based company introducing steam machinery on the "meadows" at the foot of Williams Creek. These developments combined to produce a positive mood, with the promise of a more secure, uniformly prosperous economic base appearing, for the nonce,
a tangible, achievable possibility. 36

On the other hand, dull times definitely "dulled the appetite for recreation." It is understandable enough that fluctuations in the fortunes of mining enterprise in general invariably produced corresponding changes in the public mood and that the mood had naturally all the more "unanimity" where fortunes were so interlocked. Then, too, when "numerous subscription lists" were circulated community spirit and financial resources were apt to be stretched pretty thin in their largely unassisted efforts to maintain public works and institutions. Poor attendance at the theatre was thus not an indication that it had become less relevant or necessary, but an index of how difficult it was to sustain a civilization on the frontier, how easily other social and economic necessities and preoccupations could supervene. Sometimes harrangues by the Sentinel urged support on the grounds of social usefulness or performance quality. But it was more often the occasion of benefit performances that brought the faithful back to the fold, reminding them of what this theatre meant in their lives. 37

Further light is shed on this question of attendance by another, related problem of C. A. D. A.; a continual turnover in its membership. It is impossible to detail here all the arrivals and departures, but in 1869 alone at least seven people were lost to the group: H. S. Blunt was transferred by his bank; E. D. Howman left Cariboo for England; William Fraser left but returned two years later; and Emily Edwards married. Death took an unusual toll that year: each of them on a visit home, S. Ormandy drowned in the Fraser and William Cochrane was lost in a shipwreck; in October W. W. Hill, actor and scene designer, died after a long illness. By January of 1870 the Sentinel asked,

What has become of the histrionic enterprise of Cariboo? Whence comes it that while the corps of the A. D. A. is gradually diminishing by untimely departures to other penal settlements so few are willing to make good the loss? . . . Seriously, the want of more members . . . is beginning to show itself. The
constant call on the faithful to take part in almost every performance places "Her Majesty's servants" in an unfair position. Few professional actors are gifted with sufficient versatility to appear before the same audience time after time without at last seeming somewhat tedious . . .; thus, to say nothing of the time they are called upon to sacrifice, they are put to a constant strain to give satisfaction.

The situation was soon remedied, however; "as members left the country others joined," and they "still kept themselves creditably before the public."38

Besides the inevitable equation of histrionic with mining enterprise and the need for periodic new "discoveries," the lack of which may have contributed briefly to the slumps in attendance during late 1869 and early 1870, the turnover in C. A. D. A.'s ranks was of course a reflection of the general turnover in Cariboo's population. This was a common enough feature of the frontier—and is a continuing problem of the many isolated single industry towns dotting a Canadian landscape that remains largely an undeveloped, merely exploited frontier, making cultural growth or continuity extremely difficult. In the case of Barkerville the tendency was again exacerbated by the forces promoting political-economic isolation and instability, and the Sentinel recorded numerous comings and goings over the years. Some left for good, others drawn to new gold excitement elsewhere or visiting homelands often drifted back; newcomers filled some of the gaps.

While the mining population was fairly constant after 1868 (though decidedly smaller than before) it was scattered over an increasingly larger area with the forced reliance of everyone on the unpredictable placers, and separated by the transportation problem. Actual population size is always difficult even to approximate, but by 1871 the Alta California reporter estimated that of Barkerville proper at between 400 and 500; the attendance of about 1200 at the holiday celebrations of 1869 suggest that about that number were within easy reach of Barkerville. Allowing, therefore, for the regular presence of people from more outlying areas for purposes of business or pleasure, the available theatre public can be assumed at somewhere between
1200 and 1400. If the theatre seated from 300 to 350, then a full house at any one performance—a regular occurrence at least as late as 1875—would required 20 to 30% of the available public. Thus the ratio of support for the theatre remained high—perhaps even increased—during the 1870’s; that and the erratic attendance were the positive and negative aspects of the interdependence of the theatre and the community. In 1871 it was observed that "The Association has, however, still managed to hold its own under the various difficulties which it has met... ." These are operative words indeed: the organic structure and integral relationship of C. A. D. A. to society; the continuity within itself and with the community of its values, its methods, and its core of old Caribooites; its institutional solidity vested in its civic theatre—all gave it a rooted tenacity and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and personnel. It was difficult for anything to hold its own in Cariboo, but no one yet believed it impossible; in 1869, it was a noteworthy event when someone transplanted some flowers from a milder clime, and they bloomed.

It was the same spirit of cultivation, actualized and socially channelled from their common myths that brought the "finer flowers of civilization," including the theatre, transplanted to inhospitable soil, to their fullest and most varied blossoming by 1871, ten years after the gold rush. During the same formative—indeed, transformative—winter of 1868 to 1869 when C. A. D. A. was cultivating its "usual good style," other branches of community life were being revived and improved, and new ones were added. By February the masons had finished their new hall, with a larger and more "beautiful" meeting room. The Welsh rebuilt the Cambrian Hall in May, and by then the literary institute was re-established in bright new quarters; donations by Chartres Brew, H. S. Blunt and others added several hundred volumes to the two thirds of the library saved from the fire, while a successful appeal for 100 new subscribers made up for governmental neglect.
and allowed new books and periodicals to be ordered monthly\footnote{41}. That spring it was also gleefully announced that "Cariboo the despised has produced a book." This was Sawney's \emph{Letters and Cariboo Rhymes}, edited by James Anderson and printed by the Sentinel, which had issued the Sawney poems in 1868 "in a form suitable for mailing." The book version was expanded to include other poems and songs by Anderson, Rebecca Gibbs, Tal O'Eifion, W. W. Hill and other Caribooites, and would seem to have been the first literary book published in British Columbia.\footnote{42}

Monsieur Deffis added English Grammar and Composition and private tutoring in "the dead languages" to the curriculum of his little academy, and in a long newspaper notice, "What Men of Resolute Purpose Can Do," he proved that the protean impulses for self-improvement and learning were more alive than ever:

It is astonishing how much can be accomplished in self culture by the energetic and the persevering, who are careful to avail themselves of opportunities. ... Hundreds of examples might be given of men who struck out an entirely new path, and successfully too, at a comparatively advanced stage of life. ... This was followed by some dozen examples of artisans-turned-scholars and other self-educated individuals, and by February, despite having enlarged his classroom, he had more students than he could handle and was "compelled to refuse further applications. ..."

Fortunately, new contributions to education and entertainment were being made by the clergy whom the Caribooites had finally induced to reside among them. The Catholic Church had been the first established, and in the fall of '68 Father McGuicken of St. Patrick's, Richfield, had opened another lending library, "well stocked" with

a very choice selection of Religious, Controversial, Historical, Biographical and Scientific Works. Also, a good supply of Historical and amusing Tales, Magazines, etc.

Terms of subscription were $3 per quarter and were open to all denominations, for generous donations had been made toward the opening of the Catholic Church.
Church by Protestant and Jewish citizens and the different religious groups lived in terms of perfect harmony.  

The Wesleyan Minister, Thomas Derrick quickly made himself popular, and the Methodist Church, though not formally dedicated till June 20, 1869, was sufficiently complete to hold services in November of '68, inaugurated by Derrick's giving of "a very impressive sermon to a large and attentive congregation." He was praised for showing "much energy" and had reason to be "proud of his success," since the church and parsonage were built entirely by voluntary contributions. Later a Sunday school was opened.

Derrick's "success" may have derived from Methodism being more readily adaptable to such a community and its secular basis than the older churches. Certainly his most impressive sermons were the occasional evening lectures he gave, essentially sermons of secular inspiration in the popular moral creed of character-building. The topics included "Enthusiasm," "Stumbling Blocks and How to Remove Them," and "Manliness." The latter is typical: manliness was defined in terms of "the 'vir' and 'virtue' of the Romans in their brave and purer day" and comprised the cultivation of body, mind and soul; he then discussed obstacles and finally "helps to manliness," which the audience could well appreciate.

Pride of ancestry is no evidence of manliness. . . . every man must earn honors for himself. Self-reliance and self-culture makes the man in the end. . . . Literary institutions and manly books are great helps to manliness. . . .

Another relevant means to this end was:

keeping fresh in our memories the recollections of home and its associations. . . . Man to be manly must have a home and love it. The love of home and memories of childhood were incentives to manliness.

These ideas perfectly supported and complemented the myths of concern and the content of the dramatic repertoire.

He concluded by reciting a poem, "The Old, Old Home," and received a "storm of applause." The poem was printed by popular request, and the lec-
tures, which invariably attracted "a large and attentive audience," were disseminated in great detail by the Sentinel. This indicates that what was wanted from religion was neither dogma and "hellfire" nor abstract virtue and other-worldly redemption, but its secular applicability to the practical problems of living out their transposed myths and values in a democratic and pluralistic society.

This role and function of ministering to current human needs and aspirations—giving them a spiritual dimension just as the theatre gave them an imaginative one—was most fully realized, though initially resisted, by the Anglican Rev. James Reynard, who contributed greatly to the expansion of cultural and theatrical life. A man of multiple talents, Reynard himself was motivated by kindred impulses to many Caribooites. Born into a working class methodist background, largely self-educated and musically gifted, he aspired to a position of status in the Church of England. His musical abilities and willingness to emigrate apparently gained access that would otherwise have been denied him, but unfortunately he was also prone to be somewhat pretentious, dogmatic, tactless and unyielding, none of which was apt to endear him to Caribooites.

Consequently, although his congregations were initially good, the collections "generous," "the Sunday service valued," Reynard was irked by Derrick's early success and impatient with the donations for his church and dwelling. He failed to see that his plans for a church were more elaborate and expensive and that the people had to support his wife and children as well. There were now four separate services being held on Sunday, but when some of the other denominations, attracted by the quality of his choir, asked if he might hold his service later so they could attend both, Reynard haughtily refused. His bid to become the established Church... was not of the temperament of the cooperative spirit of the Cariboo people, and would later cost Mr. Reynard heavily when he most needed their help.
Dubbing himself "Curate of Cariboo," he also tried to smuggle candlesticks, an altar and other High Anglican paraphernalia into the service on the one hand, and violin music on the other; when some of his non-conformist parishioners protested he refused to give in, and they left the church. But Reynard never acknowledged that his capacity for alienating people, not the Caribooites, was to blame for the delay in building his church. 48

Yet this complex and quite brilliant man provoked mixed feelings and succeeded as teacher, cultural mover, and performer while floundering as a preacher. He began by teaching English to the Chinese and holding classes for "children of both sexes." Beginning in the winter of 1868--69, he established the St. Saviour's Church Institute, based on British models. Here he showed great sensitivity to local needs and demands, and though other such groups existed in B. C., "none was more active than Barkerville's." A typical winter schedule included the following:

Tuesday Evening—8 o'clock till 10—Military Band.
Wednesday and Saturday Evenings—The Class Room will be open for Reading, Study, Chess, etc. The Institute is supplied with the following Magazines or Reviews: Blackwood, Cornhill, London Society, St. Paul's, . . . The Edinburgh Quarterly, North British and Saturday Reviews, The Pall Mall Budget.
Thursday Evening—7:30 to 10 o'clock, Mathematics—1. Euclid, Books 1 and 2. 2. Elementary Algebra. 3. Arithmetic on "first principles.

In addition public lectures on "Popular Science and History" or Musical Entertainments were given on Wednesday evenings. The first lecture, "John Bunyan and The Pilgrim's Progress," with readings from the book, was "loudly applauded by a large audience" on January 14, 1869. Season tickets to the classes and lectures were $7.50, with "more Elementary Instruction given if desired."

With the low fee and the different educational levels, the institute drew tremendous support; classes usually ran over until 10:30 or 11 o'clock,
and at all of them the average attendance grew to about sixty.

So deeply do many of the men feel the work in the . . . classes of last winter that many wish for the winter, that the "night shift" might not interfere with the classes.

A composition and elocution class was added during the second winter; and on the last night:

the members read and criticized (1) Bacon's Essay on Vain-glory; (2) Gray's Ode on the Progress of Poetry; (3) The Death of Little Nell. My business was to explain all classical allusions, and words used in a literary sense; criticize all criticisms as to faulty enunciations.

Though pleased with the response to the classes, Reynard as minister remained dissatisfied, complaining to the Bishop that "in fact people care little for any Church as a Church; personal influence is put for Church principle." This was generally true of most of the B. C. communities. In Barkerville Rev. Duff, the only previous clergyman to winter there, had been "esteemed" just because he preached "rather by example than by words." The role in which the minister was cast was that of moral guide rather than spiritual authority, teacher rather than preacher; his function was precisely that of constructive personal influence in a personalistic, secularized religion, to minister to a congregation eagerly looking for rebirth and renewal in this world first and in the form of wholeness of being, as becoming and belonging. If much of their psychic energies were withdrawn from the established churches and projected onto a mythology of modern individuation, of personal and social integration, these were entirely compatible with a church that combined positive and appealing influences of home and school and channelled those energies into avenues not inconsistent with enhancing spiritual or moral as well as personal worth. That this was his real mission for them was the gist of their support for the Church Institute. Intuitively, if not intellectually, Reynard seems to have recognized this and acted upon the popular mandate. His means of resolving the apparent discordances of his mission and theirs was: music.
"My music classes began in small things, but increased steadily and still maintain their efficiency." In the singing classes he seems to have worked with both choral and solo performers, including some, like Jack Hudson and Gomar Johns, who also performed with C. A. D. A. Of the chorus he wrote:

During the winter we have studied the best glees and madrigals; and the choruses from Handel's "Messiah" and "Judas Maccabaeus." And a good hearty "joyful noise" my Cariboo chorus makes. We have no treble voices, of course, but a good cornet player keeps the part a-going.

At the same time he helped a "number of young men" with an interest in instrumental music to form a band, which consisted of:

a clarionet, two flutes, cornet, and bassoon. I preside at the piano. Last night the street was crowded with listeners, and quite a sensation was made; and really we begin to get on very well.

Reynard appreciated the personal and social benefits of regular, group music-making; so did his students, delighted as usual with new-found abilities and skills. He felt "repaid for all this exertion" on hearing groups of men after class "going up and up the snow-clad hillside" singing together on the way to their cabins. "Musichhath made the winter fly," they said. 53

These socializing, inspiriting qualities were extended by inviting the listeners in from the street, and at the practices the room was often full. This and the later addition of a club room, where men could "meet, smoke their pipes, have a song or a game at chess," were to Reynard means of keeping them "from the dance-house," but the fact of large numbers choosing to come indicates that they actively desired more mentally and emotionally satisfying substitutes for social club and parlour than the saloons could now provide, and more healthy expressions for impulses "harmless in themselves." "Lead us not into temptation:" again the church was made more relevant to their lives by such cultural connections. 54

Since the classes already mixed practice and instruction with entertainment and performance, and no doubt spurred by the listeners, they quickly
made the transition to formally structured public performances. Some of those apparently alternated with the lectures at the Institute rooms, but the more elaborate and remarked upon were given at the Theatre Royal; the first, on February 8, 1869, attracted a "large and respectable audience." Described as a "Concert and Readings," admission was $1.00 for front seats and 50c for the back. It was considered to offer "a pleasant and rational evening's entertainment to everyone." 55

It commenced with an "overture from 'Oberon,'" presumably the one from Weber's romantic opera, and

the performance was very creditable, considering the short time that has elapsed since the formation of the band, and the small number of instruments, and we have little doubt that under the able leadership of Mr. Reynard, in a very short time Cariboo will be able to boast of a band of a very superior class. During the evening the band played very sweetly "Home Sweet Home," and a German military grand march. The members of Mr. Reynard's singing class sang the glee "When first I saw they face," with much taste; this class has only recently been formed, and the members have evidently made rapid progress under Mr. Reynard's instructions.

As usual, new performers were greeted in a manner "critical yet complimentary," progress was urged, noted, and identified with Cariboo pride. Solos were sung by Mrs. Tracey and Jack Hudson. Reynard, himself sang "The Anchor's Weighed" with "a very fine and well cultivated voice, while the style of his execution, as shown by his performance on the piano, evinces him to be a thorough musician." 56

The multi-talented Mr. Reynard also did the readings, including "Bob Sawyer's Party" from Dickens' *Pickwick Papers*, Poe's *The Raven*—given a more realistic slant by "preliminary remarks on wasted gifts and opportunities," and "the amusing legend of 'The Jackdaw of Rheims,'" another of Barham's *Ingoldsby Legends*. The Dickens piece,

especially, was very well received by the audience, who were frequently convulsed with laughter, as the reader, with considerable versatility, delineated the forlorn terror of poor Bob; the indignation of his landlady Mrs. Raddle; the pomposity of Mr. Pickwick; the wonderful professional anecdotes of Jack
Hopkins, and the amusing quarrel and subsequent reconciliation between the scorbutic young gentleman, and the gentleman with pink anchors on his shirt.

Dickens’ behavioural eccentrics and topically observed types seem to have provoked the same delighted responses as those depicted in the dramatic productions. The entertainment concluded with “Farewell to the Forest” by the singing class and “God Save the Queen” by the band, fond evocations of nature and of culture.

Another performance on March 8 was similar in format, content and participants, with the band “making good progress towards proficiency.” It was decided that Reynard’s “forte” as a reader was with Dickens:

... much better adapted to his voice and style, than the famous scene which he read from Henry VIII, where the proud Wolsey bids a long farewell to his greatness.

Too long, obviously, on this occasion; mining audiences of the time generally knew their Shakespeare very well indeed and were critical as to the performance of his work. At any rate, this remained the only recorded attempt at the bard in Barkerville.

In keeping with the Church Institute’s functions of improvement and community centre, informal lecture-concerts were offered, expanding Reynard’s teaching into enriching the public’s conscious understanding and appreciation of music and its performance. The first two of these, on the history of old English ballads, stressed their values as common cultural inheritance and folkloric roots and placed them in historical continuity with the present.

He systematically divided the subject into a review of old songs in use among the peasantry, songs mentioned or introduced by Shakespeare, and ballad opera and sea songs. The reverend gentleman has evidently devoted a great deal of study to this subject, and his descriptions of a number of old songs which have been orally transmitted from father to son, for generations, ... afforded the audience much delight.

He also "sang in excellent style a number of the old ballads," prefacing each with remarks on its origins and evolution, nature, and, where known, its
author. Those by Shakespeare illustrated the literary adaptation of traditional songs, thus placing the Caribooites' similar practice in perspective; sea songs (including those by Dibdin) and songs of the soil were always popular in Barkerville for their multiple evocations and their analogies to the gold seeking life. "The entertainment concluded with 'Rule Britannia,' given in masterly style." 59

Apparently these lecture concerts were part of a series, including others on Scottish Ballad Poetry, "illustrated especially by selections from the works of Burns," as well as Irish and Welsh, and thus furthering the access to the British cultural heritage and identity that were already pronounced in the theatrical performances. Though not reviewed, they seem to have been designed to culminate in a general "Lecture on Music," first written by Reynard in 1852–3 and delivered in Barkerville on February 2, 1870. It made quite an impression, and its enthusiastic reception by a large audience and subsequent dissemination at some length in print suggest that it clarified and articulated what Caribooites naturally responded to in music that "would stir the soul of anything human" and "threw the house into a perfect ecstasy."

His lecture notes open with a rhapsodic invocation and aptly mythic apostrophe:

Music! Poets sing and sages reason of thee, Music! . . . Thine harmonies float on the Sunbeam, thy melodies on the wind! Music! the earth is vocal with thee . . . . Each leafy forest is a mighty harp. . . .

It was the prologue to "tracing the origin of music in natural laws and man's adaptation to them—showing that both harmony and melody were, in the outset, creative gifts, of which men only discovered the use and application." These terms, too, were congenial to the Cariboo myths and ethos as well as their collective realities and response to their environment. Their use of music for moral and social continuity and imparting a sense of order and
comprehensibility to the new land and experiences was given a spiritual sanction and significance, as well: for those natural laws and gifts were both the work of God, who was no mere "Utilitarian," and in "organizing the senses he ordained that which is a prime necessity to be a source of great pleasure." But, "be it remembered that all gratification we derive from music is a pure gratuity of goodness." Music, then, imitates the original harmony, the innocence and happiness, of the edenic existence; gazing on Paradise, Adam and Eve "could only sing." He finds analogies to the triad in such natural phenomena as "the Animal, Mineral and Vegetable Kingdoms" and the three primary colours of light rays; in the Christian faith, hope and charity and the "triune existence in man" of body, mind and spirit.

In addition to this reconciliation in music of scientific discovery and revealed religion, he emphasized the temporal, geographical and social universality of musical principles by demonstrating the similarities of modern and ancient instruments, of the cadences of B.C. Indian songs to medieval plain chant, and the early sources of many hymn tunes ("the growth of centuries"). He concluded: that

the Church of the Present is linked with the Church of the Past by the close ties of musical (as well as doctrinal) harmony, and, as music is the one thing of Earth that will follow us to Heaven, the Church of the Present is by music linked with the Church of the Future, the militant with the triumphant; only that there the redeemed sing a different song before the throne.

Despite the flowery language, the lecture is quite in accord with orthodox Victorian notions of music, its elements of "soul," its moral and spiritual qualities.

It was bound to capture the imaginative sensibilities and spiritual yearnings of the Cariboo people, whether they were attuned to the secular myths of concern or literal religious beliefs, to the church as sanctified home or the home as secularized church, to redemption and heaven as altered states of this world or the next—or whether they shared both creeds. The
defining of music as an affirmation of natural order and natural human goodness and harmony, of its principles as accessible to discovery and their appreciation and employment to study and application, was especially meaningful for a frontier population, for the gold seekers' desire to discover and develop what was of value in nature and themselves. The musical, theatrical and all other activities of the Church Institute acted on the Anglican propositions of Christ as "the king of culture" and God as most pleased when man is most fully alive—to which all Caribooites could say, "Amen."

Music especially seems thereby to have gradually resolved the initial contradictions between his sense of his mission among them and their sense of it, reconciled personal influence with church principle and Reynard with his flock. In 1870 he reported to the Bishop:

... it is an influence to strengthen and foster all that is good, honest and true; to help the wavering by frank companionship, and preference of the solid for the doubtful. ...

The movement toward a mutual influence of religion and culture, church service and performance, is evident in his scheduling of performances during the Christmas and Easter seasons and in the use of church and classical sacred music in both services and concerts. Thus the 1870 Easter service attracted some 65 people and $35 in offerings by the quality of the choir and the inclusion of choruses from Handel's Messiah, which were then performed at an Easter concert in the theatre. Certainly Reynard's musical teachings and performances were decisive in regaining support for himself and his church building; in a direct pecuniary way the first two pairs of lecture-concerts and theatrical entertainments alone netted $209, after disbursements for band instruments; more important, in the long run, they extended the relevance of his church.

Construction of St. Saviour's still proceeded haltingly, but Reynard seems to have learned a few things from the Caribooites. His private railings gave way to a realization of how dependent was their available cash
on the exigencies of mining, and he even wrote excitedly in a mission report of "our" season's prospects. Individuals encouraged him by saying, "people will see your pluck at last;" patience he may have learned from miners who had toiled five years or more on tunnels, flumes and claims before seeing any results. In the winter of 1870 he was aided by a church committee, the masons, and the Sentinel's urging of donations. One figure in the cost shows the expense of putting up a decent building: the rates for importing and shipping glass for the windows were $127, "sixtimes the cost of the glass."

On September 18, 1870 it was finished; its dedication was "the occasion of much congratulation toward Mr. Reynard, who has shown a great deal of patience, energy, and industry."

If Reynard came to acquire some of the virtues Caribooites respected, he also provided a church they could well appreciate as expressive of the soul of frontier culture. It was an "elegant structure," its style a miniature English gothic, "in which architectural effect is attained by due proportion of parts, bold and simple forms, rather than by elaborate ornament," but it was built entirely of wood—even its transverse arches and pointed door and window frames. The building was complete with a nave, 30 by 20 feet and 23 feet high, an apsidal chancel, and a schoolroom and vestry attached. Concluded the Sentinel:

Certainly those who wish to pray as their fathers prayed may do so here, in a church which in form, if not in material, will remind them of the village churches of the "fatherland."

Indeed it was lovingly preserved over the years, and remains today a moving testament to the vitality of the pioneer spirit: its flexible, meaningful adaptations of traditional forms to British Columbian materials and experience, its sense of a necessary continuity of past, present and future, its desire to combine the best of both old and new worlds.

This spirit continued to animate the Church Institute entertainments through 1870 and 1871. They complemented those of C. A. D. A. in that they
broadened the range of theatrical experiences and began to expand musical taste via the genteel folk tradition and sacred and classical forms. The area of overlap was in the folk tunes and Victorian parlour ballads, and a popular feature at several concerts was that quintessential and apparently deathless lament of the modern age, "Home, Sweet Home," which haunts us still. If C. A. D. A. combined elements of saloon, popular theatre and parlour entertainments, the Church Institute concerts widened the spectrum of associations by combining those of parlour, salon entertainment, and church.

By December of 1870 the band had grown to nine musicians and was developing some sense of style, and the chorus contained "a number of very superior vocalists. . . ." The performances still drew some negative comments, however; at that of December 10, Reynard, carried away with the response to his short Dickens excerpts, insisted on reading A Christmas Carol, in its entirety! The poor audience, wearied before it was over, hesitated to leave or "boo" a "reverend gentleman," but the reviewer pointedly informed him that he was not that versatile, and "liveliness and variety always afford the greatest satisfaction—at least in Cariboo." They were also urged to have programmes issued, since "some music lovers like to know what they are listening to," and to give more advance notice of their entertainments.

The institute members omitted such faults from their concerts of spring 1871, which were also noticeably more varied and elaborate, presented a greater range of music than previously attempted, and interspersed "MAGIC LANTERN PICTURES." Serious music included Mendelssohn's Wedding March, a solo and chorus, "The Marvelous Work" from Haydn's Creation, a cornet solo by James Elder of "Melodies from La Traviata," and an unnamed "Quartette for Stringed Instruments," with first and second violins, viola and cello. The last-mentioned piece was "sweetly and tastefully rendered—and presented a new feature in the musical performances. . . ." These items were balanced by
medleys of traditional gaelic melodies: Irish at the first entertainment, Welsh and Scottish at the second. Earthly home was hymned in its more personal sense in such pieces as "Old Folks at Home," "Home! Home! Home!" and "The Heart's Bright Home;" the heavenly one in "So Rest My Rest" and "Beloved Eye, Beloved Star." Other homelands were conjured up in "La Marseillaise," "The Bay of Biscay," and "Our Native Land," "adapted to the music of Arndt's famous song 'Was ist das Deutsher's Vaterland.'" 68

Selections by the singing class—now "the choir"—were "in every way deserving of praise," giving evidence of "careful study." Vocal quartets of "The Minstrel Boy" by Thomas Moore and the glee "The Witches" (derived from Macbeth) "were exquisitely rendered in a style which would have been worthy of credit on any stage." Individual performers began to emerge from the group, delighting audiences with newly developed skills and talents: Mr. Elder's cornet solos were "thoroughly appreciated" and "received much applause;" Mr. Powell possessed "a splendid bass voice, which we should like to hear oftener upon the boards;" Gomar Johns, who joined G. A. D. A. later that month, first stepped to the footlights at the March 4 concert with an apt ballad, "I'll Love the Free." 69

Then there were the Magic Lantern Pictures, another borrowing from refined middle class social evenings. The "magic" was, like that of contemporary magicians, the cunningly contrived power of technics and optics, domesticated, as it were, and whetting the appetite for later mechanized entertainment; it was "the first of all flicks." 70 Of course the projected pictures would have been hand-painted slides at this point, not photographic ones. They were found to be "very pretty;" added visual appeal to the largely aural programme, and gave a structure to the performance by being grouped by subjects, with musical numbers alternating with sets of two to four pictures. The March 4 programme was divided into "Part I. THE POLAR REGIONS," which were subdivided into smaller groups of northern seas, ice-
bergs, etc., and "Part II. A VISIT TO THE HOLY PLACES," containing those of
the Holy Land, England, and elsewhere. The pictures were not accompanied by
music, but "afforded a pleasing change in the programme" and gave the
musicians "a little breathing spell between pieces;" presumably they were
shown with verbal commentary in the manner of a travelogue.

Yet there would seem to have been some meaningful integration of mood,
subject and thematic association between these images and the music preceding
and following them. The first series of polar regions, icebergs, glaciers
and the aurora, conveying the forces of uncivilized nature (significantly
captured and controlled by mechanical means), were preceded by a heroic
march "Trumpets of the Zouaves" and a "Prayer for Those at Sea." The Mendels-
sohn wedding march served as transition to the civilization of the northern
environment depicted in scenes of a Lapland village, followed by a joyful
dance tune, "The Heart's Bright Home." Scenes of Bethlehem and the Nativity
were introduced by the excerpts from Haydn's Creation and linked by "Beloved
Eye, Beloved Star," "a delicious musical gem . . . rapturously encored;"
while those associated with the Resurrection were separated by the hymn "So
Rest My Rest." An "Interlude of COMIC PICTURES" gave "much amusement to the
children, of whom there were a large number present," after which came the
Irish folk melodies, associated with the collective childhood of all ages and
the permanence of humanity and society.

While it would perhaps be going too far to assume any more discursive
or intellectual meaning in all this, the local and general associations are
clearly present in the printed programme and suggest that, like the C. A. D.
A. performances, these entertainments had definite emotional-imaginative
points of contact with, gave relevant expression to, concerns and hopes in
the context of the physical environment and human community. The combination
of human agency and mechanical means; the linking of past and future with the
physically present; the interpenetration of elements of sight and sound,
church and theatre, instruction and entertainment, the programmatic progression through natural, social and divine orders—all indicate that the Church Institute members had evolved their own theatrical ritual, in which the unity of aesthetic and moral values, the sanctification of the secular and secularization of the sacred, were given an emphasis understandably more oriented toward religious contents and concerns, and, as has been indicated, Caribooites were more receptive to such general religious feeling than to specific doctrines, to personal influences than preachments.

Certainly their entertainments were a welcome enlargement of the theatre's social mirror and window on the world. Their contributions also went beyond their own performances, for organizations, like people, quickly learned to cooperate and share resources. Just as C. A. D. A.'s executive helped the Church Institute prepare and manage its performances, so the singing classes developed new or more able performers to enhance the musical features of C. A. D. A.'s productions during this period; moreover, at some point the Church Institute Band took over the role of orchestra for the dramatic association, with the cornettist, James Elder, as leader.

Another group that came to the fore at least partially as a result of the Church Institute was the Welsh Society. Several of their number took music classes from Reynard and participated in the concerts, among them Watkin C. Price and members of the Welsh Glee Club. The latter, "composed of about a dozen of our best singers," had existed at least since 1867, but the Welsh as a group were the most clannish and strictly religious of Barkerville's nationalities and had kept their performing and socializing mostly to themselves and their Cambrian Hall. That they did so with such a quintessential form of musical mirth and extroverted fellowship as the glee is somewhat ironic and suggestive of their community relations.

But the combination of their homeless state after the fire with the instruction, performing experience and confidence gained from the Church
The Institute seems to have drawn them out. The glee club participated in the opening performance of the second theatre, and when C. A. D. A. "most generously lent" the theatre to the Cambrian Society for their annual St. David's Day Celebration on March 1, 1869, they decided to make it a public entertainment. Though the theatre was at first thought too large for the event, it was "almost filled ... with a mixed audience, who appeared to enjoy themselves to their hearts' content," despite much of the proceedings being in the Welsh language. But then this probably added to the appeal, the very assiduity with which this group had retained its cultural traditions and folk character making the event a vivid exemplification of the sense of continuity, belonging and permanence craved by the community at large.

Therefore the occasion kept much of its typical ceremonial character: John Evans, their lay preacher and social leader, was as usual the chairman of the proceedings, which began with the Welsh Anthem and followed a prescribed pattern. After Evans welcomed the non-Welsh audience and explained the significance of the occasion, "a custom which had prevailed from time immemorial ... Mr. Wm. Lly Jones read an able paper on 'unity and co-operation.'" This was apparently also in English; its sentiments obviously were appreciable by all.

Next, in Welsh, several recitations were delivered, and "original compositions in poetry were read by Messrs. J. Minton, and Henry Jones," while "Taliesin Evans read extracts from his poem on the 'Contest 'twixt David and Goliath.'" This constituted the "eisteddfod" or congress of bards and literati, an old practice that enjoyed a revival in the nineteenth century. Prizes were given for original poems and songs, which could be on local topics—Harry Jones remembered winning five dollars for a song "on the 'Old Bachelor of Cariboo.' But I did not have to sing it myself!"

Music dominated the rest of the entertainment, with the glee club singing several glees and anthems and other singers performing duets and
trios. "Amongst those of our well-wishers who were present," Mrs. Parker, Tom Harding and James Anderson sang "several good songs, which was a great addition to the amusement," and J. S. Thompson "addressed the meeting in a short but appropriate speech." This was unity and cooperation indeed; then, with "votes of thanks" to the chairman, the volunteer performers, and the dramatic association proposed and carried "unanimously," "and after singing 'God Save the Queen,' the meeting dispersed, everyone appearing to be well satisfied. . . ."??

This "rite of passage" seems to have been as much a progress in spirit from the old to the new world as the other way round—at least for the Welsh, who from this time on involved and identified themselves more freely with the social life of Cariboo. Their annual celebrations continued to be public events, aided by other local talent, and though that of 1870 was held in their new hall by way of dedication, they were afterwards usually given in the theatre "so that more people could enjoy them."?? In 1875 John Evans was elected an M. L. A. for Cariboo, and later Harry Jones represented the district for several terms. The glee club quickly became regular participants in C. A. D. A. performances. At that which sparked the critical controversy, Tal O Eifion was forced to write of his friends that their singing was "discreditable to them in the extreme,"?? but this may have been partly an effect of C. A. D. A.'s current troubles, for a short time later they "seemed more harmonious" and subsequently the club "received several valuable accessions to its strength and under the leadership of Mr. W. C. Price continue to improve steadily."?? They also extended their repertoire to trios, quartets and ballads, as well as part songs.

Emboldened by their success and to raise funds for the costs of their new hall, the Welsh organized a concert for July 1, 1869, with the glee club supported by "the leading vocalists of Cariboo." A "special attraction" was an original song with music by Price and lyrics by Tal O Eifion. Called
"Welcome Spring," it was apparently written with performance by the glee club in mind:

Proclaiming with harmonious sound,
Summer's coming richly crowned,
Giving all, by winter bound,
Liberty!

The lines appear naturally divisible into three part harmony with the group joining together on the last word of each stanza, and they seem like an apt local application in form and content of Reynard's notion of musical principles discoverable in natural laws, finding a "rough justice" even in the Cariboo climate. Indeed, Reynard, who set one of "Tal"'s poems to music, may have encouraged his collaboration with Price; several of their songs were included in Sawney's Letters and Cariboo Rhymes, typically either pining for "My Native Land" or exulting "Away with Care and Sorrow." 81

In the same active, early months of 1869 the last new performing group was organized: the Cariboo Minstrels. Amateur minstrel performances were common everywhere on the Pacific Coast, especially in isolated mining towns where they filled in between the professional purveyors of this extremely popular theatrical form. It was "one of the easiest and merriest opportunities for the amateur," and it also worked the other way; professional troupes as renowned as the San Francisco Minstrels, under pressure for the constant novelty demanded of this form, employed amateur talent, and, as observed earlier, Lafont and Ward had done this in Barkerville. No doubt the appeal of the latter company fostered the forming of a local minstrel troupe at this point. It was the only purely American theatrical entertainment that took root in Barkerville.

By March 20th the new troupe had been organized and had sent to Victoria for musical instruments. It included J. Z. Hough of C. A. D. A., W. W. Dodd, an occasional comic singer, a Mr. Devlin, and others referred to only by the stage names of "Ephraim," "Sam" or "Bones." "Some of the performers
having more interesting occupations than rehearsals to attend to," their first appearance was delayed until after the spring mining operations were underway. Finally it was announced that for the Queen's birthday "the amateur vocalists of Barkerville will give a concert . . . when the Cariboo Minstrels will also appear." The theatre was crowded for the doubly significant occasion, and after the musical entertainment:

The Amateur Minstrel Troupe then followed with their comic and sentimental singing, their drolleries and conundrums, and the audience testified their appreciation and laughter throughout. They appear to have had the same sort of ambiguous imaginative-emotional resonance of minstrel performers that was discussed earlier--alter ego and comic buffoon--and the minstrel format had its own inherent strengths in its blend of folksiness and sophistication, variety and familiarity, freedom and order, informality and respectability. As "the best common denominator of democratic fractions," it suited the theatrical values and tastes of the Barkerville audience.

If the Cariboo troupe could hardly have had the slickness and versatility of Lafont and Ward, they did have the advantages of other local performers in terms of immediate empathy and rapport and the explicit doubling of theatrical interest. They turned these and minstrelsy's great asset of complete adaptability to further account by concocting "new and original conundrums and local hits," which "created roars of laughter." Minstrel forms could be used for some scabrous social criticism or political satire, as in "A New Song to An Old Tune," based on the minstrel number, "Jump Jim Crow." Attributed to "Dr. H.,” which referred to Dr. John Helmcken, the song ridiculed the hypocritically altered position on Confederation by Helmcken and other M. L. A.s of the old Hudson's Bay Company elite, now that "the company" stood to lose some northern concessions:

Electors of Victoria, again your votes I seek,
To put me in the Council where I may vote and speak
Against Confederation, as the Company, you know
Has changed its mind and ordered me to
"Jump Jim Crow."

Nor could the use of the walk around, "Going to Join the Union," though originally referring to the American Civil War, have failed to take on ironic Canadian connotations in such a context and in light of the annexationist sentiments in Victoria and south of the border.

In other local numbers the applications were more general. "Down the River" by Tal O Eifion was sung at one minstrel performance:

As it courses merrily,
From the mountain to the sea,
Like the river let us be,
Light of heart and full of glee.

This is in line with the use of songs to contain and order experience, give revealing form to natural patterns, and affirm the human power to tame or adapt to a rough unsettling environment. Even the mighty Fraser, it seems, was losing some of its terrors: "To its music we will row." At another performance, among the usual "Nellie Bly" and "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," but especially well received, was:

"Our Cabin on the Hill," a song written by an old Caribooite,
Mr. John Fannin, and dedicated to two of our amateur minstrels,
Messrs. Hough and Devlin.

They may have actually shared such a cabin, and certainly many in the audience did. Unfortunately the lyrics are not available, but they obviously parodied such sentimental minstrel favourites as "My Old Kentucky Home."

Another advantage of the group was that it usually shared the burden of the bill with a play by C. A. D. A., which also allowed it to eschew the performance of a farce and concentrate on purely minstrel features. Here they were careful to adhere more closely than Lafont and Ward to the traditional format, but even borrowed or adapted material could be grist for the Cariboo mill. At their one full-length entertainment on April 8, 1871, after "the first or regular minstrel part" and an overture by the band, the "olio"
section included W. W. Dodd singing in character "O vere and o vere ish my leetle vee tog," which:

was splendid and elicited rapturous applause. The manner in which the gentleman was got up for the occasion, as an old Knickerbocker, was unapproachable and excited the surprise and admiration of everyone. Mr. Dodd is worthy of a high place among our amateur singers.

This is a good example of the contextual appeal and significance of the local performer: the audience's expectation and surprise in a new discovery of human potential in their midst; the high degree of identification and responsiveness with one of their own; praise and a "high place" for recognized individual worth, reflecting on that of the community. The content is typical of minstrelsy's sharp ridicule of linguistic ineptness among immigrant populations, implying the importance of getting "wised up." The overpopulation of dogs in Barkerville gave it additional comic point.

The impunity of the minstrel mask for impudent mockery of the socially sensitive was also employed in the stock "stump speech," which was in the form of a humourous "Lecture on Women's Rights," performed of course by a man in an extravagant caricature of a feminist. "A popular item with the California Minstrels," it no doubt defused a topic of particular social anxiety to frontier males. The Sentinel itself, extoller of Queen Victoria as a model of femininity, ran an editorial on militant feminism, admitting: "Ladies, we begin to be afraid of you." If laughter is a release of tension the "incessant roars" of it on this occasion and the insistence on having an encore are very suggestive that the Sentinel spoke, as usual, for the majority. The reviewer always hoped that the minstrels would "not let so long a time elapse between their performances," but they, no doubt aware that value is enhanced when demand exceeds supply, gave only accouple of shows a year.

These, then, were the groups that emerged during those years of fertile social development and community enterprise, of which they were an integral
and revealing part. They evince an enlargement of the scope and variety of theatrical activity that paralleled the attempts to further develop the human and material resources of the area and establish a permanent centre of industry, commerce and general prosperity. But the enlargement was not in the quantity of performances, any more than the quantity of gold production had increased. Indeed, both remained, quantitatively, fairly steady. The newspaper records show the largest number of performances, 35, belonging to 1868, thanks to the touring professionals, followed by 29 in 1869, 21 in 1870, and 23 in 1871 (see Appendix II). But because of gaps in the copies of the Sentinel in the latter two years and because some performances received no mention due to "the press of other matters;" such figures are best treated as approximate. It is probably more useful to consider that in the four years from December 1867 to December 1871 at least 120 performances, each constituting a separate entertainment, were given, an average of about 30 per year. Thus a fairly regular pattern was established and maintained, mainly by local agencies, year-round and from year to year, concomitant with similar developments in mining, business and social activity.

Development continued, then, in quality rather than quantity. It is perhaps the failure of historians, generally, reflecting our own confused values and priorities, to distinguish these and give due consideration to the quality of social and economic life that explains the failure to understand and appreciate fully the achievements and goals of the most vital community our much abused hinterland has probably ever seen, and its potential value and meaning for the present and future. Both the quality and quantity of theatrical and social life reached their peak in the years 1869–1871, but they also reached their limits—imposed by the same circumstances that limited mining and commercial enterprise.

Quality, as always, is an imprecise and elusive term, and therefore careful application, within its variable connotations, is crucial. In the
sense of standards, although C. A. D. A. was unable to achieve its stated goal of raising the literary content and scenic sophistication of its performances, it did continue to improve the general level of acting and production with the resources and repertoire available to it and in spite of financial and other obstacles. Together with that progress, the new groups and performers expanded the range and richness of theatrical experience, enhanced the role and significance of music within it, and increased and developed available talent. The Church Institute, the Welsh Society, and the Cariboo Minstrels all give evidence of having complemented, in the regularity of performances, their fixed formats, the elements of temporal and cultural continuity, the ritual quality of C. A. D. A.'s performances. They added to the formal expression of shared interests, whether local or universal, topical or serious; enlivened the figurative and literal celebration, under the broad terms of the myths of belief and concern, of the conditions of a congenial personal and community identity. Moreover, the same moral-aesthetic criteria of quality were applied as to the C. A. D. A. productions: the minstrels were described as "having labored hard to amuse the citizens ... with much success" the musical performers were praised for "hard work, and study," "improvement" and "progress," "taste" and "judgement." 92

Because of the cooperative spirit and consensus of values and aims that animated community and theatre alike, these groups, as has been indicated, were not insular, specialized, or cliquish organizations, but mutually supportive and influential, and individual performers moved easily among the free associations, tending to make every performance something of a variety show within a relatively structured and particularized event; again the familiar-with-a-difference that had both superficial and deeper connotations. C. A. D. A., as the major organization and the managers of the theatre, was at once the chief participant and beneficiary in this interplay, which was the main factor in the elaboration of the "interludes" noted earlier.
Not only did the minstrels usually share the bill with C. A. D. A., but on other occasions the latter produced "ethiopian" sketches or even farces. Sometimes C. A. D. A. omitted plays altogether to present a "concert;" actually a pot-pourri of the available performers and their specialties, which had the advantage of lessening its production expenses. The appeal of such entertainments was in keeping with the myth of man's protean capacities and the theatre's unique ability to give them symbolic presence: for one of them the paper urged everyone interested to "attend and encourage these persons in their development;" another was "a great success and an excellent illustration of the varied talent in Cariboo." 93

In sum, the theatrical performances of Barkerville all add up to one big bi-monthly variety show, which may seem on a cursory inspection to have been a mere hotchpotch of incongruities; incoherent, initially "quaint" and charming, ultimately trivial and not worth taking seriously. But they did not see it that way, and, when viewed in their context, coherent patterns are discernible, relevant connections can be glimpsed. It has hopefully been made apparent that the desire for entertainment that had fixity and continuity together with "liveliness and variety," and was "pleasing and instructive;" the recognizable and adaptable nature of the various forms, styles and contents that comprised it; the nexus of representative performers, belonging to both the old world and the new while demonstrating multiple capacities for becoming "something better;" the unity and logic of association conferred on stage events by all that spectators and performers held in common—all combined, with the other elements that have been discussed, to render the diversities compatible and meaningful, personally and collectively, in relation to their material, social, imaginative and emotional realities. According to the principle of pers pro toto, the aspects that have yielded to examination indicate that each such component of their performances played some part in clarifying and easing or resolving the dual claims that informed
those realities. Usually after such performances people were "exceedingly well pleased. ..." 94

Two other areas of the theatre's societal relevance and community functions were noticeably developed during this period and concerned, respectively, the performances and the theatre building. The first was the pronounced tendency to link performances to various public occasions, giving the elements of secular ritual an explicit, ceremonial connection and social efficacy. This dimension was inherent from the outset: the first theatre had, after all, opened on New Year's Eve—"that social night, / When cares are buried and when joys are bright"—and the second one on the anniversary of the fire, celebrating the rebirth of the town and the renewal of Cariboo identity and purpose. Subsequently such connections became a typical feature. Examples of them have already been cited in the Welsh St. David's Day entertainments and the Easter concerts by the Church Institute. The social customs associated with the Christmas season were most widely revived at this time, with festive dinners and gatherings held among groups of bachelors, gifts exchanged, the married women holding "open house" and men making rounds of visits, to an extent unprecedented in the mountains of Cariboo, everyone vying "to outrival his neighbour in good feeling." Both the secular and sacred significance of the Christian holidays in terms of human transformation and communal belonging were extolled, together with musings on the passage of time—nostalgia for the past, uncertain hopes for the future—and with the gaps and absences of the present more acutely felt at such year's turnings. In keeping with theatre's ability to satisfy impulses, fill absences, and provide a social communion of laughter and sentiment, the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association performed on or about Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve, or both. 96

Here the associations and consensus of theatrical event and social occasion were bound to reinforce each other. Indeed, one year an editorial
observed that one of the most fondly missed of Christmas customs was the English pantomime; this was beyond the resources of C. A. D. A. and the Theatre Royal, but on December 24, 1870, the bill did feature "The Old English Christmas Dance of Robinson Crusoe," which was presumably an excerpt from a pantomime. The same performance contained a contest for original conundrums with a Christmas turkey as the prize. Though such explicit links were unusual, manifold connections are implied by all that has been observed of the Barkerville theatre and its evocative popular forms. It might also be assumed that C. A. D. A.'s pragmatically chose such days to attract a larger audience, but this did not necessarily follow due to "other attractions," while big houses as often occurred on ordinary performance days; it would seem that the theatre contributed more to the festivities than the reverse.

More prominent and revealing among occasions celebrated by the theatre were the national days. Beginning with May 24, 1869, the elements of spontaneous demonstration and celebration at the July 1, 1868, public meeting were further elaborated and instituted for regularly observing the Queen's birthday, Dominion Day, and the Fourth of July; each of them organized at meetings in the usual cooperative manner, with committees to collect subscriptions and plan programmes; each one a day-long festival of which a theatrical performance was the culmination. With the majority of the white population Canadian by 1869, the largest and most elaborate of the three celebrations was Dominion Day.

These occasions were very much a matter of Cariboo pride, political identity, ideals and sympathies, and if people were slow to organize them there was sure to be a letter or article urging them not to be outdone by other communities in loyalty and unity. There was no contradiction felt in celebrating the American holiday as well: it was pointed out that it was "not an illustration of the political sympathies" of the majority, but of "the
good feeling among the population;" that these occasions celebrated in
common the principles of democracy and responsible government and "the wide
field . . . opened for the civilization and happiness of mankind" and the
opportunities for "suffering overcrowded humanity in Europe" provided by the
North American nations. Canadian and American holidays were, however, kept
strictly separate, and a suggestion to amalgamate them prompted "Ontario" to
write that "surely the representatives of either country are not so poor . . .
as to barter their identity for . . . a few dollars." 98

That same writer asserted the felt efficacy of the Dominion celebration
in expediting Cariboo's political goals, the 1868 one having caused "no small
comment throughout Canada" and given "gratification to the promoters of
Confederation;" its intent was "to show to the world" the general will of
Cariboo and to "disclose to the world the humiliating fact that the country
is not governed 'according to the well understood wishes of the people.'" The
world specifically included the annexationist element in Victoria and the
U. S. and the Canadian, British and B. C. governments. The primacy of
Dominion Day, which was for "all who may choose Canada as a home," was
affirmed by longer programmes of sports and more extensive reportage, and
when the Americans put up a 100 foot "liberty pole" in 1869 in preparation
for their day, a group of Canadians slyly topped them by raising a 110 foot
flagpole, flying a Canadian flag of W. W. Hill's design, before the dawn of
July First. The functions of symbolic gesture and direct political act
infused Victoria Day too, expressing the love and obedience "due to her by
law" but still more by "the higher moral law of which she is a brilliant
example:" it sharply distinguished the justice of the constitutional monarchy
from the misrule of the Colonial Office, reminding the British subject "of
the rights which under the direct government of her Majesty he and his
ancestors had enjoyed, . . . now withheld from us." 99

"Another reason" for the holiday games and revels was that "the
exercises of the day" provided the recreation and relaxation "necessary to
counteract the effects of the hard monotonous labor" and isolation of Cariboo
life, and were "like returning to boyhood again and reviving the pleasurable
associations of youth." Thus these occasions exemplified, writ large, many
of the mythic aspirations and values, psychic-emotional needs, and social
purposes served by the theatre.

Except for Dominion Day '69, when they lent the theatre to the Welsh
for a fund-raising concert, C. A. D. A. took charge of the entertainments for
the national holidays. On such evenings the ceremony of "God Save the Queen"
was given double emphasis: "the entertainment appropriately commenced by the
whole company" singing it, and "the entire audience—in which was a consider­
able sprinkling from all nations—gave it the usual reverence in standing. .
. ." This, with name of the theatre, its crown-topped chandelier, the mostly
British repertory, would have formed polite reminders that the Fourth of July
was not being celebrated on American soil, though minstrel performances
sometimes made a concession to the spirit of that day. Again the theatrical
consensus and the social one were mutually reinforcing, and no secessionist
sentiments ever seem to have been expressed, even by Americans in Cariboo.

That the theatre was considered to play an active role in the desired
efficacy of the larger ritual, as a show-within-a-"show to the world," is
demonstrated by the occasion that was made of it when any public figure
visited Barkerville, the most spectacular example being the arrival of the
new Governor of B. C., Lord Musgrave in September 1869. Known to be charged
by the crown with assessing and acting on evidence of the confederationist
wishes of the British Columbia people (unlike Governor Seymour, who had
ignored and opposed them), he was viewed as "the Representative of the
Queen," and a public meeting was held in the theatre to decide how best to
welcome him as such and make their "wants and wishes known." Committees
were formed for "reception, arrangements, and entertainment," and the arrival
Fig. 9. R. W. W. Carrall. Pictured here as a Canadian Senator, Carrall is the unsung hero of British Columbia's entry into Confederation. A physician turned miner, social leader and politician, he served with C. A. D. A. as an actor and as manager during its formative period, while serving Cariboo as an M. L. A. and as negotiator of the terms of union. Provincial Archives Photograph.
was staged like a royal entry. Besides the usual holiday decorations of bunting, banners and evergreen festoons covering the buildings, no less than four triumphal arches were constructed across the street, including one by the fire brigade in front of the theatre and one by the Chinese. The brigade in full uniform marched out as an honor guard to meet the governor and escort him into town, where he was met by a cheering crowd, anvil salutes and band music, and addresses and petitions were read to him. During his stay Musgrave was given every token of respect and shown various mining operations.

Clearly the object of the whole exercise was to impress him with their economic and social worth, to convince him to take them seriously as a community deserving of Confederation and self-government. Toward that end, C.A.D.A. offered to give a "command performance" in honor of His Excellency; and "his Lordship the Chief Justice"—Matthew Begbie—"also attended." The theatre was full and the air of ritual importance and critical expectation palpable:

Immediately after His Excellency had entered the Theatre, a loyal and lusty voice proposed three cheers for the Governor and the cheers were given with right good will. The customary prelude to the music on such occasions was duly observed, and the whole audience rose as "God Save the Queen" was performed. . . . Fully sensible . . . that on this occasion any deficiency would be severely dealt with by the audience, who wished to see the distinguished gentlemen present well pleased, the Amateurs took great pains to render the performance in their very best style.

The first of the carefully chosen plays was Slasher and Crasher, which was "most successfully played;"

The 'bold Slasher' and the 'gallant Crasher' were rightly placed in the hands of Messrs. Thompson and Grant respectively, who succeeded in eliciting frequent applause by their correct delineation of character and the humor which they imparted. . . . The greater part of the burden of the piece falls upon the shoulders of Slasher, and Mr. Thompson carried it manfully and without the slightest symptom of it being too much for him. His drollery was inimitable, and his elocution extremely correct.

"Correct," like "occasion," was a by-word for that performance and the others
were praised accordingly. 104

After "Mr. Coulson gave a 'taste of his quality' in dancing," the second comedy, Nan the Good For Nothing,

proved in the hands of the amateurs to be good for something—a constant movement of the cachinatory faculties; and as laughter is said to be extremely beneficial to health the effect of Nan's performance was the reverse of that indicated by the title. . . . At the conclusion of the performance the audience rose and remained until the National Anthem had been duly rendered by the orchestra. His Excellency the Governor subsequently spoke in flattering terms of the Amateurs to Hon. Carrall, the manager.

Obviously the theatre was considered a potent means of communicating Cariboo society's respectability, cultural impulses and affinities, and creative human resources. 105

Yet this was by no means merely an obsequious action: given the feeling that politically much was at stake; the rebellious discontent among the B. C. populace; what the plays represented for Barkerville people; the fact that they were staged by Dr. Carrall, also the "behind the scenes" director of the Confederation movement and Cariboo's actor on the political "stage" in Victoria (an analogy they drew themselves), there was an underlying but strong and unmistakeable political message in the dramatic performances. In this context Slasher and Crasher—with its depiction of the "new men" insisting on being accepted on their own merits by the old order, free from outmoded codes and arbitrary authority—and with its violent image of social chaos resulting from the attempt to impose them—must have presented an analogous comic caution against any further feudalistic rule by the incoming administration. Even more clearly

Even more clearly, and more positively, when "Nan," at the end of that play, said, "if you (to the audience) will only go about and tell people that at last I am good for something. . . .," the figure could hardly have escaped appearing like Cariboo incarnate, trying to "improve" and "deserve every good that can come to me." "Tom''s speech might have been aimed at the
Of course, everybody's good for something if taken care of. . . . and when Nature does so much, I maintain we ought to help Nature whenever we can. . . . If you will think with me and help us by your approval of what we've done, and see there's a little truth in it, then neither that, nor Nan here, nor any, nor any one present at this moment can by any possibility be "GOOD FOR NOTHING."

Seated among them in their democratic theatre—where "a society thinks in public in front of itself;" entertains the same thoughts and feelings at the same time—Musgrave could not have avoided thinking with them, and ultimately he did help to advance their political cause. A concert was also given for him three days later by the Church Institute.

On September 1, 1871 a similar performance was given in honour of a sudden visit by H. I. Langevin, Canadian Minister of Public Works; with less advance notice C. A. D. A. simply repeated its production of August 26, which is the only record of this having been done. The citizens also held a public meeting in the theatre to present him with a "congratulatory address."

Langevin, too, was apparently impressed, subsequently remarking to others on the intelligence and talent of Caribooites, and declaring them entirely capable of running the country! On important occasions the window on the world could be a window to give the world a "look in." The social mirror gained another facet.

Another aspect of the strong sense of civic occasion and social efficacy vested in their theatre was the frequent recourse to benefit performances. These included personal benefits for the actresses and charitable ones for needy institutions or individuals. The former were said to "not only perform a courteous but a just act," and no one ever seems to have disagreed; on the contrary, considered as tokens of the esteem in which the women were held by the public, they usually drew full houses, indicating that they were a part of the social-theatrical consensus. The statements that the actresses were indispensible to C. A. D. A.'s survival, the urging
of attendance as compensation for their services and the assurance that a performance "cost the Amateurs individually more than the price of a ticket," all point to the conclusion that benefits were literally compensation for lost income and necessary to permit the women to continue performing. All three worked in the hotel and saloon trade and presumably had to have replacements during rehearsals and performances. Mrs. Parker, who received the most benefits, also had four children. About two or three such benefits per year were tendered, probably giving the beneficiary a share of the net receipts, but how much is not known.

Institutional benefits were a function of theatrical performances from the earliest scattered efforts of 1864 and the first appearances of C. A. D. A. in 1865, as were a few for distressed persons. With the regularity of performances came more frequent benefits for the Cariboo Hospital, the Literary Institute and the Williams Creek Fire Brigade, all shamelessly, shamefully, neglected by the government. Over the years C. A. D. A. raised many hundreds of dollars for each of these institutions—$336 at a single performance on behalf of the fire brigade, whose members attended such occasions in uniform and entered in procession. Without such transfusions the latter could not have afforded essential equipment, while the hospital and library could not have survived.

It is of course possible that funds would have been raised by subscriptions, but such calls on the public were often made as it was. The use of theatrical events had the advantages of associating the giving with pleasure as well as profit, private with public interest, and weaving them together in the very fabric of theatrical and social life and reaffirming the community feeling and consensus on which all depended. It made the theatre's collective testing and bolstering of shared ethically and aesthetically equated values, interpersonal and civic belonging and improvement, and common humanity concrete and effective, as well as symbolic and affective.
Sociologists, while interested in theatre's affinities with ceremony and ritual, tend to separate it from life by denying it any power to effect, as opposed to its ability to affect, the world beyond its imaginative confines. Perhaps such nice distinctions can only be made by academic specialists in an age of increasingly exalted technique, which has dangerously lost the sense of flexibly adjusting means to ends, of judging the former in the light of the latter—has lost, in short, the frontier spirit. Fortunately the Caribooites had never read any sociology and could blissfully employ their theatre for social or political efficacy. For them to affect was also to effect—have we also specialized our emotions and our doings?—and was the logical conclusion of their consensus of an integral theatre, representative and responsible, a theatre in context.

A final element of the evolving community role and social usefulness of the theatre concerns the second Theatre Royal, a building intended from its inception "to be held in common as a civic hall." And so it was, subsuming two specific functions the first of which was that of social centre and dance hall. It was already observed that it was used, before the building was even completed, for a Fire Brigade Ball, which became an annual event during the Christmas season and, as usual in Cariboo, had the added practical purpose of augmenting the funds of the brigade. Dances were also held by C. A. D. A. to reduce the debt on the building, while others were organized simply as social gatherings to relieve the long winters.

Correlative with their awareness of the non-specialized, integral and multi-dimensional nature of theatre, the Caribooites pioneered in Western Canada the multi-purpose civic auditorium. With its removable bench seating and ornamental chandeliers, its stage and velvet curtains providing an appropriate band stand, its floor "smooth and waxened" for the "terpsichoreans, whose exertions were accelerated and rendered easy of movement," the theatre was easily transformed into an attractive ballroom. The walls were
decorated with evergreen wreaths, home-made banners and hangings, and:

the flags of many nations, represented by the population . . .
and by the attendance of them, in fair proportion, were
artistically arranged and created a striking effect, no less
for the peaceful harmony suggested by the friendly proximity
. . . as if in a Peace Congress. . . . Altogether the salle
de danse presented a most charming aspect and inspired the
liveliest emotions. . . . for this kind of work, decorative
and artistic, Cariboo possesses in her population--composed
of all nationalities and professions, as 'twere in a cosmopol­
itan city--plenty of art workers, and nothing is done by
halves here, the ball being in all respects a decided success.

They usually were a success, with a large crowd "representative of the entire
district, people coming from as far as fifty miles." Dancing began at nine
o'clock and was kept up, with intervals for refreshments and socializing,
"until six o'clock the next morning." A supper was catered by the Wake-Up
Jake Restaurant about midnight, when "copious libations" of "vinous" bever­
ages were drunk in "well strung toasts," renewing "the festive fires." 111

As the conscious symbolism and such terms as "taste," "harmony,"
"representative" and "success" indicate, the dances augmented the theatrical
performances in enacting and celebrating the basis of civic pride and social
identity. They, too, gave miners and storekeepers an opportunity to trans­
form themselves from their workaday garb and experiences and share the
enjoyment, with "the fashionable dances" of the day, of an evening of
elegance, polite sociability, fellow feeling and feminine companionship which
they missed or had never known. The social benefits were appreciated:

Much good is done by social reunion, in the development of
friendly relations, especially in Cariboo, where differing
characteristics, drawn from many nations, might naturally
tend to the contrary. 1112

As the only building in which large numbers could congregate, the
Theatre Royal also quickly took on the functions of a public meeting hall,
and the simple, neutral yet pleasant auditorium was again readily adaptable
as a forum for discussion and debate. The stage easily became an effective
podium for representative speakers, the egalitarian seating served the
enactment of cooperative and democratic participation, carried over into matters of direct economic, social and political issue and practical result, while the theatre's connotations of decorous behaviour and community belonging, together with the authority delegated to the chairman on the platform, promoted good order.

Among examples of the many meetings held in the building were all those previously alluded to for organizing holiday celebrations and planning receptions and those for settling the fire brigade dispute. Individual mining companies sometimes held business meetings in the theatre to avoid the expense or distractions of a saloon or the inadequacy of a cabin. Large gatherings took place for the promulgation or establishment of public mining or prospecting ventures, such as those which resulted in the importing of a test quartz mill. Sometimes highly sensitive issues were hotly contested, especially when they involved mining land grants to outside capitalists (the approval of which James Douglas had wisely left to a vote of the free miners of the district). The supporters invariably argued that only by such grants could large scale capital be attracted and the area be developed, while the opponents, accused of a "dog in the manger" attitude, pointed out the dangers of fostering monopoly and mere speculation and countered that capitalists should share the risks and support the labours of the practical miner. The latter view usually prevailed, unless the company was clearly bona fide, like the Lane and Kurtz from California, who invested much time, effort and money in attempts to work the Williams Creek Meadows. On the whole, time and our increasingly foreign-owned country have proved the fears of many for the threat to the Cariboo way of life and genuine free enterprise sadly correct, though on a scale unimagined by Caribooites, while the old arguments go on.

Despite such controversies the adherence to strict rules of order ensured that civility was maintained, and everyone seems to have got a fair hearing. The same was true of political meetings, which made the theatre
quite literally a forum for local democracy in action, even while that was
denied by the colonial government. They included all-candidates meetings
and reports of representatives to their constituents, and keeping the former
out of the saloons seems to have ended the bad old practice of buying votes
with drinks.

Until 1870 there was little divisively personal or partisan feeling in
elections for the legislative assembly; formal polls were not usually
required and a simple show of hands by a quorum of residents sufficed. In
his eagerness to get the Confederation terms accepted by the colonial
legislature, however, Dr. Carrall had agreed that responsible government
could be left as an issue until after the union had been achieved. Though it
seemed clear to him that self-government would naturally follow and would
only be irresponsible before the fact, yet his handling of the question was
politically tactless and foolish, almost fatally so, causing much misunder­
standing and personal suspicion in his isolated constituency. At a chilly
meeting in the theatre on October 10 he earnestly tried to explain his
intentions, but many remained unconvinced and Cornelius Booth afterward
declared himself a reformist "people's candidate," opposing Carrall's re-
election with strong support. The election was hard-fought with fully
organized campaigns on each side and was the first such political battle in
Cariboo, though "nothing but amicable arguments," said the Sentinel, "have
happily been resorted to." In the end Carrall won, but only by 24 votes and
did not run again. With Confederation in sight a new era began in district
politics: all subsequent elections for the British Columbia Legislature were
strongly contested, and meetings in the Theatre Royal were more serious.

These political and miners' meetings held in the theatre show that
consensus and unanimity were by no means matters of dull uniformity, but
were dynamic, ongoing processes, and they suggest that, finding themselves
at a crossroads, Caribooites were economically and politically fast losing
their innocence—and sometimes their patience. While basic goals and ideals were still shared, sharp differences were emerging as to the means of achieving or remaining true to them. At a crucial juncture, faced with mounting obstacles and growing frustrations, hard choices and anxieties about the future, the threads of honesty, trust, and felt mutuality that held the delicate social fabric together were easily strained, and, as with C. A. D. A.'s finances, suspicion and divisive individualism were easily aroused. Here again the theatre filled an integral role and central place in Cariboo life: the building physically contained the concerns, aspirations, tensions and conflicts, gave them literal vent, expression and enactment, just as the performances did in imaginatively terms, symbolic forms, and ritual patterns.

As civic hall, the Theatre Royal was the scene of the last vital institutional creation of Cariboo society. Though sporadic attempts had been made to educate them, by the end of 1870 there were "quite a number of children growing up" with no formal school. A petition was circulated to secure the $500 government grant for the purpose, and at a public meeting in the theatre a school board was elected with the ubiquitous J. S. Thompson as chairman. For the major funding three alternatives were presented: voluntary subscription, tuition fees of $2 per month, or a $2 tax on all male residents of the district. Initial arguments that only those with children should pay were criticized as

those antiquated prejudices which the ever advancing spirit of the age of progress bids fair to annihilate. It is not alone the children or their parents who are benefitted by the instruction imparted but the entire community shares in the participation, independently of the pleasures of witnessing material improvement and the increased sense of security. . . .

Liberal thinkers were quoted on "the duty of a state" to make free education available to all, and Cariboo's "good reputation" was said to be at stake. Such appeals to their myths, ethos and pride generally brought out the best in Caribooites and on March 20, 1871, in the theatre where they watched Nan,
the Good For Nothing, they voted in favour of the tax. 119

Things moved swiftly then. A house was purchased and fitted up; although there were qualified people around none apparently wanted the job, so a teacher was hired from Victoria. On June 12 the school was opened with thirty students, and since as many more lived too far away to attend another was later established at Lightning Creek. Thus it was in the summer of 1871 that Barkerville reached the zenith of its social and cultural life. It was an eloquent testament of people's commitment to a permanent community and faith in its future human potential that the enterprises for the continuity and progress of civilized life that had begun with efforts toward adult improvement in 1863 and had since produced at least one new organization a year, now culminated in provisions for the "elevation" of "the rising generation of young Cariboo."

That same bright summer Confederation—on which the rest of the hopes for Cariboo's future were pinned—was finally realized. The terms of union had been accepted, including the pledge to begin the railway within three years, starting from the Pacific Coast. It was naturally assumed that the line would run through the agriculture and mining districts:

It is right enough, however, to say that existing interests should receive the benefits of the road if compatible with the question of cost. If rapid and cheap communication intersected Cariboo, it would soon lead to the establishment of a great quartz mining industry, and the prosperity of agriculture would then find a permanence it can never have without the growth of the mining community. 123

And of course the coastal ports would then benefit and be benefitted by such an eventuality. The dream of an enlargement of cooperative capitalism and the furthering of mutual interests into an organically related development of all regions of the country still fired the Cariboo imagination, and the model of California held out a tantalizingly practicable warrant for it.

Accordingly it was planned to make the Dominion celebration "the most magnificent of any that has yet transpired in Cariboo." Though the formal
proclamation of B. C.'s admission was not expected until July 20, and rumours on the coast still cast some doubts on the whole outcome, Caribooites characteristically risked holding a prior celebration on their beloved Dominion Day, which had always been a ritual willing of the desired consummation. News of this optimistic, festive spirit must have reached the coast, where Victoria was in the same economic and theatrical doldrums as in 1868, for on the First of June The McGinley Variety Troupe of Minstrels, the only itinerant company since Lafont and Ward, arrived in Barkerville.

As the combination of "variety" and "minstrel" implies, the performance seems to have followed a similar format to the earlier company, except that in this case the main source of appeal was a family troupe featuring three child performers. Though the sampling is rather small, the touring entertainers do suggest an interesting progression from the solo performer, to the ensemble company featuring husband and wife, to this family troupe. Certainly the latter was appropriate for the current preoccupations of the community and consistent with the desire for thoroughly respectable entertainment.

They first appeared at the theatre on the evening of their arrival and played to a crowded house. The children were an immediate hit:

The entertainment consisted of Ethiopian Minstrelsy by the entire company, with singing and dancing by Miss Alice, Miss Mary and Master Bobby McGinley. The dancing and acting of Bobby, and the acting of Mary as the Juvenile Captain Jinks, were loudly applauded; and though the performance was late in commencing owing to the difficulties of getting properly started after the fatigues of a long journey, the audience were in good humour throughout. A considerable number of silver coins were tossed on the stage to the clever children, whose talents were appreciated. 125

Little more was said of specific shows, for professional entertainers were never reviewed in such detail as the amateurs, and in any case the paper was filled with Confederation and mining news. Subsequent performances on June 3, 6, and 10 drew "respectable houses." Each was announced as the last before
the troupe left for the Peace River mines; whether these were ploys to ensure good audiences or held over performances resulting from them, the elder McGinleys seem to have realized that between the renewal of political and mining excitement and the popularity of the children they had struck a gold mine of their own, and were back in town by June 24.

The Dominion Day programme was "similar to . . . previous occasions, only on a scale of greater magnitude," and "the tasteful manner in which the town was decorated rendered the spectacle unusually brilliant." People came from as far as Yale to take part. The day began at 10:00 A. M. with the national anthem and a speech by J. S. Thompson delivered from a spacious platform decked with scarlet banners and gilt maple leaves, and throughout the afternoon "a large number of choice musical selections" were "performed in good style by the band." With added enthusiasm the sports were kept going until 7:00 P. M. The theatrical celebration began with An Irishman in London, one of those exuberant farces of the unimproved immigrant dealing ludicrously with a transplanted and transformed existence. It was followed by a variety entertainment in which C. A. D. A. was aided by the McGinley children. This apt gesture of cooperation between Canadian and American, Cariboo and the outside world, was extended to the Fourth of July, when the amateurs in turn supported the professional troupe. 127

For the rest of their stay the McGinleys cannily arranged benefit performances for each of the children and again secured the help of the amateurs. For that of May McGinley on July 8 the groups combined to produce The Battle of Bull Run, with "Cannons and Horses. 20 people on stage," which would seem to have been a typical minstrel farce featuring civil war burlesque and embellished with specialties and modest spectacle. The "cannons" were probably a modified version of the "anvil battery," but getting horses up to a second floor theatre must have been a spectacle in itself. The company's final appearance was on July 15 for the benefit of
"Bobby" when they were again showered with "a liberal douceur" of silver dollars by the affectionate miners, who predicted a bright theatrical future for the children. In fact they did later achieve popularity as adults, touring the American southwest with their own company, the girls as actress-singers and Robert Jr. as musical director and soloist.

On July 20, the expectations of the First were confirmed; Cariboo belonged to Canada in fact as well as in spirit. A little smug in its faith justified, the Sentinel grandly reminded the lower country towns that had hesitated on Dominion Day that Barkerville had already celebrated the happy event in advance. The same day the dual importance of the Theatre Royal in the life of Barkerville was consecrated by raising an alarm bell, imported at a hefty cost, to its roof and housing it in a belfry, "where we trust it will long remain without its warning notes being required for a serious cause." As the last significant addition to the town it literally capped the development of a remarkable community in the wilderness, a "contribution to the art of living" and "a more successful adaptation to the environment of the frozen north" than any before it.

This contribution was made, first, because gold, the "jewel" of an enlarged selfhood in terms of the secular mythology of the age, attracted people in whom those myths mobilized tremendous psychic energies, which gold most effectively liberated; and, secondly, because the conditions of that environment tended to ensure that those remaining in it were precisely those who were more adaptable, more imaginatively and socially resourceful, and therefore more inclined to commit themselves to the place and, within it, to finding the means of constructively and productively channelling those energies. The "art of living" was specifically the art of living out, in that "frozen north," the broader and deeper humanistic aspirations of their common myths, which meant, personally, a more balanced and satisfying individuality and, collectively, a more generally equitable and congenial
community living, in which all could participate. The common denominators and nexus between the individuality and the collectivity were human integrity, as both soundness and wholeness, and social and industrial democracy. The externally and concretely experienced symbols through which they were jointly lived were: economically, a cooperative capitalism, founded on a sense of common cause, a felt mutuality of interests, and the principle that "every person in the community has an equal stake in the development of the country;" and, societally, those transposed socio-cultural forms that most effectively fostered a commonly accessible experience of becoming and belonging, of individual enrichment and collective identity. Both economic and social dimensions, as well as the later political one, were realized through the free association of free individuals and constituted the framework for a valuable community, evolving toward the goal of a progressively happy home for protean modern man, with its own mythic goal of a protean homeland.

Since theatre quintessentially confers an immediate experience, at once fictive and actual, of becoming amidst belonging, of the relations between the individual and the group; since it is by definition the only medium that can make imaginative truth physically present truth, and is an extension, not of a single human faculty, but of the integral human being and of the conditions of that integrity, it was inevitable that it should play an indispensable and integral role—or rather several such roles—in the living out of those myths and the development of that society. Because of the inherent multiplicity of its dimensions and affinities theatre simultaneously gave symbolic expression and literal demonstration to imagined human possibilities; was a means of realizing such possibilities in itself, a validation of their existence as such, and a contribution to their larger realization in the totality of cultural and civic life; was at once a part of that life in its own institutional and performance development and expansion of forms and activities, and, through those, an agency for assisting the
survival and growth of community living in other institutions, forms, and activities.

A mainly amateur theatre by virtue of the same environmental necessities that shaped and determined all else in Cariboo, that very status ultimately made a virtue of necessity and made the theatre a positive necessity for the human environment, by virtue of its adaptability to the historical and local particulars of the myths and concerns that were at work in those people, The amateur performer could best fulfill their creative, improving, self-expressive impulses: their becoming; and the institution as a free association held in common could best fulfill their impulses for participation, continuity, and permanence: their belonging. A theatre that gave mythic and ritual expression and resolution to archetypal human claims; that brought people together in a secular communion affirming shared and accessible standards of human worth; that directly and indirectly was both affective and effective, both a cause and a result of the health of society, was a community theatre in a most meaningful and encompassing sense.

These realities can only be discerned and understood in context, in the light of which Cariboo and its theatre illuminate each other and show a community and a theatre that were achieving their fullest, most varied and meaningful existence; a people who were making their strongest, most creative commitment to building "a happy home for aye." From their point of view they were just getting started, but the warning notes had already sounded. This beginning was in sad fact the beginning of the end.
EPILOGUE

... so let us live
That from the Past we may receive
Light for the Now--from Now a joy
That Fate nor Time shall e'er destroy.

Charles Mackay, "Now"
Cariboo Sentinel, March 15, 1873.
Fig. 10. Barkerville and the Theatre Royal in Decline. Photograph, taken in 1898, in possession of the Provincial Archives. The fire bell is clearly visible on the roof of the lowered theatre building. The theatre's appearance shows unmistakable signs of long neglect, in common with several other buildings.
Though the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association continued its activities and the Theatre Royal its existence for many years after 1871, there is little to add to their story, and much to subtract. It is almost as if, having achieved its most extensive goal, the community lost its will and purpose. This may have been a partial factor, at least psychologically, along with the positive influence of a new, larger, national consciousness and a vast new country to move about in, directing attention beyond the mountains of Cariboo toward more hopeful horizons elsewhere. But more clearly in evidence are the steadily worsening effects of the same ills that had been plaguing Cariboo all along, for which Confederation supplied none of the desired remedies, in either the short or the long term, and which in some ways it even aggravated.

In any case, after the banner year of 1871 the community centered in Barkerville began a lingering decline over the next several decades, punctuated, it is true, by brief renewals of life followed in their turn by further decay. The social and theatrical development that had reached their apex with the commercial and industrial growth of the area began almost immediately to give way to "retrogressive progress." Indeed, in the fall of 1871 community and theatrical life both suffered their first major loss: Reverend Reynard left, like many a miner before him, broken in health from self-deprivation and overwork. There were no more Church Institute performances—in fact neither church nor institute, for the Anglican hierarchy did not see fit to send a replacement for many years. Only the Cariboo Band survived, with subsequent changes of name and personnel.

Eighteen seventy-two began with no performances of any kind until the spring, though there were temporary causes to account for that. Because of the ravages of the creek freshets, which carried mine tailings around and under the buildings, the lower story of the theatre had to be removed and the shortened structure placed on piles to prevent further damage. The fire
brigade equipment was then kept in the foyer beneath the balcony. Later photographs show that the facade with its double doors and high windows was essentially retained and adapted to the altered building. Another influence on the curtailed season was the absence of C. A. D. A.'s actresses. Florence Wilson spent the winter visiting in Victoria, while a more permanent loss--indicative of the emergence of more serious and lasting conditions--was sustained by Mrs. Parker and her husband having sold their hotel to open another in the rising town of Stanley, on Lightning Creek.3

Only one new feature enlivened the stage of the Theatre Royal that year: a "Chinese Theatrical" on March 4. The reviewer felt somewhat at a loss to criticize a performance that "beggars all description," but he gave a fulsome account of it nonetheless.

A huge head with outlandish features, painted with every color--representing apparently a mythical beast--was borne on the shoulders of a Chinaman; drapery attached to and falling from the head concealed the body of the carrier and was stretched out by way of a tail ten or 12 feet in length, and under the end of the tail another Chinaman, on all fours, was ensconced... and both capered about to measured time, kept up by an incessant clangour of gongs, drums, etc. The next proceeding consisted of gymnastics, and certainly the performers displayed great agility and suppleness of limb.

"Two short dramas were next enacted," for which English synopses must have been supplied since the review summarized the plots in considerable detail. It concluded:

The performance was heartily enjoyed by the Celestial portion of the audience, and we have no doubt the whites present would have been equally well pleased "suppose they sabbeed."

Apparently the latter group found the unfamiliar stage conventions rather baffling, for the reviewer thought that the man working the tail section of the beast in the dragon dance actually represented a separate creature that was "worrying" it. The performances were presumably of Cantonese Opera, since that was the native province of the Chinese immigrants. Professional troupes often toured the coastal towns with oriental populations, but
whether this was such a company or a local group of amateurs is not known. Nor is it known if the event was ever repeated. Still, C. A. D. A.'s granting them the use of the theatre, the whites in the audience, even the review, reflect a more friendly attitude to the Chinese by at least some of the whites and a bemused curiosity, replacing earlier suspicion or revulsion, regarding the exotic ways of the "Celestials." The change is also indicated by the inclusion of the Chinese community in Dominion Day celebrations, perhaps fostered by their general support of the movement (their previous experiences in American towns giving them no appetite for the alternative). Certainly their learning of English and obedience to the mining laws had begun to remove causes of former misunderstanding and distrust. They were also industrious miners, and thrifty as well, and were held up by the Sentinel on occasion as exemplars to less persevering and frugal whites. Some white claim owners had begun employing them, and though others protested and controversies periodically surfaced, the Chinese slowly won acceptance over the succeeding decades. An observer in the early years of this century noted the complete amity, frequent partnership, and absence of any distinctions between the races in Cariboo--at a time when the more "civilized" coastal towns still sparked anti-Oriental riots and deportation efforts. Even in decline Cariboo remained a truly pioneer society, and we could still afford to learn much from it.

Unfortunately though, that was the only area of social progress that remained open to it. C. A. D. A. did not appear that year until the usual Queen's birthday performance. There were no others before Dominion Day and the Fourth of July, and altogether only six for the whole of 1872. It was not simply a matter of disinterest, for those given seem to have been well attended and received except for the melodrama *Seven Clerks; or, Three Thieves* and the *Denouncer*, which was rejected as utterly silly, as it certainly is.
Eighteen seventy-three began with a couple of charitable benefits; they too were considered highly successful, financially and critically, and a letter they prompted shows how great the regard for the people of C. A. D. A. had become:

Let us pay homage to those who take prominence in deeds of benevolence and charity in our midst. Let all praise and honor be given to the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association, the Cariboo Band, and those noble ladies and gentlemen who kindly assist them in their endeavours to aid those in need. Their efforts for the relief of the wants of poor little children and to assist the poor and distressed have always met with success, showing that Charity is still Queen of the Graces and rules the hearts of all. . . . They are truly public benefactors, and entitled to the plaudits of all who love mercy, and whose acts are governed by the great humanizing law of kindness. . . . When they lay down at night in the stillness of darkness, and the omnipresent Spirit, our Father in heaven, seems to be nearer; and as they meditate upon the good deeds performed, . . . they pass away into the beyond of sweet dreams with a holy plaudit on the fading senses, like sweet music. Let us give honor to whom honor is due.

Sentimental? absolutely; and yet it perfectly sums up the psychic and social value of sentimentality for Caribocites as a factor of their common sensibility and of their theatrical performances.

It formed a strongly felt connection between the secular and the sacred, aesthetic affect and moral effect, pleasure and profit, vicarious and actual empathy, all of which interacted concretely and constructively for them in their use of theatre and the humanizing community ritual it provided. There seems to be a heightened awareness here of the social evolution of their mythology and ethos and of the integral role of the theatre in enacting and furthering them, inwardly as well as outwardly. Their ethos also seems to have gained a new, consciously formulated and objectively exemplified ideal thereby, echoing the "nature's nobleman" of earlier benefit entertainments. It is now extended into a frontier code of honour, meritocratic rather than aristocratic, and ethically grounded in the "great humanizing law" of the Victorian value of humanitarian acts, psychologically and emotionally validated by a shared and accessible sentimental identification and catharsis.
After this apotheosis of G. A. D. A. and of the immortality of its theatrical "deeds," it is a sad irony that performances ceased entirely for almost two years, excepting only some informal outdoor supplements to the public holidays. For Dominion Day, 1874, the sports at Barkerville were augmented by a tightrope performance on a wire stretched over the main street by someone called Monsieur Garant; he had advertised the intention to carry a live bear across the wire, but either he or the bruin must have changed his mind, and he contented himself and the public with lesser feats. Concurrent celebrations at Stanley were enlivened by music from the Stanley Band, presumably the one previously resident in Barkerville, which indicates the growing ascendancy of the new town and, more seriously, the general fragmentation of Cariboo society.

As usual the direct causes may be found in the mining economy, determined by the same old political, economic and isolating tendencies within British Columbia, none of which were improving with nationhood and representative government. Still hampered by the lack of capital for quartz mining or the machinery for working the deeper placer leads around Barkerville, and with hydraulic mining not yet extensively utilized, activity in that area had slackened and placer mining was spread over an ever larger territory. Barkerville would yet have remained the centre of business, distribution and entertainment, but the lack of road or even decent trail connections made its position more and more difficult to sustain. Even the wagon road was so badly maintained that freight teams could not get through the high terrain around the town with sufficient regularity during the winters. The years of governmental neglect and misused revenues were coming home to roost—in Cariboo.

Lightning Creek's richness having been tapped and proved in places, it had recently become the area of the most concentrated prospecting and mining; "old companies began working and new locations were opened up."
Although much of the creek was still found to be unworkable—even some small steam engines imported at high costs proving inadequate in places—yet enough claims yielded and prospected with a richness second only to Williams Creek that a minor boom and excitement ensued. Four separate little towns along its banks testify to the dispersion of community energies that resulted. While the chief town of Stanley was only 12 miles from Barkerville, with the poor transportation it might as well have been 120; besides, it enjoyed a location on the wagon road just that much closer to the sources of freight and thus intercepted potential trade. Therefore Stanley grew at the expense of Barkerville, with other businesses moving there under the necessity of keeping up with the shift of miners. In fact, in the spring of 1873 Florence Wilson also opened her saloon business there, and while C. A. D. A. could make do with one comic female role being played by a man, the loss of their remaining actress would have been a heavy blow, probably more so than the decreases in the available audience.  

Beyond the couple of open air musical programmes mentioned, however, Stanley did not develop any performing activity, cultural enterprise or institutional forms. It never got beyond the stage of a temporary mining camp, and the period of boom was short: the putative capitalists of the lower country and the speculators that Cariboo always attracted at such junctures were invariably eager for the buying and selling of mining shares for quick profits in a rapidly rising market; but the long term investment needed to foster real mining development was as usual not so forthcoming. Those companies that had some accumulated capital or mercantile backing remained, others had to abandon the more difficult ground, and, though Lightning ultimately produced some $12 million worth over the years, expenses were high and much of the creek was never bottomed.  

Individuals and companies of lesser or exhausted means had meanwhile been ranging further afield than ever, particularly toward the northeast, in
hopes of making a raise, numerous light but easier deposits were found in which at least wages could be earned. Some adventurous ones had explored to the Peace River region during 1869, and enough profitable mining was being done on the Omineca River's tributaries to have drawn others to the area. By 1871 there was a sufficient population to lure the McGinley troupe there during the summer. Though this migration had made the Cariboo population even more far-flung, this had not been considered detrimental to Barkerville; on the contrary, the new area was seen as a logical extension of the Cariboo gold fields with Barkerville as the natural jumping-off and distribution point for it, as well as a wintering spot for its miners. But the lack of road connection made this impossible; the government ignored requests that a road be built direct from Barkerville to Omineca, thereby opening up much mineral land and benefitting smaller mining camps that lay between them. Instead the traffic went due north by way of Quesnel, with an awkward river and portage route, and Barkerville was again cut off from potential trade and cash flow.

By 1872 the usual exaggerated reports in the south created a small-scale rush to Omineca, with people from within and without B. C. adding largely to the Caribooites already there. A theatrical index of its effect is that the McGinleys bypassed Cariboo entirely that summer to play to "good houses regularly every week" at the new diggings. But few paying claims were actually found besides the moderate ones already being worked, and there was much suffering and not a few deaths the following winter because of the inadequate supply routes and inflated prices and the desperate attempts of people to reach Barkerville or Quesnel through the ice and snow. By 1873 the bottom had dropped out of yet another baseless excitement, and B. C. repined in yet another recession, with further losses of population and of reputation abroad.

In articles like "Union is Strength" the Sentinel continued to urge
larger-scale mergers of mining ventures and cooperation among the province's various communities and economic interests in order to give fresh stimulus to the mining industry on which all still mainly depended. It pleaded for an end to sectionalist attitudes and the Micawberish "waiting for something to turn up," and again and again it advocated an active working together to promote development and the common good. There was no shortage of letters from miners outlining practical schemes by which government and capital could encourage such objects. In fact, mining companies within Cariboo did begin to form larger amalgamations in subsequent years, but the lower country interests still offered little support. Indeed, both sectionalism and Micawberism received a new impetus and object with the advent of Confederation: in the form of the promised railway.

With various routes being surveyed during the 1870's "the railway was on everyone's mind."

The railway made the news. Victorians might note that Dr. Livingstone . . . had been found again . . . or they might read the reports of an imminent find in Cariboo or Omineca. But it was the railway, not mines nor missionaries, which drew their undivided attention.

Given the established propensities for speculation, this did not encourage any industrial growth or productive investment in anticipation of the rail link, but rather aroused excessive concern with possible routes, the locking up of needed capital in land holdings adjoining them, or the hoarding of moneys in expectation of profitable land-grabbing when the locations were finally decided. Thus the new province regressed rather than developed, old habits of mind and short-sighted values were further ingrained, and a series of economic slumps continued.

Long standing tensions and rivalries between Island and Mainland erupted into fractious disputes over whether the railway should proceed to Bute Inlet, crossing by ferry to Vancouver Island, or should follow the Fraser River south to New Westminster; of course the struggle was especially
bitter between the latter place and Victoria as to which town deserved to be the terminus. The Fraser River towns naturally supported New Westminster, but though Caribooites tended to favour Victoria over their despised former capital and realized as well that the Bute Inlet route would pass through Cariboo, they preferred to stay out of the fray, as did the Sentinel, and to let the best route be objectively decided. It might have been better for them had they been more politically aggressive and opportunistic.

With these already entrenched economic interests and political divisions, it is not surprising that representative government represented them more effectively than it did the welfare of the people or the province at large. Lacking political parties, governments simply formed around coalitions of those forces, and, with desertions solicited from one camp or the other, they rose and fell with considerable and wasteful regularity. Though Cariboo M. L. A.'s pressed the claims of their constituents, they were outnumbered and their voices drowned out amid the opposing factions and their "more important" concerns. Revenues and moneys from the Federal Government were still spent too unproductively on perks to placate the rival ports and vested interests; within a few years B. C. was back in debt.

For Caribooites there was little concrete improvement from the general conditions of the colonial regime; as J. S. Thompson had cynically, but correctly, predicted at the opening of the legislature, from their distanced viewpoint it was but the curtain going up on: "a new drama, of Representative Government; or, Who Shall Have the Spoils." Their eyes were turned eastward, but relations between B. C. and eastern Canada quickly deteriorated, and hopes from that quarter gradually dissolved. Aggravated by distance and lack of knowledge of each other, the mutual misunderstandings chiefly arose over the bickerings about the railway route and terminus, the Canadian Government's delays, first in deciding and then in starting construction, and the commencement of the line in the east instead of the west.
together with its slow progress. B. C.'s fiscal mismanagement, its requests for more Federal aid, its internal fractiousness and threats of secession, all earned the infant province the title of "the spoilt child of Confederation." Its political and economic instability did not encourage investment from Canada or anywhere else, and nowhere was this more crippling than in the increasingly capital intensive mines of Cariboo, which also found the Canadian Tariffs only a little less burdensome than the colonial ones. These, then, were the lines of force that dominated the province, continuous with the past and becoming stronger and more pervasive in subsequent decades; Barkerville was at once isolated and strangled by them.

It was not until the fall of 1875 that a revival of theatrical activity began at the Theatre Royal. Caribooites had been gradually returning from Omineca, Stanley was on the wane, and businesses had moved back to Barkerville. Though the population had been diminished in the interim, the placer claims in the Williams Creek area still yielded well in proportion to the numbers employed there; some, like the old Cameron and Wattie diggings continued to be profitably worked through the 1890's. Hydraulic mining was beginning to be fully utilized and brought the deposits finely scattered through the hills and benches into steady production.

As a result of these improved conditions the first performance since 1873 took place at the theatre on October 23, 1875. The announcement of some old favourites of "days gone by,"

coupled with the fact that considerable expense had been gone to in repairing the theatre, . . . attracted the attendance of a numerous audience.

Fortune's Frolic was revived with J. S. Thompson as "The Ploughman Turned Lord" and I. B. Fisher, Jack Hudson and Henry McDermott among the veterans, and "the unanimous verdict was that want of practice had not dulled the faculties nor the energies of the Amateurs." A new actress, Miss Fitzsimmons, "gave much satisfaction."
Among the usual variety performances a Miss Parker, presumably the daughter of Mrs. S. P. Parker and representing the rising generation of Cariboo, sang the operatic air "Sweet Spirit, hear my prayer" and for an encore, and for the aging generation, "Silver Threads Among the Gold." Frank Perrett did a "burlesque review" of speeches by recent provincial election candidates and was followed by a more literally political act. George Walkem, formerly a lawyer, mining investor and M. L. A. in Cariboo, was now Premier of British Columbia and looked on as a friend in government. Symbolically, he "gave a laughable sketch, in which a former well known Cariboo speculator figured prominently," and he then closed the entertainment by leading the company and the audience in "God Save the Queen." Though an orchestra was missed, arrangements had already been made to secure one for "future occasions." The next performance was advertised for November 13: A Trip to Paris and Back was to be presented for the benefit of John Tindall, "an old worthy Cariboo miner ... prostrated by illness." 25

Sadly, October 30, 1875 marked the final issue of the Cariboo Sentinel, which closed for the winter but never reopened. It had not been a big money-maker before, and probably the smaller population could no longer support a paper, though it must have been sorely missed. With its demise the history of Barkerville and the theatre grows dark. Occasional glimpses do show that theatre continued as long as there was any spark of vitality left in Barkerville and the district, though like them it seems not to have regained the level of activity it had enjoyed in its heyday. But Cariboo's decline was slow and marked by periodic upswings of interest and influxes of new people and investments; no doubt the theatre followed a similar pattern.

Quartz mining had been the subject of the Sentinel's last editorial, accompanied by a letter suggesting a petition to the government to request an appropriation for milling machinery as Cariboo's share of the $1 million received in Federal aid. But Walkem's government fell the following January,
and though he was returned to power for four years in the 1880's and was always favourably inclined toward Cariboo, he was also "a weather vane and a fence sitter" and too easily swayed by the more proximate interests in Victoria; he did little practical good for Cariboo other than obtaining the long-desired clear title to claims worked by the owners. That measure (in 1874) at least encouraged a faithful few to remain in the district, by providing some security and a collateral that stimulated sporadic investment.

In 1878 a large quartz mining company was at last formed, with "a good deal of capital invested in quartz mills." The interest this aroused even attracted a touring theatrical company, which was headed by Captain Jack Crawford, a quondam frontiersman and member of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, who was now an actor-manager of western melodramas and colourfully dubbed himself "the poet scout." After a successful run in Barkerville during the summer, "Captain Jack" returned to Victoria with glowing accounts of Cariboo's riches and announcing plans to return there and occupy himself with quartz mining. Whether that heroic talker actually did so or not, the quartz company soon failed, partly because many of the ore bodies were not free milling and concentrators and chlorinators were lacking, and partly due to the absence of skill and experience in this new form of mining. Moreover, such companies, despite a large original outlay, could not continue to raise sufficient capital in themselves to outlast the initial failures, import additional machinery, and accumulate know-how from repeated experience. The miners, however, "never lost faith in the gold of Cariboo. Their discouragement came rather from their long unassisted struggle," but they persevered and went on prospecting and developing quartz properties as far as possible, attempting to induce big capital investment to help bring them into regular production.

During the 1880's C. A. D. A. likewise continued to produce plays. Perhaps stimulated by the visit of Crawford's company, they had begun per-
forming full-length western dramas like *Nevada*. A photograph of that production survives, indicating an effective setting of boulders and mountain crags, not unlike parts of Cariboo. Three dimensional built units blended with flats suggest that some additions to the stage facilities may have accompanied the repairing of the theatre in 1875. Also from the 1880's, Bishop Sillitoe's wife recalled having taken part in concerts during their visits to Barkerville and noted the generosity of the miners, who threw enough gold and silver coins on the stage after her songs to assist the needs of St. Saviour's Church.  

In 1885—1886, as the C. P. R. was at last being finished, the government finally commissioned a group headed by Amos Bowman, a mining engineer, to carry out the first thorough surveys of the district. Bowman's reports, printed in the east as well, eloquently confirmed Cariboo's potential, obstacles, needs, and even rights. He testified to its extensive veins of gold-bearing quartz and base metals and its good agricultural and grazing lands on the low and level areas south of Barkerville. He affirmed the value of cooperative capitalism and of a community where people felt a direct stake in the economy, pointing out the significance of the "vitality" and "persistent confidence" of the mining companies' shareholders:

... composed mainly of resident and non-resident old Cariboo miners, who are now by avocation independent of mining, yet who have shown much enterprise in the development of their respective properties.  

But the necessity was also crucial for encouraging more outside capital and for the lowering of costs, which had stayed much the same for fifteen years; it was still "largely a matter of transportation and supplies," for with high expenses even a bonanza ore "may have to be thrown upon the dump as worthless." He insisted on the vital importance of a branch line railway "for the proper development of the mineral resources," and he surveyed an "easy and natural route" from Ashcroft through the agricultural lands to Barkerville.
Of the value of this great northern interior, in mines, agricultural and grazing lands, the fur trade, and other unthought of industries likely to follow present developments, only the need thereof, and a knowledge of its resources, seem to be wanting to remove the last doubt. . . . It is believed that no one will question the fact that Cariboo is entitled to a fair consideration, in view of its phenomenal yield of gold in the past, and its promise of maintaining a good reputation in the future. 35

Sadly Bowman's successive reports were never acted on, the debts went unacknowledged, the consideration was not granted, and the "present developments" were never begun.

With the completion of the C. P. R. British Columbia entered the era of "The Company Province," of what Martin Robin calls "the great barbecue," in which speculators, corporate oligopolies, and influence peddlers were fostered by political minions, and incompetents, elected by a too trusting public too suddenly augmented by the rail boom and having no prior stake or experience in B. C. The consequences were the "rush for spoils" predicted by Thompson, with earlier interests and propensities greatly exaggerated, partly as a product of the railway excitement and of the prototype offered by the C. P. R. itself, which, in return for building its own railway, was granted additional, enormous power and wealth by an excessively grateful Canadian Government. The Provincial Government followed suit, and "robber barons" quickly carved up territories and resources with governmental appropriations of land grants, mineral and logging rights, and even large cash subsidies to companies that would undertake to build rail lines—some of them never finished—to any areas likely to produce a boom and thereby boost the commercial and shipping interests and the land values of New Westminster, Victoria, or the new haven of speculation, Vancouver. 36

Remote from all this feeding, Cariboo was lost in the shuffle. Perhaps also its people were too independent and knew too much; their free enterprise may have been too free and their venture capitalism too venturesome, to tempt such "developers." Cariboo was kept isolated, unable to compete with other
mining areas and consigned to oblivion; it gained no material advantage, and
quite the contrary, from either the Confederation or the railway which it and
its people had indispensibly helped to achieve. This is not a chapter of our
history in which we can take any pride, but neither should it be ignored, and
we may yet learn from it.

Still, old Caribooites and their descendents remained, working in spite
of all. It was, "after all, their home, and many could not bear to abandon the
place and their chosen way of life. In the later 1890's there was another
influx of people and some brief interest in the area from without, partly as
a by-product of the Klondike gold rush and of the current North American
recession. It was at this time that the literary institute, now renamed the
Cariboo Library Association, apparently took over the maintenance of the
Theatre Royal, but the reason for this is not clear. Certainly C. A. D. A.
still existed and still did occasional new productions. Part of a letter by
John Bowron's daughter, Lottie, refers to a performance on January 28, 1898,
for which a programme also survives, of Triss; or, The Angel of Blue Canyon:

... The play, which had a long run in New York, was a very
appropriate one, the scene of the first 3 acts being laid in a
Western Mining Camp.

Such plays unmistakably evince a nostalgia for the restoration of the great
days of Barkerville; but those were gone for good. 37

By the beginning of the present century Barkerville had shrivelled to
a mere shadow of its former self: a village with a couple of stores and
saloons and a single hotel remaining, and serving as a base for some 300
miners and their dependents. By 1902 only three performances a year seem to
have been given by C. A. D. A., including one benefit for the fire brigade,
which netted only $22.50. Dances were more frequent in this period,
occurring once or twice a month; some were held in aid of the hospital,
indicating that the inhabitants were determined to hang on to their remaining
institutions. Political meetings were also held in the theatre, and
Barkerville was visited several times by Pauline Johnson and her fellow performer, recitationist Walter McRae. In 1905, after a short existence as the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic and Athletic Association, with the theatre doubling as a gymnasium, the Cariboo Dramatic Association, B. C.'s longest continuous theatrical organization, was declared by the fire brigade to be "legally dead." With eerie appropriateness the theatre building lingered on partly as a morgue and funeral parlour.

As late as 1912 Cariboo was still being cruelly tantalized with hints and rumours that a railway line was imminent:

Railway routes, practically at water grades are obtainable in several directions, and there is not likely to be much longer delay in providing the much-needed transportation facilities that will greatly facilitate the opening of the country to an industrial activity and increasing settlement of considerable proportions, so that from being the "cradle" of British Columbia... the district will develop into one of the mainstays of the Province. 41

But they invariably came to nothing and such reiterations must have seemed to Caribooites like rubbing salt in their wounds. Certainly one quartz prospector, after years of trying to get capital, expressed great bitterness:

Met with plenty discouragement--whole country knifed us--all saw nothing here--geologists, engineers, mineralogists said the same. 23 years before we made a turn to amount to anything. 42

That was in the 1930's, when a quartz boom was sparked partly by the depression and the raising of the cash equivalence of gold to $35 per ounce, and locally by the efforts of two prospectors. Fred Wells and Seymour Baker had each developed a quartz mine of obvious richness at Cow Mountain and Island Mountain respectively, just outside Barkerville. After years of fruitless attempts to find financial backing within Canada, the former had to go to New York, the latter to England, and sell their claims to large foreign concerns; an old Canadian story.

These mines were profitably worked for many years, the Island Mountain one alone yielding over $15 million worth up to 1969 and still operating.
Nor were the placer deposits exhausted: as recently as 1969 a summer prospector found one worth more than $6 million. Such discoveries prove that Barkerville did not decline simply because the gold ran out, the common, superficial explanation; the Cariboo miners were right, and the "whole country" was wrong. But, dominated by impersonal, foreign interests, quartz mining produced no new cooperative relationship of capital and labour, and consequently no resurgence of theatrical or other cultural growth. On the threshold of it in 1931, the B. C. Department of Mines had blithely and complacently noted:

Undoubtedly, Cariboo even yet possesses great quantities of gold hidden from sight beneath her creek beds. But we may safely predict that although great amounts of gold may be extracted, the mining industry will never again produce the hurried growth of a boom civilization such as Cariboo of the sixties enjoyed. . . when companies develop a district the spirit of individual effort disappears. 44

"Companies" here refers of course to corporate industrial structures, as opposed to the association of individual efforts that had formed the cooperative capitalism and industrial democracy of old Cariboo and animated its community and theatrical life, its unique and creative adaptations to the challenges of the Canadian North. Such statements as the above are correct, but only as self-fulfilling prophecies within the confines of their own arbitrary assumptions. It is a sobering consideration that had the Cariboo gold seekers of the sixties believed only in such possibilities they would undoubtedly have stayed home, and where might we be now?

That corporate mining "development" did not stimulate any renewed social development, and was indeed inimical to it, is illustrated by the fact that the new centre of Wells that grew up around it was an example of what has usually been termed a "company town," and more specifically by the fate of the Theatre Royal itself. After a brief stint as a second-run movie house, beginning in 1933, the building was condemned in 1937 and torn down; even much of the memory of it was obliterated as theatrical mementos
and records were unceremoniously thrown on the fire. The night before, some Barkerville residents had gathered there for a farewell dance, and when they attempted to ring for the last time the fire bell that had hung in its rooftop steeple since the year of promise, 1871, the bell broke loose and crashed to the floor, aptly ringing down the final curtain on a doomed theatre in a virtual ghost town. In death, as in life, the theatre in Barkerville was a faithful social mirror.

It can only be briefly noted here that Barkerville did not decline simply because the gold ran out; obviously it has by no means begun to run out yet, and more has been produced by two isolated quartz ventures since the 1930's than in all the preceding years. Rather Barkerville's isolation and its fragile single industry base were vulnerable to, and aggravated by, first the forces of colonial politics, regionalism, and the boom and bust, exploitative economic philosophy produced, ironically, by the gold rush mentality and conditions that Caribooites strove to transcend, but which instead seem to have transcended them; and the same problems proved to be fatal under the impact of the much larger waves of speculation, boom or bust and neo-colonialism and regionalism that, again ironically, followed Confederation and the railway in which Caribooites' had placed their, perhaps excessive and naive, faith for the future. The vast powers of corporate capitalism which the latter developments brought to B.C., and which have since shaped the province were incompatible with "the spirit of individual effort" and the cooperative form of capitalism that derived from Caribooites' myths and values and were the foundations of their distinctive social, cultural and theatrical life.

Of course the same tendencies have been observable throughout B.C. and the North American West in general, and whether one agrees with Morrell that this been all for the best, a necessary transition in our economic progress and toward "a new social integration under capitalist leadership,"
or with Rickard that it was wasteful and socially destructive, a questionable form of progress, it is certainly true that in death as in life Barkerville has been a formative experience in the history of B. C. Since the Cariboo gold rush more than 85 ghost towns have resulted, "proclaiming former volcanic human activities that are now extinct...." And this is not even to consider the number of single industry, resource-based towns that continue to lead an uncertain and problematic existence.

This is hardly the place to discuss the implications of Barkerville's decline, however. Though the recurrent pattern of the loss of communities and ways of life and the brooding presence of their "ghosts" do raise some serious issues regarding our cultural life and identity and haunting questions about our historical choices and economic values, they will hopefully be addressed by future historians better equipped for the task. Howay's provocative question, "but have we caught their spirit," must likewise be answered in another time and place. The concern of the present study has been merely to define something of that spirit which animated Barkerville and its theatre; accordingly the reader who has had the "patience," "pluck," and "perseverence" to bear with it thus far will not be wearied further with speculations on their death or questions of ghosts. Nor is it necessary to attempt any weighty conclusions: enough has hopefully been discussed in enough detail to allow the readers to draw their own. It remains to offer a brief summation and suggest some possible areas of value and application for this contextual approach to Canadian theatre history.

The object of this study was to give to an important aspect of our theatrical past a significant relation to our present and our future; all three have often seemed equally dim. To that end it has sought to clarify two of our basic and central myths and some of the theatre's connections to them; to discuss some of the constructive role, vital relationships and meaningful purposes theatre can be seen to have had within a Canadian
community, its interactions with, and expressions, of, personal and societal needs and impulses; and to exemplify the fragile yet valuable interdependence of its origins, evolution, and vitality with those of a democratic social group. To define these it has examined the Barkerville theatre, the first established, indigenous theatre in British Columbia, in the widest possible context in the hope that theatre and society would each illuminate the other, thereby also substantiating some generally applicable principles and validating this kind of historical inquiry in the process.

What have been called the myth of protean man and the myth of a happy home expressed, in terms of a multiplicity of historical particulars, social activities and cultural forms, the deep-seated, intensely felt impulses of modern individuals toward a greater control over the forces of secular change in their lives, through economic and personal improvement and the realization of their human potential and self-worth; and toward a fuller, more meaningful participation in a freer, more open human community, in more mutually satisfying and constructive relations with others, while at the same time preserving or restoring their bonds with all that was considered good and vital in the old home and retaining what was felt to be fundamentally decent in the human essence. The basic myths are common to all who have come to Canada, though the forms in which people have expressed them and the terms in which they have tried to realize them have varied with the time, place, and circumstances, and they and their aspirations are very much alive in Canadians today.

Thus the gold seekers of Cariboo represent them in heightened and symbolic form and throw some of their most desirable elements and implications into sharp relief. Behind the historical and local particulars of the myths are archetypal patterns of becoming and belonging, death and rebirth, continuity and renewal, which are at the root of theatre, its origins and its universal appeal. The myths contain elemental ideas which
are indeed discernible at the roots of Cariboo society as a whole, and of our own. Theatre itself, as both a protean and a social art form, was also the most suited to the expression of the contemporaneous aspects of those myths and to the embodying of their imaginative truths in specifically realizable and locally meaningful forms and images.

A cooperative and democratic ethos evolved from Caribooites' efforts to achieve their material and social goals collectively and harmoniously, as a group of people tested and conditioned by the physical realities of their environment and fortified by common cause, occupation and experience. That ethos comprised a code of relevant values and enlarged the terms of the myths, reconciling them and moderating their goals in the practical virtues of "mutual encouragement and support," "union is strength" and in the laudable ideal of "an equal stake" for all in the development of the country. It extended the personal components of their common myths into a collective mythology of becoming and belonging, adapting the larger myths of progress, democracy and lands of opportunity to shared community goals that would "improve us all individually and increase the general prosperity." These and other components of that mythology and ethos in their turn channelled the energies released from the subsiding of the gold rush conditions and mentality into commonly accessible socio-cultural activities and institutions.

If these myths and ethos shaped, and were shaped by, the community life in general, that reciprocal relationship was particularly true of the theatre: they provided the consensus for the operation of the theatre and the working of its conventions and conduct of its performances; in its repertory, the ritual format of its performances, the critical criteria for judging them, and the patterns of emotional response, the theatre did not merely reflect their myths, values, goals, local concerns and evolving societal norms, but also tested, imparted, elaborated and applied them within the tangible, practical forms of typical human characters, situations
and behaviour. The theatrical event as a whole involved the community in a representative enactment of social democracy and an affirmation of the basis of its identity and integrity and of those of the individual within it. Later theatrical developments also fulfilled these functions and bore both a cause and effect relationship to the development of the community as a whole, not only in terms of imaginative and emotional affects, but also in terms of concrete social, economic and political effects.

Concerning theatrical activity in Barkerville, it was intended by these means to show that it grew out of, and yet also far beyond, the mentality and conditions of the gold rush, and that it was an integral, indispensible element of a unique and valuable community, seeking permanence, progress and prosperity "in the well being of its people generally" and in further social and cultural applications of its mythology and values. The central object having been accomplished by showing that process through the theatre, this method would also seem to show that the theatre shows it—for us as it did for them—and would suggest a more general and continuing value of contextual studies in theatre history.

Whatever disagreements there might be with particular observations in this work, some credence has hopefully been given to the following propositions: that theatre history—and theatre itself, past or present—only become truly comprehensible and meaningful in context, the context of what is most significant and valuable for the people involved; that the most fundamental vital context is in terms of a society's deeply-rooted myths of concern, their archetypal impulses and current social manifestations, their implicit symbols, codes and values and their explicit forms, activities, and goals, through which people seek to realize them and realize themselves in the process; and that theatre's popularity and vitality in a democratic culture are factors of the degree to which those realities are shared, believed and participated in, of the extent to which theatre itself is
made responsive and adaptive to them and to the concerns, aspirations and entitlements of the public. It would seem that theatre is not only important for the health and happiness of a democratic society; it is essential, by virtue of what is essential to it.

It is hoped that more able scholars will be encouraged by the general approach to undertake further studies of our theatrical past in context, from which theatre and society can continue to illuminate each other. For theatre historians it would not only seem to offer a way of deriving trends and patterns of significance from the mass of historical details and of understanding past theatrical forms, genres, styles and conventions from the point of view of the "beholder's share." It would also appear to guard against any temptations to make their field either narrowly specialized and esoteric, or, on the other hand, less analytical and enlightening than it might be. It should prove an especially useful approach for studying theatre in pioneer communities, which contain our origins, our roots, our cultural myths, and our "brightest hopes."

Because theatre in context can sharply reveal these and many other things to us even across the gulf of time, because its very presence or absence indicates much about the concerns, values, goals and vitality of a society, and its nature and functioning suggest a good deal about those of the community, such studies could potentially expand the general relevance of theatre history for our own time and make it more useful to other social scientists in particular. (Indeed among the latter this has already been more recognized and employed in other countries, especially in reference to popular theatre, and it was such work that suggested the approach of this study.) They could also help to correct a tendency observable in our general historians to scant the cultural and social value of communities in favour of the economic, and to ignore what Howay calls "the spirit behind the act." Theatre has the capacity both to imply much about its social and
cultural environment (and even its economic one) and to show something of that spirit in action. Consequently theatre historians might profitably develop flexible means of alternately placing theatre in the contexts of both the inner, psychic, and outward, socio-economic, life of the people who gave rise to it, and placing the latter forces within the context of the theatre.

For governmental departments, cultural agencies and other policy makers studies of this sort could be particularly useful at a time of massive reviews of cultural policy and many questions and uncertainties as to the directions future policies should take. Such examinations of our theatrical past could help to clarify some general patterns of theatre's emergence and development, the forces and stimuli that have been conducive to them, and the societal relations and functions which it can reasonably be expected to have. While the community arts councils of B. C. and the "grassroots" cultural policies recently formulated by the Saskatchewan Government may be welcome steps in the right direction, it would seem necessary to see theatre more fully "in the round;" there has been altogether too much romantic fixation on the artist and too little attention paid to the audience, without which there is no theatre, and to the community, without which there is no audience.

As for practitioners in the contemporary theatre, many of them are showing an increasing sensitivity to social context. Stephen Katz, a young Canadian director, has, for example, concluded:

Canadian writers should be articulating our myths. Our theatre is too elitist. We need more meat and potatoes theatre. 49

But though he is correct in every particular, by themselves such statements are only abstractions. If the theatre is to find new ways of enacting our myths it can only do so in relation to simultaneous efforts to find new and more comprehensive ways of living them out; either is possible only if we know what they are and seek to understand them fully, in their comprehensive
human terms and socially desirable dimensions and applications. Studies of theatrical history in context could help to provide understanding and exemplification of the myths and values that theatre has articulated, the "meat and potatoes" with which it has sustained people and nourished communities, the non-elitist roles it has played, and the means by which it has done so. They might also provide "times of our origins" that could be scripted and performed. In these and other ways our theatrical past can yield something precious: what a Caribooite called "light for the now."
NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY
NOTES

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CHAPTER ONE

1 Morrell, p. 3.


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7 A. L. Fortune, "Overland Route to Cariboo;" 1862, T. S., Provincial Archives of British Columbia (hereafter abbreviated as PABC).


10 Conway, p. 375.


13 Robin, Rush for Spoils, p. 41.

14 Letter from A Scribe, British Colonist Victoria, B. C. 16 May 1863.

15 R. Byron Johnson, p. 3; Duthie, p. 2.


18 This paragraph is drawn from Heilbroner, pp. 8-17.

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25 The Bleak Age, etc. refer to titles of books on Victorian England; the term "self-made man" had been coined as early as 1827, and "may be of American origin," Rex Burns, Success in America: The Yeoman Dream and the Industrial Revolution (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1976) p. 63.


Gold mining is in fact rich in images that are analogues of the psychic symbols associated with this archetype: gold itself is suggestive in its found forms of the "round stone" or jewel of the self which are connected with rebirth as psychic integration or wholeness; the seeking of it is parallel with the quest for self realization; the mine shaft or tunnel with the cave that stands for the dark unconscious of the psyche in which the materials of transformation and wholeness are found. As these archetypal motifs are to be found in most major mythologies, it is not surprising that gold seeking itself should be traceable as far back as prehistoric myth.

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47 Krutch, p. 63.
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50 Alexander Allan, Letter to his mother, March 8, 1868, Letterbook 1868–1876, TS, PABC.
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60 Sentinel, 21 Aug. 1869.
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Macfie, p. 69.

Howay, p. 1.


see Morrell, pp. 79-110.

Howay, p. 1.

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The details in this paragraph are compiled from letters by T. Gwallter Price, March 20, 1872, and John Price, July 22, 1862, in Conway, pp. 377-382; and from W. Champness, "To Cariboo and Back," The Leisure Hour, 14 (1865), pp. 231-237.

Macfie, p. 246.

The information in this paragraph derives from Macfie, the Cariboo Sentinel's regular weather reports, and Matthew Begbie, Diaries 1861--1863, MS, PABC.


Ormsby, pp. 110-163; Conway, pp. 377-382.


To appreciate the equivalent cash value or purchasing power of such a fortune in contemporary terms, it must first be remembered that gold was then worth $16 to $18 per ounce in its unrefined state, and is now equal to more than $500 per ounce. But this change does not represent an increase in the actual worth of gold, which is a fairly constant store of value, but rather the relative decline in the purchasing power of the dollar when measured against the currency of gold. Thus Cameron's fortune would be equivalent to some five or six million dollars in present terms, while even a "competency" of $5,000 would be equal to more than $125,000. The $35 to $40 million estimated to have been produced by Williams Creek during the last century would amount to almost a billion dollars in present day terms.


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CHAPTER TWO


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13 *Colonist*, 12 Dec. 1864.


15 *Colonist*, 17 July 1863.

16 Cheadle, p. 249; *Colonist*, 23 July 1863.


18 *Colonist*, 10 July 1863; *Fortune*, p. 1.

19 *Colonist*, 17 July 1863.

20 *Colonist*, 3 Aug. 1863.


24 *Columbia Mission Report 1863*, p. 6; similar observations may be found in the section on Cariboo in any of the Mission Reports for these years.


26 Sawney's *Letters*, p. 18 (1866 "letter").

28 Bescoby, p. 157; Baird, p. 35; Bescoby, p. 157.

29 Macfie, p. 416.

30 Extracts from the Bishop’s speech in London, Col.M.Report 1863, p. 15.

31 "The Williams Creek Hospital," from The Caribooite, rpt. in Sentinel, 9 July 1866.

32 Commager, p. 22.

33 Sentinel, 9 July 1866.


35 Victoria Evening Express, 24 Mar. 1864.

36 Evening Express, 11 Mar. 1864; in 1866 the Sentinel printed several articles from The Caribooite, dated 1866, see notes 31, 54 and 103.

37 Colonist, 11 June 1864; for a history of the Bed Rock Drain and its troubles, see Sentinel, 15 July 1865.

38 Colonist, 11 Feb. 1864

39 Colonist, 3 Mar. 1864; 17 Feb. 1864; see also Evening Express, 13 Feb. 1864.

40 Colonist, 16 Mar. 1864.

41 Colonist, 7 Apr. 1864.

42 For a detailed account of this, see R. L. Reid, The Assay Office and Proposed Mint.

43 Rickard, Historic Backgrounds, p. 306.

44 Letter from B. Deffis, Colonist, 17 Oct. 1865; see also Evening Express, 6 Apr. 1864.

45 Colonist, 1 May 1864.

46 Wolfenden, p. 179.

47 These titles are drawn from a list of surviving books, which was kindly furnished me by the curator and staff of the Barkerville Museum, Barkerville Historic Park, my request having apparently stimulated a search that unearthed them; other sources are the advertisements in the Sentinel by the literary institute.

48 Colonist, 12 May 1864; Colonist, 17 Oct. 1865.
Colonist, 1 Aug. 1864.

Colonist, 1 Aug. 1864; Colonist, 31 Oct. 1864.

Sentinel, 15 July 1865.

Ormsby, p. 177: "... and the hostility of New Westminster towards Victoria disturbed him."

Selim Franklin, at an emergency meeting re. British Columbia, in London, 1866, published account in Colonist, 20 Jan. 1866

From "Chronicles of Cariboo," from The Caribooite, rept. in Sentinel, 24 May 1866.

Ormsby, p. 211.


see, for example, Letter from A Miner, Sentinel, 5 Aug. 1865.

Macfie, p327; Bescoby, pp. 26-29 sums up the miners' grievance and concludes that they were all justified complaints.

Evening Express, 15 Jan. 1864; by following summer of 1865 the Sentinel noted that the population was not half what had been the year before and that there were comparatively few Americans left, many having left rather than submit to the taxation: Sentinel, 8 July 1865.

Colonist, 13 Nov. 1865; Colonist, 19 Dec. 1865.

Colonist, 28 Nov. 1865.

Colonist, 7 Oct. 1865.

Colonist, 21 Nov. 1865.


John Fraser, Prologue, printed in its entirety in Colonist, 28 Nov. 1864.

Colonist, 3 Jan. 1865.

Colonist, 3 Jan. 1865.

Colonist, 6 Jan. 1865; Colonist 12 Dec. 1864.

Colonist, 6 Oct. 1865.

Colonist, 8 Sept. 1864.

72 Bescoby, pp. 138-139.

73 Editorial, Sentinel, 6 June 1865.

74 Sentinel, 6 June 1865.

75 Bescoby, p. 139.

76 Alexander Allan, Letter to his mother, March 8, 1868: he was able only "to keep even with the world;" Sentinel, 15 Apr. 1867, quoted in the editorial.

77 Bescoby, p. 143.

78 see advertisement headed The Cariboo Sentinel on page one of each issue.

79 Sentinel, 12 June 1865; see Colonist, 13 Apr. and 15 Apr. 1865; Sentinel 6 June 1865 and subsequent issues.

80 Advertisement in Sentinel, 6 June, 1865; for information on Barnard, see J. B. Kerr, Biographical Dictionary of Well Known British Columbians, (Vancouver: Kerr and Begg, 1895).

81 Sentinel, 1 July 1865.

82 Colonist, 6 Jan. 1865.

83 Sentinel, 1 July 1865.

84 Sentinel, 30 Sept. 1865.


86 Sentinel, 20 May 1867; Bescoby, p. 99.

87 Bescoby, p. 98; for the suggestion that the saloons might be seen as working men's clubs, I am indebted to Professor H. K. Ralston of the History Dept., University of B. C.

88 Sentinel, 6 June 1865; Bescoby, p. 150a.

89 Sentinel, 16 and 20 May 1867.

90 Walter, McRae, Town Hall Tonight (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1929) p. 136.

91 Cheadle, p. 240; Sentinel, 30 Mar. 1867.

92 Sentinel, 24 June 1865, Parlor Saloon ad; Sentinel, 28 Feb. 1867, ad for The Bowling and Billiard Saloon.

93 S. D. Clark, The Social Development of Canada: An Introductory Study with Select Documents (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1942).
The danger of this sort of approach is implied in the word "select," for in this instance he could just as easily have selected evidence that showed the miners to be paragons of morality and sobriety. Bescoby, p. 161, also becomes rather priggish and judgemental on this point, claiming that drinking and gambling are not prevalent among more settled populations and occupations, but this again is merely to condemn the Caribooites because their vices were not so segregated or concealed.

94 Colonist, 12 Oct. 1865.
95 Sentinel, 29 July 1865; Sentinel, 20 Mar. 1869.
96 Sentinel, 9 July 1868; Sentinel, 18 June 1868; 14 Oct. 1865; 2 Sept. 1865.
98 See Sentinel, 24 June 1865 for examples of such ads; subsequent issues exhibit more of them.
99 Sentinel, 15 Apr. 1867.
100 The Bishop of Columbia himself attested to this: Col. M. Report 1863, p. 45.
102 Bescoby, p. 99.
103 Sentinel, 25 Sept. 1865; "How it Strikes a Stranger," from The Caribooite, rpt. in Sentinel, 5 July 1866.
104 Colonist, 27 Oct. 1865.
105 "Great Floods in Cariboo," Sentinel, 9 Sept. 1865.
106 Letter from B. D., Colonist, 19 Dec. 1865.
107 Sentinel, 7 Oct. 1865.
108 Sentinel, 7 Oct. 1865.
109 Sentinel, 10 May 1866; Clowes, "Old Barkerville," p. 59.
110 Sentinel, 19 Aug. 1865; Sentinel, 3 June 1867.
112 G. A. Walkem, from a speech to the electors of Williams Creek, as quoted in Sentinel, 27 Sept. 1866.
113 Sentinel, 15 Mar. 1867.

115 Sentinel, 2 July 1868.
116 Sentinel, 9 July 1868; Sentinel, 28 Oct. 1867.
117 Sentinel, 29 July 1865. This does not include the Chinese.
119 Sentinel, 5 July 1865; Sentinel, 30 May 1867; "What We Live For," Sentinel, 31 Dec. 1866.
120 Sentinel, 30 Nov. 1866.
121 Letter from A Cariboo Trader, Sentinel, 2 Sept. 1865; see letter from Pickaxe, Sentinel, 19 Aug. 1865 and for the other point of view see letter from A Merchant, Sentinel, 19 Aug. 1865; letter from A Merchant, Colonist, 26 Feb. 1866.
122 Sentinel, 19 Aug. 1866; Colonist 7 Jan. 1867.
123 Sentinel, 7 May 1866.
125 Sentinel, 27 May 1867.
126 George Walkem, as quoted in Sentinel, 27 Sept. 1866.
127 Sentinel, 30 May, 1867.
128 Sentinel, 16 Sept. 1867.
130 Editorial, Colonist, 18 Jan. 1868.
131 Sentinel, 30 Mar. 1867.
132 Sentinel, 15 Apr. 1867; Sentinel, 30 May 1867.
133 Sentinel, 15 Apr. 1867.
134 Rickard and Bescoby both observe of mining towns that the total population is usually 3 to 5 times the number actually engaged in mining, though the ratio may have been smaller than that in Cariboo, considering its extreme isolation; in any case no census figures are available for this period and only rough estimates of the number of miners as around 2,000.
135 Sentinel, 15 Apr. 1867.
Bescoby, p. 202; Sentinel, 27 Oct. 1868, has a list of buildings destroyed in the fire.

Sentinel, 13 Sept. 1868.


"Our Gold Mines."

Sentinel, 30 Oct. 1867; Bescoby, p. 144, also mentions this but sees no implications in the fact.

Sentinel, 30 Oct. 1867.

Sentinel, 9 Aug. 1868.

Sentinel, 28 July 1869.

Sentinel, 5 Feb. 1870.

Sentinel, 15 Jan. 1867.

Sentinel, 5 Aug. 1868.

Sentinel, 25 May 1868.


From an account in Sentinel, 25 June 1866, it is significant that several of the speakers at this meeting later emerged as political leaders.

Sentinel, 19 Sept. 1867.

R. W. W. Carrall, letter to Wm C. King, November 23, 1864, in Wm C. King, Correspondence Inward, MS PABC; see also John Evans, Letterbook for similar sentiments expressed in 1863; Sentinel, 6 May 1867.

"Great Confederation Meeting in Cariboo," Colonist, 27 and 28 Dec. 1867; Sentinel, 6 May 1869.

Colonist, 27 Dec. 1867.

Sentinel, 24 Sept. 1866.

Sentinel, 26 Sept. 1867.

Clowes, p. 59.

Sentinel, 30 Sept. 1867.

Clowes, p. 59.
CHAPTER THREE

1 Colonist, 14 Mar. 1868; these members included J. S. Thompson, William Cochrane, and George Grant.

2 Colonist, 15 Feb. 1864.

3 Sentinel, 24 June 1867.

4 Bescoby, pp. 117-118.

5 Sentinel, 14 May 1868.

6 A photograph of the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association, reproduced on page 271 of this thesis, shows the members backed by scenery that definitely indicates that at least two and probably three rows of flats were used.

7 Bescoby, p. 118.


9 Sentinel, 14 May 1868.

10 Colonist, 11 Feb. 1868.

11 Colonist, 11 Feb. 1868.

12 Esslin, p. 10.

13 Colonist, 14 Mar. 1868.

14 Colonist, 14 Mar. 1868.

15 Colonist, 10 Feb. 1868.

16 Colonist, 14 Mar. 1868.

17 Sentinel, 18 Feb. 1869.

18 Michael R. Booth, "Gold Rush Theatre; the Theatre Royal,


20 *Sentinel*, 5 May 1869.

21 These included J. S. Thompson, R. W. W. Carrall, J. Z. Hough, John Bowron, and W. W. Hill; their Confederation activities and C. A. D. A.'s relation to them will become apparent in the course of the succeeding chapters.

22 *Sentinel*, 14 May 1868.

23 William Martin, *D'Ye Know Me Now?* (New York: Samuel French, n.d.); all subsequent references are to this published edition of the play.

24 *Sentinel*, 14 May 1868.

25 *D'Ye Know Me Now?*

26 *Sentinel*, 14 May 1868.


28 *Sentinel*, 14 Mar. 1868.


31 In a series of humourous pieces in the *Sentinel* under the heading, "The Barkerville Pickwick Club." This might have been a real organization indulging in humourous debates and parody—Selman sees it as a serious organization—but there is no other evidence of its existence; perhaps the articles referred to activities of the literary institute.

32 *Sentinel*, 14 May 1868; *Mad as a Hatter*, p. 10; *Sentinel*, 14 May 1868.

33 William Bowron, "Reminiscences," n.d., n.pag., TS PABC.

34 *Sentinel* 14 May 1868.

35 This and preceding paragraph are derived from *Sentinel*, 25 May 1868.

36 *Sentinel*, 28 May 1868; *Sentinel*, 8 June 1868.

37 *Sentinel*, 28 May 1868; *Sentinel*, 8 June 1868; *Sentinel*, 1 June 1868.

38 *Sentinel*, 25 June 1868; *Sentinel*, 21 June 1868.

39 *Sentinel*, 25 June 1868; *Sentinel*, 14 May 1868.

40 *Colonist*, 11 May 1868.

In the last two weeks of December, 1867, he performed at the Theatre Royal, Victoria; and he returned in March, 1868, for an engagement at the Alhambra Music Hall; Sentinel, 11 June 1868; Colonist, 7 Mar. 1868; Sentinel, 11 June 1868.

Sentinel, 15 June 1868; Colonist, 20 Dec. 1867; Colonist, 31 Dec. 1867.


Rickard, Romance of Mining, p. 1.

Colonist, 11 May 1868; McLean, p. 159.

Sentinel, 22 June 1868; Rourke, Troupers of the Gold Coast, p. 161; Colonist, 26 Apr. 1868; 14 Jan. 1868; 26 Mar. 1868; 14 Apr. 1868.

British Columbian, 23 Jan. 1864; Bescoby, p. 54.

Sentinel, 18 June 1868.

Sentinel, 20 June 1868; Sentinel, 2 July 1868.

Sentinel, 29 June 1868; Sentinel, 2 July 1868.

Sentinel, 2 July 1868; R. W. W. Carrall, extracts from speeches at Barkerville, July 1, 1868, as quoted in Sentinel 2 July 1868.

Sentinel, 6 July 1868; Sentinel, 14 May 1868 (this piece was apparently sent to Canada for publication); Anderson, Sawney's Letters, p. 55.

"The Two Anniversaries," Sentinel, 6 July 1868.

Sentinel, 9 July 1868.


Sentinel 2 Aug. 1868.

Sentinel, 25 June 1868.

Sentinel, 9 Aug. 1868.

As quoted in Bescoby, p. 120.

rpt. in Turner, pp. 160-164.

Hans Nathan, Dan Emmett and the Rise of Early Negro Minstrelsy (Norman, Oklahoma: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1962) pp. 227-242; Nathan, p. 385. This piece has as its original title "Old K. Y. Ky." and as its original lyric, "Whose foot dat a burnin"; the substitution of the word "heel" I have retained as a plausible variant, but the title quoted in the programme and in Bescoby is obviously an error; Maynard to Bescoby, Bescoby, p. 120.

Toll, p. 170; Bescoby, p. 120; Sentinel, 29 July 1868.


Toll, p. 273; Toll, p. 86.

Toll, p. 92.


Toll, p. 282.

McLean, p. 130; Letter from A Forty-Niner.

Besides Ward's participation in the Dominion Day sports, Lafont is listed among those supporting Dr. Carrall's nomination for election to the B. C. Colonial Legislature.

This sobriquet is used by both the Colonist and the Sentinel on several occasions; see, for example, Sentinel 16 July 1868.

Letter from A Forty-Niner. The editor of the Sentinel, 6 Sept. 1868, also hoped the audiences would encourage the troupe "to persevere" in their efforts, and referred to the "plucky Tom:"

Sentinel: 9 Aug. 1868; 29 July 1868; 5 Aug. 1868.

Andrew Leavitt and Hw W. Eagen, Deaf as a Post, (New York: Samuel French, 18-).

No script is available, but the Sentinel, 9 Sept. 1868, refers to "his wonderful Jocko feats." It had been made famous by the French pantomimist, Mazurier, as early as 1825; Allardyce Nicoll, A History of Early Nineteenth Century Drama: 1800-1850, 2 vols. (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1930) vol. 1, p. 26.


S. Barry, The Persecuted Dutchman; or, The Original John Schmidt (New York: S. French, 189-).

Sentinel, 16 July 1868; Sentinel, 13 July 1868.

Sentinel, 23 Aug. 1868; Sentinel 13 Sept. 1868.

Sentinel, 22 Sept. 1868.
Letter from Onyx, Sentinel, 19 Aug. 1868.

Sentinel, 13 Sept. 1868; Sentinel, 16 Sept. 1868.

This paragraph is based on Frederick Dally, "An Account of the Burning of Barkerville," n.d., MS PABC. Dally, an eyewitness to the conflagration, adds at the end of his narrative the story, told to him afterward, that the fire was caused by a stovepipe knocked loose when a miner tried to embrace a hurdy girl and she rebuffed him, but this story, amusing though it is, remains unsubstantiated.

Chartres Brew, Letter to Colonial Secretary, September 22, 1868; Sentinel, 22 Sept. 1868.

Sentinel, 27 Oct. 1868.

Sentinel, 27 Oct. 1868.

Sentinel, 29 Sept. 1868.


Sentinel, 27 Oct. 1868.

Sentinel, 29 Sept. 1868, report of a telegraphic message from Governor Seymour.

Sentinel, 25 Dec. 1869. By looking at the extra customs and road toll duties collected on the goods brought in to rebuild and restock the town, the editor concluded "that the government made some $60,000 by the fire!" Victoria commerce of course benefitted even more. What raised this issue more than a year later was the government's refusal to grant another sum to the fire brigade, despite liberal amounts having been given to those of Victoria and New Westminster, which shows both how and why bitterness and resentment toward the government and the coastal towns grew over the years.

Bescoby, p. 66. She points out that because gold itself was the medium of exchange the function of the banks was as a store of value; she notes that even then there were relatively few depositors as most people preferred not to deal with them. That is not surprising, considering that the banks had kept the price of gold from 2 to 3 dollars lower than the amounts paid in San Francisco, and further reduced it after the fire. What she fails to mention is that the banks were there to make money, not from deposits, much less from investments, but from buying up gold low and selling it high, from manipulating and speculating on it. They abused Cariboo's isolation and the absence of competition—thanks to their Royal Charters—to short-change the miners, thereby draining off more needed capital. See John Evans, Letterbook, for references to this practice.

96 Ivan Jesperson, "Missions to the Miners of Barkerville," Thesis University of B. C. 1968. This is the most balanced and detailed account of the subject. This paragraph is derived from it.

97 Sentinel, 28 Nov. 1868.

98 Sentinel, 2 Oct. 1868; Sentinel, 27 Oct. 1868; Sentinel, 14 Nov. 1868.


100 Sentinel, 22 Sept. 1868.

101 Sentinel, 21 Nov. 1868.

102 Sentinel, 17 Dec. 1868. This was still a problem as late as 1871, and caused a great deal of anger; see: "The Government and Cariboo," Sentinel, 29 Apr. 1871.

103 Sentinel, 28 Nov. 1868.

104 Sentinel, 5 Dec. 1868.


107 Sentinel, 12 Dec. 1868.


109 "Notes from a Travelling Correspondent," Alta California San Francisco , 5 Oct. 1871.

110 Sentinel, 2 Jan. 1869.

111 Sentinel, 11 Dec. 1869. The receipts for a full house were listed as $396.00. Allowing for a few complementary seats we may safely round it off at $400.00 Tickets were $1.50 reserved and $1.00 at the door. The problem is that we have no way of knowing how many were reserved. Nor do we even know that there were a set number of reserved seats; were they paying for a particular seat or simply for the privilege of ensuring that they would get one? There is a single reference to a "Parquette," but this is probably just a fancy way of distinguishing main floor and balcony. (see Sentinel, 27 Nov. 1869.)

112 Sentinel, 2 Jan. 1869.

113 from recollections of Bill Hong, Dr. Bapty, A. W. Ludditt, and Lottie Bowron, as quoted in an unpublished report by the Barkerville Restoration Advisory Committee, PABC; photograph from 1937 is in Ludditt, p. 86.

114 Ludditt, p. 4.

See, for example, Letter from Onyx, Sentinel, 19 Aug. 1868, concerning the delicate balance on which the community depended; with the government's neglect of road building or maintenance and the fear of the drain being flooded, he observes, "It is well known that this creek is fast approaching the period when its position as a distributing point will no longer be tenable. Hence, the outside creeks, supplied from other points, will no longer contribute towards its support; and the most valuable claims in this vicinity submerged, population will leave us. . . ."


The latter two terms are indebted to Elizabeth Burns' "authenticating" and "rhetorical" conventions. Burns, "Conventions of Performance."

The beginnings of a successful grain production industry was not only making flour cheaper, but it enabled Harper and Thormey (two gold seekers turned farmers) to begin raising cattle at Williams Lake directly for the Cariboo market. This meant a secure supply of better beef at lower prices than that previously imported from the U. S. Vegetables were also being cultivated on the Williams Creek Meadows and dairy cattle were being grazed during the summers on the rich grassland to the south of Barkerville.

Sentinel, 23 Jan. 1869.

Tom Taylor, Still Waters Run Deep (London: S. French, 18--) Act 1, sc. 1, p. 4. All subsequent quotations and references are from this published edition of the text.

Still Waters, Act 1, sc. 1, pp. 22-23.

Act 1, sc. 1, p. 26.


Act 3-4; sc. 2, p. 38.

pp. 42-43.

Act. 3, pp. 50-58.


"Theatre Royal."
133 List of passengers leaving on the down express. *Sentinel*
12 Apr. 1869.

CHAPTER FOUR

1 See Appendix II for a complete list of recorded performances and play titles.

2 *Sentinel*, 4 Dec. 1869.


5 Nicoll, p. 134.

6 The date for this and the other plays refers to that of the original production, not that of publication, which is seldom known. Sources are the published texts, where production dates are given, and Nicoll, *A History of Early Nineteenth Century Drama*, vol. 2, which follows production dates.

7 Nicoll, vol. 1, p. 149.


10 *Sentinel*, 28 Sept. 1872.

11 Ludditt, p. 125.

12 Letter from Fuente.


16 Watson, p. 424.

17 Watson, p. 425.

18 Watson, pp. 341-348; Watson, pp. 382-383.


20 Watson, p. 424.

22 Watson, p. 423.

23 Watson, p. x.


25 R. Ben Jones, p. 25.

26 Augustin Filon, as quoted in Watson, p. x; the English translation is my own.


28 John Till Allingham, Fortune's Frolic; or, The Ploughman Turned Lord (London: Davidson, n.d.), p. 12. All subsequent references to the play are to this published version, taken from the acting copy.


30 Fortune's Frolic, p. 23.

31 Fortune's Frolic, p. 21.

32 Fortune's Frolic, p. 32.

33 Remarks, Fortune's Frolic, p. 7.

34 Rex Burns, Success in America, pp. 1-13.

35 Burns, Success in America, especially Chapter Three, Yeoman Mechanic and Wage Slave, pp. 91-130.

36 Charles Mathews and Dion Boucicault, Used Up (London: Samuel French, 185-) p. 10. Subsequent references are to this edition.


38 Smiles, Self Help, p. 299.

39 Rickard, Romance of Mining, p. 30.

40 Used Up, p. 12.

41 Used Up, p. 12.

42 Bentley, pp. 244-248.

44 Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, p. 247, and Four Archetypes, p. 64.

45 Used Up, p. 38.

46 Nicoll, I, 131.


49 Charcoal Burner, p. 4.


51 Thomas Haynes Bayly, Perfection; or, the Maid of Munster (London: n.p., n.d.) p. 2.

52 Perfection, p. 8.


59 Cool As A Cucumber, p. 8.

60 Reynolds and Nicoll both make this judgement.

61 Bentley, pp. 224-226; Esslin, p. 21.


64 John Baldwin Buckstone, Good For Nothing (New York: Samuel French, n.d.) p. 4. Subsequent references are to this edition.

65 Good For Nothing, p. 4.

66 p. 10.
67 Good For Nothing, p. 11.
68 p. 11.
69 p. 17.
70 Nicoll, I, 130.
71 Good For Nothing, p. 17.
72 Harrison, pp. 112-113.
74 John Baldwin Buckstone, The Rough Diamond (London: J. Dicks, n.d.) p. 4. Subsequent quotations are taken from this version.
75 The Rough Diamond, p. 5.
76 p. 7.
77 pp. 7-8.
78 pp. 7-8.
79 pp. 7-8.
80 p. 8.
81 p. 9.
82 p. 9.
83 p. 10.
84 Sentinel, 31 July 1869.
85 Sentinel, 6 May 1867.
86 Bentley, p. 159.
87 Cole, p. 7.

CHAPTER FIVE

5 Rendle, p. vii.
6 Rendle, p. vi.
7 Rendle, p. vi.
9 Turner, p. 2.
10 R. Ben Jones, p. 25.
11 Rendle, pp. vi-vii.
12 Rendle, p. 9.
13 Rendle, p. 5.
14 J. W. S. Thompson, Letter from Ottawa, Sentinel, 10 May 1873.
15 Wages varied from $8 to $10 per day during the 1860's and from $6 to $8 during the 1870's.
16 W. D. Moses, Diaries, MS, PABC, May 1869; September 22 and 25, 1869, and November 6, 1870; Pilton, "Negro Settlement in B. C.," has the best account of the race riot in the theatre in Victoria, beginning on p. 188.
17 Sentinel, Sept. 1869; April 24, 1869; July 31, 1869; Marshall, Cariboo Gold, p. 44; British Columbia Directory, 1871 (Victoria: The Britisher, 1871); Sentinel, 27 Oct. 1868.
19 Ormsby, p. 143.
20 Sentinel, 15 Jan. 1867; Sentinel, 12 Aug. 1871.
21 Sentinel, 9 July 1866; Marshall, p. 44.
22 William E. Ireland, Preface, Sawney's Letters and Cariboo Rhymes, by James Anderson, p. 3.
23 For example, the masons included Thompson, Carrall, Grant, Cochrane, W. W. Hill, and S. Ormandy, all members of C. A. D. A.
24 Indeed, the ad in the Sentinel, 19 June 1869, lists "Hon. R. W. W. Carrall" and "Hon. H. Havelock" in boldface type at the head of the cast, and later the same practice was followed after Thompson became an M. P.
25 Cole, see his section on the actor.
26 Rendle, p. 3. This practice dominated well into the 1880's.
27 I am indebted to Chad Evans, of the Department of Historic Parks and Sites, Victoria, for pointing out this distinction.
29 Bentley, p. 179.


31 Colonist, 14 Mar. 1868.

32 Bylaws had to be passed and fines imposed for infractions of fire brigade rules, Sentinel, 6 Mar. 1869.


34 Cariboo Library Association, Account Book 1902-1905, MS, PABC.

35 Sentinel, 6 Oct. 1869; see, for example, Wilson, Mines and Miners, p. 14, and Booth, "Theatrical Boom in the Kootenays," The Beaver (Autumn 1961), p. 44; also Booth, "Gold Rush Theatres of the Klondike," p. 34.

36 Sentinel, 24 Apr. 1869.


38 Violet E. Sillitoe, as quoted in Herbert H. Cowen, Church Work in British Columbia (London: Longman’s, Green, and Co., 1899) p. 66; Sentinel, 27 Mar. 1869; Sentinel, 25 Sept. 1869.

39 Sentinel, 27 Feb. 1869; Colonist, 14 Mar. 1868.

40 Sentinel: 3 July 1869; 5 Jan. 1870; 5 Oct. 1872; 31 July 1869; the regular ad (front page of each issue) for the Sentinel’s "job printing office" specified theatrical posters and programmes among the work it did.

41 Sentinel, 6 Oct. 1869.


43 Letter from J. S., Sentinel, 17 Apr. 1869.

44 Photograph No. 57681, Historical Photograph Division, PABC. It can be seen from some rough painting of boulders in the foreground that the scenery was not professionally produced, although the perspective behind the border is quite good.

45 Sentinel, 17 Apr. 1869; Sentinel, 20 Mar. 1869; Sentinel, 3 Apr. 1869.

46 See Sentinel, 11 May 1868 and 8 May 1869, for examples.

47 Sentinel, 23 July 1869.

48 Sentinel, 20 July 1869.

49 Sentinel, 17 Apr. 1869.


51 Notices and ads usually appear two weeks before upcoming shows,
along with references to preparations being underway.

52 Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association, Playscripts, 1869-1870, MS, PABC. Hand-copied acting sides.


54 Colonist, 14 May 1868.


56 I am indebted to Dr. Ian Ross, of the English Department, University of British Columbia, for verifying that Taliesin Evans would indeed be the English equivalent of the Welsh Tal 0 Eifion. The suspicion that this was the case was triggered by several facts, including the coincidence that the names of Evans and O Eifion both turned up in San Francisco at the same time, signed to articles in The Overland Monthly and The Bulletin, respectively.


58 See Sentinel, 14 May 1868, 4 Mar. 1871, 15 Feb. 1873, for examples; Colonist, 14 Mar. 1868; Sentinel, 30 Oct. 1875; Sentinel, 20 Feb. 1869.

59 Rev. J. Hall, "Lecture on Success," Sentinel, 18 June 1874; Sentinel, 6 July 1868.

60 Sentinel, 20 Feb. 1869.


62 Sentinel, 17 Apr. 1869; Sentinel, 14 May 1868.

63 See, for example, "Persevere and Conquer," Sentinel, 29 May 1869. It says, in part, "He certainly deserves to succeed, if there is any virtue in perseverance."

64 Sentinel, 5 Oct. 1870.

65 Sentinel, 10 May 1868, 6 Feb. 1869, 12 Oct. 1872; Sentinel, 20 Feb. 1869; Sentinel: 24 Apr. 1869; 27 Feb. 1869; 1 May 1869; 8 June 1868.

66 This was typical of the North American frontier: culture was expected to "serve some useful purpose." Commager, p. 10.

67 Watson, p. 380.


69 Sentinel, 27 Apr. 1869.

70 Sentinel: 20 Mar. 1869; 22 Sept. 1869; 14 May 1868; 4 June 1869.
71 Bentley, p. 44.
72 Sentinel, 14 May 1868.
73 Sentinel, 6 Feb. 1869.
74 Sentinel, 23 July 1869.
75 Sentinel, 1 May 1869.
77 Sentinel, 20 Feb. 1869.
78 Sentinel: 14 Mar. 1869; 8 June 1868 (Carrall's most outstanding success in such roles was in Used Up); 14 May 1868; 20 Mar. 1869.
79 "Mr. R. A. Brown ... was undoubtedly the wrong man in the wrong place, and although he appeared to do his best to fulfill his part, he failed to make any impression on the audience," Sentinel, 20 Mar. 1869.
80 Sentinel, 13 Mar. 1869.
81 Sentinel, 9 Nov. 1872. He had previously been mining recorder.
82 Sentinel, 13 July 1869. See Theatre Royal ad.
83 Sentinel, 14 May 1868.
84 Sentinel: 16 Dec. 1869; 20 Feb. 1869; 7 July 1869; 19 Nov. 1869; 12 May 1869; 27 Feb. 1871.
85 Letter from J. S., Sentinel, 17 Apr. 1869; Letter from An Old Amateur, Sentinel 24 Apr. 1869. They disagreed on all else, but agreed on this.
86 Sentinel, 14 May 1868; Sentinel, 20 Feb. 1869.
87 Sentinel: 17 Apr. 1869; 8 June 1868; 23 June 1869.
88 Sentinel, 5 Oct. 1870.
89 Watson, p. 343; Watson, p. 337.
90 Sentinel, 1 May 1869; Sentinel, 5 Feb. 1870.
92 Sentinel, 8 June 1868; Sentinel, 26 Mar. 1868.
93 Sentinel, 8 Jan. 1870; Sentinel, 1 Jan. 1870
94 Sentinel, 1 Jan. 1870; Sentinel, 23 June 1869.
95 Sentinel, 6 Feb. 1869.
This and the preceding paragraph are drawn from Letter from J. S., Sentinel, 17 Apr. 1869.


Letters from Tal 0 Eifion, Sentinel, 1 May 1869.

Sentinel, 6 Mar. 1869.

Sentinel, 1 May 1869; Sentinel, 17 Apr. and 1 May 1869.

Sentinel, 23 June 1869; 27 Nov. 1869.

Sentinel, 26 Nov. 1870; Sentinel, 20 Feb. 1869.

Sentinel, 6 Nov. 1870; Sentinel, 20 Feb. 1869.

Sentinel, 6 May 1871.

Sentinel, 1 May 1869.

Sentinel, 26 Nov. 1870.

Sentinel, 6 Feb. 1869.


Sentinel, 7 Jan. 1870; Sentinel, 25 Mar. 1871.


Letter from San Francisco, Sentinel Apr. 2 1870.

Alta California, 3 Oct. 1871; Clowes, "Old Barkerville," p. 56.


Esslin, p. 53. Sentinel, 14 May 1868.


Sentinel, 3 Apr. 1869; Sentinel, 20 Feb. 1869.
123 Turner, p. 4.


125 Sentinel, 17 Apr. 1869; Disher, p. 82.

126 Sentinel, 8 Feb. 1873.


129 Sentinel, 17 Apr. 1869.


131 Sentinel, 2 Dec. 1871.


133 Turner and Miall, p. 16.


136 Rourke, p. 130.


139 Sawney's Letters, pp. 43-45.

140 Sawney's Letters, pp. 50-51.

141 Sentinel, 27 Mar. 1869.

142 Rourke, pp. 133-134.

143 Sawney's Letters, p. 58.

144 Sawney's Letters, pp. 57-58.

145 Sawney's Letters, p. 54.
146 Sawney's Letters and Cariboo Rhymes, pp. 37-38.
148 Thomas Ingoldsby (Richard Barham), The Ingoldsby Legends: or Mirth and Marvels (London; Richard Bentley, Third Series, 1852) pp. 275-286.
149 Sentinel, 6 July 1872.
151 Sentinel, 5 Feb. 1870.
152 Sentinel, 31 July 1869.
153 From a list of conundrums from the performance of December 24, 1870, printed in the Sentinel, 31 Dec. 1870.

CHAPTER SIX

1 Taliesin Evans, "Gold and Gold Mining," Overland Monthly, 4 (1870) 500-501; Sentinel, 12 Nov. 1869.
2 Sentinel, 6 Oct. 1869.
3 Sentinel, 17 Apr. 1869.
5 From a speech by J. S. Thompson, as quoted in Sentinel, 6 July 1868.
6 Letter from Free Miner, Sentinel, 6 Jan. 1869.
7 Free Miner.
8 Sentinel, 27 Nov. 1869.
9 Sentinel, 27 Nov. 1869.
10 Sentinel, 5 June 1869.
11 Sentinel, 4 Aug. and 7 Aug. 1869.
13 "Retrospective and Prospective," Sentinel, 27 May 1869.
14 Sentinel, 21 July 1869.
15 Sentinel, 11 Aug. 1869.
16 "A Trip Up North," Alta California, 6 Sept. 1871.

17 R. Byron Johnson, p. 47.

18 W. C. Ward, excerpts from a letter written in 1871, as quoted in Victor Ross, History of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, (Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1920) p. 471. Ward was then manager of the Victoria branch of the bank; the letter reported to the head office in London on his recent trip to Cariboo.


20 Wright, "Cariboo," p. 528.


22 Margaret Ormsby, "Canada and the New British Columbia," The Canadian Historical Association Annual Report (1948), pp. 74-85.; rpt. in J. Friesen and H. K. Ralston, eds., Historical Essays on British Columbia (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976) pp. 96-112. She says, in part: "Speculators in lands and mines were more concerned with making quick profits than in combining efforts for the building of a stable society. . . . Neither the government nor the banks gave financial assistance to the promoters of these enterprises." (pp. 99-100)


24 Extract from a session of the Legislative Council of British Columbia on January 12, 1869, as published in Sentinel, 30 Jan. 1869.

25 Gordon Selman, Madge Wolfenden, and Lottie Bowron, "Early Libraries on Williams Creek, Cariboo, B. C., B. C. Library Quarterly, 26, No. 1 (July 1962), 6-7. While the original building at Cameronton was paid for by subscriptions, "Bowron contributed personally the $1, 750 necessary to construct the new building" at Barkerville in 1867, and also contributed largely to rebuilding and restocking it after the fire.

26 Sentinel, 30 Jan. 1869.


28 There was also a bill for an undisclosed amount for having the building raised on posts to protect it from the flooding of the creek, Sentinel, 3 Apr. 1869.

29 Sentinel, 7 July 1869.

30 Sentinel, 7 July 1869; Sentinel 14 July 1869.

31 Letter from A Citizen, Sentinel 14 July 1869; Sentinel, 6 Oct. 1869.

32 Sentinel, 7 July 1869.

33 Sentinel, 6 Oct. 1869.

34 Sentinel, 22 Oct. 1870; Sentinel, 16 Dec. 1871.

36 Sentinel, 5 Mar. 1870; Sentinel, 16 Apr. 1870; re. Lane and Kurtz Co. on the Williams Creek Meadows, see Ludditt, pp. 90 and 147, and "A Trip Up North," Alta California, 6 Oct. 1871.

37 Sentinel, 14 June 1869; Letter from Cosmopolite, Sentinel, 11 June 1870.

38 Sentinel, 22 Jan. 1870; Sentinel, 16 Dec. 1871.

39 "A Trip Up North," Alta California, 3 Oct. 1871; Sentinel, 20 May 1869; Sentinel, 16 Dec. 1869; Sentinel, 30 June 1869.

40 Marshall, Cariboo Gold, p. 22. He includes a description of the interior by the daughter of one of the masons.

41 See Sentinel: 28 July 1868; 31 July 1869; 23 June 1869; 18 Sept. 1869; 9 July 1870, for reports on the library's progress.

42 Sentinel, 17 Apr. 1869.

43 Sentinel, 30 Oct. 1868; Sentinel, 6 Feb. 1869.

44 Advertisement, Sentinel, 13 Sept. 1868.

45 Sentinel, 16 June 1869; 20 June 1869.

46 Sentinel, 19 Aug. 1869.

47 I am indebted for this information on Reynard's life and character to Rev. Daniel Meeks, of the Anglican Church, Dawson City Yukon, who is working on a biography of Reynard. Personal interview with Rev. Daniel Meeks, 14 Mar. 1980.


51 Colonist, 18 Nov. 1865; Macfie, p. 417.


55 Sentinel, 30 Jan. 1869.

56 Sentinel, 6 Feb. 1869.

57 Sentinel, 6 Feb. 1869.
58 Sentinel, 13 Mar. 1869.
59 Sentinel, 24 Apr. 1869.
60 Sentinel, 24 Apr. 1869.

61 James Reynard, "Lecture on Music," TS, 1852-1853, extracts from unpublished papers, St. Saviour's Box, Anglican Archives, University of B. C.

62 Quoted in Sentinel, 5 Feb. 1870.
63 I am indebted for this observation to Rev. Meeks.
66 Sentinel, 20 Nov. 1869.
68 From concert programmes printed in Sentinel, 25 Feb. and 22 Apr. 1871; also review of concert in Sentinel, 29 Apr. 1871.
69 Sentinel, 29 Apr. 1871.
70 Disher, p. 16.
71 Sentinel, 11 Mar. 1869; Sentinel, 29 Apr. 1869.
75 "St. David's Day."
76 Jones, Province, 9 Mar. 1935.
77 Sentinel, 13 Mar. 1869.
78 Jones, Province, 9 Mar. 1935.
79 Sentinel, 24 Apr. 1869.
80 Sentinel, 26 May 1869; Sentinel, 26 Aug. 1871.
83 Sentinel, 20 Mar. 1869.
84 Sentinel, 24 Apr. 1869.
85 Sentinel, 26 May 1869.
86 MacMinn, p. 431.
87 Sentinel, 10 Dec. 1870; "A New Song to an Old Tune," published in Sentinel, 28 Nov. 1868.
88 "Down the River—Boat Song," Sentinel, 7 Nov. 1868, included in the programme of April 8, 1871; Sentinel, 13 Apr. 1871.
89 Sentinel, 13 Apr. 1871.
90 MacMinn, p. 435.
91 "Female Suffrage," Sentinel, 17 June 1867.
92 See, for example, Sentinel, 26 May 1869.
93 Sentinel, 22 May 1869; Sentinel 19 May 1869.
94 Sentinel, 19 May 1869.
96 Sentinel, 31 Dec. 1870.
97 Sentinel, 6 Oct. 1869.
98 Sentinel, 7 July 1869; Letter from "Ontario," Sentinel, 26 June 1869.
99 "Dominion Day," Sentinel, 26 June 1869; Jones, Province, 9 Mar. 1935; Sentinel, 3 July 1869; Sentinel, 26 May 1869.
100 Sentinel, 26 June 1869.
101 Sentinel, 26 May 1869.
102 Sentinel, 15 Sept. 1869.
103 See reports in Sentinel, 15, 18, 22, 1869.
104 Sentinel, 25 Sept. 1869.
106 John Buckstone, Good For Nothing, p. 17.
107 As quoted in Eunice M. L. Harrison, "Pioneer Judge's Wife," Chapter 20, Northwest Digest, 8, No. 2 (February 1952), 17. She herself considers that this was an accurate assessment, finding them to be "bright, intelligent, well informed, courteous, generous and very hospitable."
108 Sentinel, 13 July 1868; see also Sentinel, 29 Jan. and 22 Feb. 1870; Sentinel, 6 May 1871.


110 See, for example, Jean Duvignaud, "The Theatre in Society: Society in the Theatre," pp. 84-87, p. 99. He is admittedly dealing with some very knotty paradoxes regarding theatre and its relation to society, but ironically it is precisely his tendency to ignore the paradox that theatre both is and is not a part of life and society, that it leads a double life at once actual and fictive, which leads him to separate theatre too absolutely and dogmatically and to fail to consider the question of direct, immediate and complete efficacy and result versus the indirect, delayed and partial ones that may stem from the affective elements of theatre.

111 Sentinel, 1 Jan. 1870.

112 Sentinel, 1 Jan. 1870.

113 John Bowron, Memoranda Book, TS, PABC, July 30, 1872.

114 See, for example, Sentinel, 13 Feb. 1869, for a detailed account of such a meeting.

115 See Sentinel, 5 Oct. and 5 Nov. 1870.


117 "Train Up a Child in the Way He Should Go," Sentinel, 26 Nov. 1870.

118 Sentinel, 11 Mar. 1871.

119 Sentinel, 3 June 1871.

120 Sentinel, 10 June 1871.

121 Sentinel, 3 June 1871.


124 Sentinel, 10 June 1871.

125 Sentinel, 3 June 1871.

126 Sentinel, 10 June 1871.

127 Sentinel, 8 July 1871.

128 Sentinel, 8 July 1871.

129 Sentinel, 22 July 1871.

130 McGinley Family Papers, MS, Theatre Collection, Bancroft Library,
University of California at Berkeley.

131 Sentinel, 22 July 1871.

132 Morrell, p. 132.

EPILOGUE

1. See Col. M. Report 1871, "The Cariboo Mission" and data sheets in St. Saviour's Box, Anglican Archives, University of B. C., for mentions of Reynard's illness, departure, and death two years later.

2 Sentinel, 18 May 1872.

3 Sentinel, 20 July 1872.

4 Sentinel, 11 Mar. 1872.


76 Lukin Johnston, p. 77.

7 Sentinel, 28 Sept. 1872.

8 Letter from Estó Perpetua, Sentinel, 22 Mar. 1872.

9 Sentinel, 4 July 1874.

10 Ludditt, p. 56.

11 Sentinel, 4 Oct. 1873.

12 Ludditt, p. 58.

13 See, for example, Sentinel, 12 May 1869 and 24 Dec. 1870.


15 Sentinel, 6 July 1872.

16 "Union is Strength," Sentinel, 24 May 1873.


18 Ormsby, British Columbia, pp. 259-292.


23 Ludditt, p. 42.

24 Sentinel, 30 Oct. 1875.

25 Sentinel, 30 Oct. 1875.

26 Sentinel, 30 Oct. 1875.

27 Ormsby, *British Columbia*, pp. 264 and 271. Langevin said of Walkem that he "had not been true to his friends."


29 Colonist, 25 Aug. 1878.

30 Bowman, p. 382.

31 Ludditt, p. 146.

32 Photograph No. 57681, Historical Photograph Division, PABC.


34 Bowman, p. 383.

35 Bowman, p. 384.

36 Robin, pp. 15-86.


39 Cariboo Library Association Account Book, 1897-1902.


42 Elmer Armstrong, as quoted in Louis Lebourdais, Misc. Notes, Lebourdais Papers, PABC.

43 Ludditt, pp. 148-150.

For definitions of the company-dominated, as distinguished from the single industry, town, see Lucas, p. 104, and Ormsby British Columbia, pp. 410-411.


Morrell, p. 196; Rickard, pp. 66-67.

Rickard, p. 67.

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APPENDIX
APPENDIX I

BIOGRAPHICAL

1. Two Protean Members of C. A. D. A.

R. W. W. Carrall

Robert William Weir Carrall was born on February 2, 1837, at Woodstock, Upper Canada. He was the son of James Carrall, a county sheriff, and the grandson of a United Empire Loyalist. Educated at Trinity College and McGill, he graduated from the latter in 1859 as a Doctor of Medicine and practised in Canada until 1862, when he served as a surgeon with the Union Army in the American Civil War, resigning the position in July 1865.

That same year he moved to Nanaimo, B. C. and by 1867 was residing in Barkerville, where he seems to have spent much less time as a physician than as an investor and participant in mining ventures, apparently with repeated success. In 1869 he owned an interest in the Minnehaha Company on Harvey Creek, one of the richer claims of the period; said the Sentinel: he "is in luck again with his mining operations, and he has been working in the dump-box like any other honest miner." His social activities included membership in the masons as well as C. A. D. A., of which he was manager in 1869.

But Carrall's most zealous and constant efforts were political. Intensely patriotic and "full of Confederation to busting," he was one of the leaders of the movement from the first mass meeting in November, 1867, and was invariably an organizer and an eloquent, visionary orator at subsequent gatherings. On October 14, 1868, Carrall was elected to the Legislative Council of B. C. "This," he claimed, "is the proudest moment of my life." While representing Cariboo till 1871 he carried on a regular correspondence with Sir John A. Macdonald; accordingly he was one of the three delegates sent to Ottawa to negotiate the terms of union and was the only one permitted to do so personally with the then ailing Macdonald.

In 1871, after Confederation was accomplished, he was appointed to the Senate and left Barkerville in the fall to take up residence in Ottawa. Carrall once described himself as "of a naturally sanguine and impetuous temperament" (which may have caused his only political debacle: giving in too readily to the opponents of immediate self-government), and he admitted to a weakness for the opposite sex: "Oh! why was I created with such susceptibilities? or why on earth are the girls so sweet!!" Nevertheless he remained a "good natured, sociable and companionable bachelor" until 1879. Then, hopelessly ill with "ulceration of the stomach," he married the widowed "sweetheart of his youth," apparently in order to leave his fortune to her. He died on September 19, 1879 at the family home. His influence, and that of a typical element of Cariboo culture, lives on through his authoring of the bill that made July First our national holiday. But only Carrall Street in Vancouver marks his contribution to making our nation.

J. S. Thompson

Born Joshua Spencer Thompson in Belfast, Ireland in 1828, he was trained as an accountant, but left to join the California Gold Rush and arrived in British Columbia during the 1858 Fraser River excitement. After prospecting and mining near Hope, he joined the rush to Cariboo, and in the
winter of 1863–1864 he was among the year-round residents. Described as "a man of excellent parts," Thompson was also one of many parts. While involved in divers mining ventures, he also supported himself over the years by a variety of employments, including police constable, sheriff, store clerk and auctioneer, and between 1866 and 1869 he advertised at various times as a "mining and commission agent" as well as an accountant. In 1870 he was secretary for the Williams Creek Bedrock Flume Company, and from 1871 to 1872 was editor of the Cariboo Sentinel.

A small, wiry person of seemingly boundless energy and interests, he was a founding member of the Cariboo Literary Institute and of the Masonic Lodge, continuing to fill executive posts in both. He served at different times on the Mining Board and the Grand Jury and handled court cases for mining companies, and in 1871 he was instrumental in establishing a public school, serving on its board also. All the while he retained his membership in the Dramatic Association; having helped to originate the group in 1865 and to re-establish it in '67, he stayed with it until 1875 at least and probably until the end of the decade. He was obviously the vital force in the group's existence, in addition to being its most popular male performer.

Like Carrall, he was an early advocate and leader of Confederation and later argued incessantly for it in newspaper editorials that also fiercely attacked the colonial regime and economic elite in Victoria. On December 20, 1871, he was elected by acclamation as Cariboo's first Member of Parliament. "An earnest, fluent speaker," said the Colonist, "he was always listened to with attention and respect both in the Commons and elsewhere." He could also be a sarcastic one, with an ironic sense of humour, as his editorials, letters and speeches attest.

In the House of Commons he generally supported the Conservatives, but, like the other B. C. representatives, he belonged to no party. Among the causes he championed were improved postal and telegraphic communication with the West, the construction of the promised railway, the waiving of tariffs on mining machinery, and, less laudably, the efforts to ban Chinese immigration, an obsession he shared with most B. C. representatives of the time.

Summing up his contributions, the Colonist observed that he "took an active part in every . . . movement having for its object the welfare of the province at large and Cariboo in particular. . . . A proof of his popularity in his own district is that no opposition has ever been offered to him . . ., he having always been elected by acclamation." Said a Caribooite: he was "all that could be desired as a friend; a faithful public servant--honest in all his dealings, who would not injure even an enemy."

Caribooites especially would have admired the way he played his final role, which took place on December 20, 1880 in Victoria, while en route to represent his beloved Cariboo in the House of Commons. When advised that the end was close at hand, he "at once dictated his will and disposed of other business matters in a remarkably calm and self-possessed manner."

2. Impressions of the Women of C. A. D. A.

It is regrettable that little information is available about these important members of the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association and the Cariboo community. By all indications they were remarkable people, became fine amateur actresses who could "rival the delineations of good leading ladies" in the professional theatre, and made an indispensable contribution to the transplanting of social and cultural roots to the harsh environment of northern British Columbia, which is the lasting achievement of the Cariboo pioneers generally.

Quite apart from the diverse stage roles they played, something of the
personality and public appeal of each is evoked by their common appelations. Mrs. S. P. Parker was always thus formally referred to—her first name is not even known—and it is in keeping with descriptions of her "statuesque" yet "graceful" bearing and indications that she was initially somewhat reserved as a performer, though she later became considerably more spontaneous and emotionally expressive. Florence Wilson, on the other hand, was invariably called simply that, or, even more informally, "Florence"—and the cast lists on the acting "sides" bear out that the first name basis was usual. Emily Edwards was nicknamed "Miss Emily," presumably by her male admirers, some of whom named their mining company after her. C. A. D. A. opportunistically took to billing her that way. These terms of reference suggest that the women represented for the miners the Victorian secular "trinity" of mother—sister—sweetheart, and certainly they reinforce the impression that in addition to their fictional roles the actresses filled an actual role as surrogate female relationships, filled a troublesome void in frontier experience and created an imaginative transition in areas of human belonging that had been left behind and for the most part had not been replaced.

Florence Wilson, a mainstay of the dramatic association, is listed in the 1863 Victoria Directory as a "wholesale and retail dealer in stationary and fancy goods." In the spring of 1864 she sold out and left for Barkerville, taking with her a stock of books for the fledging library and becoming the first librarian in B. C. Women could be as susceptible to a gold rush as men, however, and just as tough: in the winter of 1864–65 Wilson joined the exodus to Idaho, walking as far as Yale through heavy snow. She returned to Barkerville sometime between 1866 and '67, like other sadder-but-wiser folk, and opened a saloon—rebuilt (next to the theatre, handily) and rechristened The Phoenix after the fire. In 1873 she moved her business to Stanley on Lightning Creek, which was enjoying a brief mining boom, but by 1875 she was back in Barkerville. Unfortunately nothing is known of her life after that, but she seems to have had all the qualities of a self-made woman, and was obviously motivated by the same protean impulses as the male Caribooites, though her opportunities even in frontier society were inevitably more curtailed. She seems to have been as popular offstage as on, known fondly for her friendly smile and hearty "what'll ye take?" The latter phrase suggests British origins, and she may have come out from England during the short-lived female immigration policy of the early 1860's and once here decided to go it alone rather than serving as a settler's wife. She appears to have been something of a "sister of mercy," known to have nursed sick men regardless of race.

Mrs. Parker and her husband Samuel ran the Parker Saloon and Lodging House in Barkerville. They had four children, at least one of whom, Luke Parker, performed in the theatre, singing Balkantyne's original "Castles in the Air." In the spring of 1872 they also moved to Lightning Creek, having purchased the Stanley Hotel. But in January of 1873 Samuel Parker died, and the following May Mrs. Parker left Cariboo with her children. It seems likely, however, that she subsequently remarried and returned, as Sarah Crease's diary for 1880 refers to a "Mrs. Austin—formerly Parker" who ran the Austin Hotel, Richfield, and the physical description of "a good-looking, tall, fair, lively woman with a large family" is certainly consistent with the C. A. D. A. photograph and with other references to Mrs. Parker.

Emily Penberthy Edwards arrived in Barkerville, according to her daughter, "as a young girl of sixteen," with her mother and stepfather, who ran a hotel at Richfield. This was presumably in 1866, as "Mrs. Penberthy and daughter" are mentioned by the Colonist as having taken part in an amateur concert at the Victoria Mechanics' Institute in December, 1865. At the end of August, 1869, she married John Bowron, the young Canadian who was librarian and postmaster as well as a C. A. D. A. member. The couple had
five children, two daughters and three sons, and apart from teaching school briefly in the 1870's Emily Bowron seems to have occupied herself as wife and mother. Like Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Kelly (she was a popular local singer), the Bowron's became lifelong residents of Barkerville. John Bowron was promoted by the government to mining recorder in 1872, government agent in '75, and gold commissioner in 1881. Emily Bowron, after suffering from a long illness, died in 1895 and rests in the little cemetery above the scene of her life.
APPENDIX II.

LIST OF RECORDED THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENTS IN BARKERVILLE AND VICINITY
1865—1875

The intention has been to follow as closely as possible the original wording of the advertisement or notice in order to retain some of the flavour, context and appeal of the performances, as well as some of the general, recurrent aspects. The titles are printed in capitals and follow whatever was emphasized in individual performances; thus they may refer to titles of plays (which are underlined), to performers and groups, or to generic names of events.

Abbreviations to the right of each entry indicate the following:

m (opposite the location) . . . an afternoon performance; a rare occurrence—-the rest may be taken as evening shows.

a (opposite the title) . . . amateur performers

p " " " professional performers (resident)

ip " " " itinerant professionals

C. A. D. A . . . . . . . . . . . . . Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association

Where a performance contained a mixture of performers, symbols follow the names of participants.

Wednesday, June 7, 1865
Parlor Saloon, Barkerville
MISCELLANEOUS ENTERTAINMENT a
Charitable Benefit for the children of the late Mrs. Winnard

Saturday, June 17, 1865
Parlor Saloon
A Harmonic Meeting held every week—Judge and Jury
A THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT a
will be given once a week by the Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association

Saturday, June 24, 1865
Parlor Saloon
Dan Watson's Benefit
POOR PILLICODDY a
Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association
SONGS, ETC. a
by Messrs. Barry, Anderson, etc.

Saturday, July 1, 1865
Parlor Saloon
THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT a
Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association

Saturday, July 8, 1865
Parlor Saloon
THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT a

CADA

Saturday, July 15, 1865
Parlor Saloon
THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT a

CADA
Saturday, July 22, 1865
Parlor Saloon
THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT

Saturday, July 29, 1865
Parlor Saloon
THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT

Saturday, August 5, 1865
Parlor Saloon
THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT

Saturday, August 12, 1865
Parlor Saloon
THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT

Saturday, August 19, 1865
Parlor Saloon
THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT

Saturday, August 26, 1865
Parlor Saloon
THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT

Saturday, September 9, 1865
Parlor Saloon
THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENT

Thursday, September 28, 1865
Parlor Saloon
Benefit of the Reading Room
CONCERT
Cariboo Glee Club and other leading amateurs

Saturday, September 30, 1865
Parlor Saloon
MISCELLANEOUS ENTERTAINMENT
Sparring Matches
Songs by well known amateurs
Legerdemain by Prof. J. Endt

Thursday, October 5, 1865
Barry's Saloon, Cameronton
MAGICAL ENTERTAINMENT
by Prof. Endt

Wednesday, October 11, 1865
Parlor Saloon
MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT

Saturday, October 14, 1865
Parlor Saloon
DRAMATIC AND MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT
Benefit of the Hospital
by Cariboo Amateur Musical Artists
previous to their leaving, the most part of them going down the country

Saturday, May 12, 1866
Loring's Saloon, Barkerville
GRAND ENTERTAINMENT
A Grand Exhibition of the
Noble Art of Self Defence
Mr. George Wilson in a Glove Fight
with any man in Cariboo, for the sum of $500
Sparring matches by others
The Entertainment . . . interspersed with Songs and Music suitable for the occasion

Sunday, May 20, 1866
MUSICAL AND MAGICAL ENTERTAINMENT
Prof. J. Endt assisted by a number of the most talented gentlemen in Cariboo Legerdemain, Acrobatic and Gymnastic Feats, Songs, Dances, etc.
Admission $1. Reserved seats $2

Thursday, May 24, 1866
Cameronton
Queen's Birthday
BENEFIT BALL AND CONCERT for Mrs. Mary Clunes
Admission $5.

Saturday, August 4, 1866
Martin and Cook's Saloon
SPARRING EXHIBITION
Match between Geo. Baker and his pupil Sam Walker
Other friendly bouts between amateurs
Songs, Recitations, and Dancing

Tuesday, August 7, 1866
Williams Creek Meadows
PRIZE FIGHT
$40 a side. 49 Rounds.
Johnny Knott vs. Ned Stein

Saturday, August 25, 1866
Ross and Burdick's New Eldorado Saloon
SPARRING ENTERTAINMENT
Geo. Wilson, the Cariboo Champion

Saturday, October 6, 1866
Barry and Cunio's Fashion Saloon
SPARRING ENTERTAINMENT
George Baker

Tuesday, October 23, 1866
The Meadows
PRIZE FIGHT

Saturday, October 27, 1866
Fashion Saloon
MUSICAL AND SPARRING ENTERTAINMENT for the Benefit of Geo. Baker varied with songs, recitations, and dances.

Saturday, November 3, 1866
Fashion Saloon
GRAND SPARRING EXHIBITION Benefit of Geo. Wilson
Saturday, March 2, 1867
Cambrian Hall
ST. DAVID'S DAY CELEBRATION
by the Welshmen of Cariboo
Songs, Glee and choral music
Comic recitations and comic dialogue

Saturday, July 13, 1867
Fashion Saloon
SPARRING ENTERTAINMENT
by Joe Eden,
with the voluntary assistance
of Geo. Wilson and Geo. Baker

Saturday, July 29, 1867
Clark and Parker Saloon
GRAND SPARRING ENTERTAINMENT
By Geo. Wilson

Saturday, August 10, 1867
A. Hardie's Saloon, Cameronton
SPARRING ENTERTAINMENT
Benefit of Joe Eden

Sunday, September 8, 1867
Parker and Sterling's Saloon
SPARRING ENTERTAINMENT
Geo. Wilson, with singing and
dancing by local performers

Tuesday, September 24, 1867
Government Reserve, Valley Creek
PRIZE FIGHT FOR THE
CHAMPIONSHIP OF CARIBOO
Geo. Wilson vs. Joe Eden
Bets totalling $12,000

Monday, September 30, 1867
Crystal Palace Saloon
PROFESSOR HERMANN
Wizard and Ventriloquist
will give one of his pleasing
Parlor Entertainments

Thursday, October 3, 1867
Crystal Palace Saloon
PROFESSOR HERMANN

Saturday, October 5, 1867
Crystal Palace Saloon
PROFESSOR HERMANN
Sleight of hand and ventriloquism

Saturday, October 12, 1867
Fashion Saloon
SPARRING ENTERTAINMENT
Geo. Baker, assisted by
Prof. Hermann and several amateurs

Wednesday, October 16, 1867
Crystal Palace Saloon
PERFORMANCE FOR THE BENEFIT OF
THE HOSPITAL
Prof. Hermann, assisted by Mons. Endt
Music by Mr. Wilson

Sunday, October 27, 1867
Sam Walker's Saloon, Centreville
SECOND HOSPITAL BENEFIT
Prof. Hermann
Saturday, December 28, 1867
Barry and Adler's
Fashion Saloon
BENEFIT CONCERT
For the Cariboo Literary Institute
Local professional and amateur
performers under the direction of
Prof. Wilson
Welsh and Cariboo Glee Clubs
Ethiopian Minstrels
Tuesday, December 31, 1867
Theatre Royal
(formerly the Parlor Saloon)
FISH OUT OF WATER
Musical Interlude
BOX AND COX
Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association

Monday, January 27, 1868
Theatre Royal
GRIMSHAW, BRADSHAW AND BAGSHAW
Musical Interlude
NUMBER ONE, ROUND THE CORNER
Cariboo Amateur Dramatic Association

Saturday, February 15, 1868
Theatre Royal
THE DEMON LOVER
Interlude: Songs, Glees, Recitations
POOR PILLICODDY
Hospital Benefit
Orchestra led by Prof. Wilson

Monday, May 11, 1868
Theatre Royal
Opening Night
D'YE KNOW ME NOW?
Interlude: Consisting of Glees, Songs, Duetts and Comic Songs
MAD AS A HATTER
--God Save the Queen--
Admission $1. Reserved $1.50

Tuesday, May 26, 1868
Theatre Royal
USED UP
Interlude: Consisting of Duetts and Songs
B. B.

Thursday, June 4, 1868
Theatre Royal
A KISS IN THE DARK
Interlude: Glees, Duetts, Songs
FISH OUT OF WATER

Thursday, June 11, 1868
Theatre Royal
MARTIN THE WIZARD
Ventriloquism, Second-Sight, etc.
Friday, June 12, 1868
Theatre Royal
MARTIN THE WIZARD

Saturday, June 13, 1868
Theatre Royal
MARTIN THE WIZARD

Sunday, June 14, 1868
Theatre Royal
MARTIN THE WIZARD

Monday, June 15, 1868
Theatre Royal
MARTIN THE WIZARD

Tuesday, June 16, 1868
Centre Ville
MARTIN THE WIZARD
(several performances)

Thursday, June 18, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD
MINSTREL AND VARIETY TROUPE
Featuring: Tom Lafont
Ned Ward
Mrs. Lafont
Miss Ella Montez
with:
Mr. Westgarth
Mr. C. Phillips
Mr. J. Johnston

Friday, June 19, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE

Saturday, June 20, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE

Sunday, June 21, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE

Monday, June 22, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE
Last performance previous to going to Centre Ville

Tuesday, June 23, 1868
Theatre Royal
A REGULAR FIX
Grand Interlude
Songs by Mr. Seymour,
Mr. Bennett, Mrs. Tracey, etc.
THE AREA BELLE

Centreville
LAFONT AND WARD
MINSTREL AND VARIETY TROUPE
A run of several performances

Wednesday, July 1, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD
MINSTREL AND VARIETY TROUPE
Saturday, July 4, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE

Saturday, July 11, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE
With the assistance of Prof. Wilson and Messrs. Barry and Wrigglehuth
THE PERSECUTED DUTCHMAN; OR, THE ORIGINAL JOHN SCHMIDT!

Sunday, July 12, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE

Monday, July 13, 1868
Theatre Royal
Benefit of Mrs. S. P. Parker
THE DEMON LOVER
Interlude: Mr. Bennett and others
Mrs. Parker in some choice selections from her repertoire
BOMBASTES FURIOSA
CADA

Saturday, July 18, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE

Wednesday, July 22, 1868
Theatre Royal
THE PERSECUTED DUTCHMAN
Lafont and Ward Troupe

Saturday, July 26, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE
The performances will include the
CHINA ACT
And the laughable Farce of
THE MASQUERADE BALL

Thursday, July 30, 1868
Theatre Royal
THE FAITHFUL SERVANT
TROUBLES AT THE FRENCH HOTEL
Lafont and Ward Troupe

Sunday, August 2, 1868
Theatre Royal
HANDY ANDY
THE MASQUERADE BALL
Repeated by Request
Lafont and Ward Troupe
Singing and Dancing, etc.

Thursday, August 6, 1868
Theatre Royal
JOCKO, THE BRAZILIAN APE
BOMB PROOF
Lafont and Ward Troupe
Singing and Dancing by the Company
First Appearance of Mr. Bennett, a
who has kindly volunteered his services

Sunday, August 9, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE
Second Appearance of Mr. Bennett
Prof. Endt, Legerdemain
Second-sight by Miss Montez
SUBLIME AND RIDICULOUS BURLESQUE CIRCUS
Mrs. Lafont will sing "Way Down in Maine."
Wednesday, August 12, 1868
Theatre Royal
The Cariboo Amateurs present
COOL AS A CUCUMBER
Interlude: Messrs. Bennett, Richards, and others present some of their choicest pieces
TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE CADA

Sunday, August 16, 1868
Theatre Royal
POLITICAL SPEECH
DAGUERREAN GALLERY
Lafont and Ward Company

Tuesday, August 18, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE
Benefit of Mr. Pierce
a number of Amateurs will give their assistance

Thursday, August 20, 1868
Theatre Royal
Benefit of Miss Montez
MONITOR AND MERRIMAC
BAL DE MASQUE
Lafont and Ward Troupe

Saturday, August 22, 1868
Centreville
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE

Thursday August 27, 1868
Theatre Royal
DEAF AS A POST
THE COBBLER'S DAUGHTER
MAGIC PIE
Singing, Dancing, etc.
Lafont and Ward Co.

Thursday, September 3, 1868
Theatre Royal
LAFONT AND WARD TROUPE
Benefit of Mrs. Lafont under the patronage of the Hon. Chartres Brew, Gold Commissioner, and the Cariboo Dramatic Association featuring the Farce of ROBIN MAKE AIRS

Saturday, September 12, 1868
Theatre Royal
Benefit of Ned Ward
JOCKO, THE BRAZILIAN APE
CUTTING OFF A MAN'S HEAD
Lafont and Ward Troupe assisted by local volunteers

Wednesday, September 16, 1868
Theatre Royal destroyed in the Barkerville Fire

Saturday, January 16, 1869
Theatre Royal
GRAND OPENING NIGHT!
The Cariboo Amateurs will perform Tom Taylor's celebrated Comedy in Three Acts, entitled
STILL WATERS RUN DEEP CADA
Preceded by a Prologue, written for the occasion by a member of the Association.
Glees, Ballads, etc., etc.

Saturday, January 30, 1869
Theatre Royal
A VERY SERIOUS AFFAIR
Comic Song in Character by Mr. Thomas Harding
THE WATERMAN CADA

Thursday, February 4, 1869
Theatre Royal
MUSICAL AND LITERARY ENTERTAINMENT a
Anglican Church Institute under the direction of Rev. J. Reynard

Saturday, February 13, 1869
Theatre Royal
BOOTS AT THE SWAN
B. B. CADA

Saturday, February 27, 1869
Theatre Royal
CHIMNEY CORNER CADA
Before the play Mr. and Mrs. Parker have kindly volunteered to sing one of their favorite Duetts.

Monday, March 1, 1869
Theatre Royal
ST. DAVID'S DAY ENTERTAINMENT a
The Cambrian Society assisted by James Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. Parker, and Tom Harding

Monday, March 8, 1869
Theatre Royal
CHURCH INSTITUTE CONCERT a
AND READING
Rev. J. Reynard, Cariboo Band and Choir

Saturday, March 13, 1869
Theatre Royal
STILL WATERS RUN DEEP CADA
To conclude with the laughable farce THE IRISH TUTOR

Saturday, March 27, 1869
Theatre Royal
A CHANGE OF SYSTEM
Interlude: Songs, Glees, Etc.
Welsh Glee Club and others

THE VERMONT WOOL DEALER

Saturday, April 3, 1869
Church Institute Rooms
ILLUSTRATED LECTURE
ON ENGLISH BALLADS
Rev. James Reynard, with
Mrs. Tracey, Messrs. Blunt,
Hudson and Fraser

Saturday, April 10, 1869
Theatre Royal
LOAN OF A LOVER
Interlude

MAKE YOUR WILLS

Saturday, April 17, 1869
Church Institute Rooms
OLD ENGLISH BALLAD POETRY
Illustrated with musical
performances by Rev. Reynard

Saturday, April 24, 1869
Theatre Royal
UNCLE ZACHARY
Domestic Drama in 2 Acts

A MARTYR TO SCIENCE

Saturday, May 8, 1869
Theatre Royal

A TICKET OF LEAVE
Musical Interlude

THE TORNED HEAD

Saturday, May 15, 1869
Theatre Royal

GRAND CONCERT
Benefit of Mrs. S. P. Parker

Monday, May 24, 1869
Theatre Royal
QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY
A GRAND CONCERT
by the Amateurs
First appearance of the
CARIBOO NEGRO MINSTRELS

Saturday, June 19, 1869
Theatre Royal

the Celebrated Romantic Drama
THE CHARCOAL BURNER
with the Petite Comedietta

THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY

Thursday, July 1, 1869
Theatre Royal

A GRAND CONCERT

by the Welsh Glee Club
for the benefit of the
New Cambrian Hall
The leading vocalists of Cariboo
will appear on the occasion
Monday, July 5, 1869
Theatre Royal
Benefit of Miss Emily
The Performance on this occasion
will receive the patronage of
His Lordship the Chief Justice
and the Hon. C. Brew
THE LOAN OF A LOVER
Interlude
GOOD FOR NOTHING

Saturday, July 31, 1869
Theatre Royal
THE ROUGH DIAMOND
Interlude: Laughable Ethiopian
Farce by two well-known Amateurs
After which . . . the screaming
Vaudville
DONE BROWN!

Monday, September 20, 1869
Church Institute Rooms
CONCERT

Wednesday, September 22, 1869
Theatre Royal
The Cariboo Amateurs will give
a performance in honor of
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR
When two petite comedies
NAN, THE GOOD FOR NOTHING
and
SLASHER AND CRASHER
will be played

Saturday, October 9, 1869
Theatre Royal
RETAI NED FOR THE DEFENCE
Interlude of Song
A BLIGHTED BEING

Saturday, November 6, 1869
Theatre Royal
That very interesting dramatic
play entitled
THE PORTER'S KNOT

Saturday, November 20, 1869
Theatre Royal
TO OBLIGE BENSON
THE LIMERICK BOY
UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE
FIRE BRIGADE

Saturday, December 4, 1869
Theatre Royal
for the Benefit of the
Fire Brigade
THE TOODLES
To conclude with a new melodrama
written for the occasion by
Augustus Frederick Funghold, Esq.
A TRIP TO THE PEACE RIVER; OR,
THE ROAD AGENTS ABROAD
Saturday, December 18, 1869
Theatre Royal
LENDING A HAND
THE DEAD SHOT
CADA

Friday, December 24, 1869
Theatre Royal
THE CHIMNEY CORNER
CADA

Friday, December 31, 1869
Theatre Royal
DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND
POOR PILLICODDY
CADA

Saturday, January 15, 1870
Theatre Royal
MRS. HARRIS
THE TURKISH BATH
CADA

Saturday, January 29, 1870
Theatre Royal
For the Benefit of
Mrs. S. P. Parker
THE DEAD SHOT
Musical Interlude: Several
popular Musical Amateurs
Concluding with the new and
exciting Comedietta, entitled
A. S. S.
CADA

Saturday, February 12, 1870
Theatre Royal
The serio-comic domestic drama
OLD PHIL’S BIRTHDAY
CADA

Tuesday, February 22, 1870
Theatre Royal
Benefit of Florence Wilson
FOUND IN A FOUR WHEELER
Interlude: Songs, Sword Dance, etc.
MRS. HARRIS
CADA

Tuesday, March 1, 1870
Cambrian Hall
ST. DAVID’S DAY ENTERTAINMENT
a
Selections by the Welsh Glee Club
original poems, recitations
Songs by Mr. and Mrs. Parker and Mr.
H. Havelock

Saturday, March 12, 1870
Theatre Royal
For the Benefit of Creditors
CAUGHT BY THE GUFF
THE VERMONT WOOL DEALER
CADA

Saturday, March 26, 1870
Theatre Royal
CONCERT
a
By the Church Institute
Choir, Band and Soloists
under the direction of Rev. Reynard

Saturday, April 9, 1870
Theatre Royal
LITTLE TODDLEKINS
LARKINS' LOVE LETTERS
Saturday, April 23, 1870
Theatre Royal
CONCERT
Church Institute under the direction of Rev. Reynard

Tuesday, May 24, 1870
Theatre Royal
Queen's Birthday Performance
THE BUZZARDS
THE OMNIBUS
CADA

Friday, July 1, 1870
Theatre Royal
THE LOTTERY TICKET
A SUIT OF TWEEDS
CADA

Monday, July 4, 1870
Theatre Royal
for the Benefit of Mrs. S. P. Parker
Commencing with the romantic Melodrama, entitled
THE WINDMILL
Musical Interlude: popular vocalists
A FRIEND IN NEED
CADA

Saturday, August 20, 1870
Theatre Royal
Under the Patronage of the Fire Brigade
THE BLUE DEVILS
TURN HIM OUT
CADA

Saturday, September 10, 1870
Theatre Royal
for the Benefit of Florence Wilson
A PHENOMENON IN A SMOCK FROCK
Musical Interlude
THE STAGE STRUCK YANKEE
CADA

Saturday, October 15, 1870
Theatre Royal
ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE
CADA

Saturday, November 19, 1870
Theatre Royal
Grand Opening Night of the Winter Season
THE AREA BELLE
DON PADDY DE BAZAN
CADA

Saturday, December 10, 1870
Theatre Royal
Commencing with the favorite farce of
DONE BROWN
To conclude with a performance by the
MINSTRELS Walk Around.
CADA

Saturday, December 17, 1870
Theatre Royal
CONCERT
by the Church Institute
Between the pieces Mr. Reynard
will read A Christmas Carol
Cariboo Band

Saturday, December 24, 1870
Theatre Royal
GRAND CHRISTMAS EVE ENTERTAINMENT!  CADA
By special request the Cariboo Amateurs will open the Holidays with a performance commencing with the semi-Ethiopian farce of QUASH
Followed by:
Songs, Dances, Burlesque Prize Fight
Concluding with the Old English Christmas Dance of ROBINSON CRUSOE
A Fat Turkey will be given as a Prize for the best Conundrum

Saturday, December 31, 1870
Theatre Royal
NEW YEAR'S EVE ENTERTAINMENT
The amusing Farce in two Acts of WHO KILLED COCK-ROBIN?  CADA
Between the Acts there will be a choice Musical Interlude

Saturday, February 25, 1871
Theatre Royal
PERFECTION; OR, THE MAID OF MUNSTER  CADA
Benefit of Mrs. S. P. Parker
Followed by Songs, Glee, Duetts

Saturday, March 4, 1871
Theatre Royal
CHURCH INSTITUTE ENTERTAINMENT
with
MAGIC LANTERN PICTURES
Band, choir and soloists under the direction of Rev. Reynard

Saturday, March 18, 1871
Theatre Royal
THE DAY AFTER THE WEDDING  CADA
Interlude: Comic Yankee Recitations in Grotesque Character
YOUNG ENGLAND

Saturday, April 8, 1871
Theatre Royal
THE CARIBOO MINSTRELS
Having been Rusticating during the Winter, will give a MAGNIFICOQUENT ENTERTAINMENT

Saturday, April 22, 1871
Theatre Royal
CHURCH INSTITUTE CONCERT
with
MAGIC LANTERN PICTURES
Benefit of the Cariboo Band
Saturday, April 29, 1871
Theatre Royal
THE PORTER'S KNOT
CADA

Wednesday, May 24, 1871
Theatre Royal
STATE SECRETS; OR THE TAILOR OF TAMWORTH
CADA
Followed by a
MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT

Thursday, June 1, 1871
Theatre Royal
THE McGINLEY VARIETY TROUPE
OF MINSTRELS

Saturday, June 3, 1871
Theatre Royal
THE McGINLEY VARIETY TROUPE
ip

Saturday, June 20, 1871
Theatre Royal
THE McGINLEY VARIETY TROUPE
ip

Wednesday, June 24, 1871
Theatre Royal
THE McGINLEY VARIETY TROUPE
ip

Saturday, June 3, 1871
Theatre Royal
THE McGINLEY VARIETY TROUPE
ip

Saturday, June 20, 1871
Theatre Royal
THE McGINLEY VARIETY TROUPE
ip

New Songs, New Dances, New Burlesques!

Saturday, July 1, 1871
Dominion Day Platform, Barkerville
OUTDOOR BAND MUSIC
The Cariboo Band led by J. Reynard
Theatre Royal
The Cariboo Amateurs will give a performance on Dominion Day
Commencing with the laughable
Farce in Two Acts
THE IRISHMAN IN LONDON
CADA
followed by a
MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT
assisted by the McGinley Children
ip

Tuesday, July 4, 1871
Theatre Royal
Fourth of July Performance
THE McGINLEY TROUPE
ip
In conjunction with a few of the Amateurs
a

Saturday, July 8, 1871
Theatre Royal
Benefit of Miss May McGinley
THE BATTLE OF BULL RUN
Cannons and Horses. 20 People on Stage. First appearance of Mr. McArthur, the celebrated vocalist. The McGinley Troupe
Frank Perrett and other amateurs
have also volunteered their services
ip

Saturday, July 15, 1871
Theatre Royal
THE McGINLEY TROUPE
Benefit of Bobby McGinley
assisted by several Amateurs a
Saturday, July 29, 1871
Theatre Royal
Benefit of MRS. PARKER
SKETCHES IN INDIA CADA
To be followed by a choice
MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT
Comic Song in Character by
Miss Fitz-John (her first appearance)

Saturday, August 26, 1871
Theatre Royal
The favorite Vaudeville
CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP CADA
Followed by the laughable Farce
HE'S A LUNATIC

Saturday, November 25, 1871
Theatre Royal
Benefit of the Fire Brigade
Overture by the Band
Followed by the laughable Farce
FIVE POUNDS REWARD CADA
Concluding with a
MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT
Overture--Songs--Recitations

Thursday, December 30, 1871
Theatre Royal
Benefit of FLORENCE WILSON
MRS. GREEN'S SNUG LITTLE BUSINESS CADA
Followed by a Choice
MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT a
Songs, Recitations, etc.
The Cariboo Amateur Band

Monday, March 4, 1872
Theatre Royal
CHINESE THEATRICAL a
dragon dance, gymnastics
2 plays with narration

Monday, April 15, 1872
Balcony of Mr. Knott's Building
Barkerville
OUTDOOR CONCERT a
by the Cariboo Band
Thanksgiving holiday for the
restoration to health of the
Prince of Wales

Friday, May 24, 1872
Theatre Royal
QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY
GRAND ENTERTAINMENT
Songs, Glees, and Recitations
by Local Favorites
Selections by the Band
The whole to conclude with the
laughable Ethiopian Farce of
BOX AND COX CADA
Monday, July 1, 1872
Theatre Royal
DOMINION DAY!
The performance will commence with
the humorous and side-splitting farce
FORTUNE'S FROLIC,—or the—
PLOUGHMAN TURNED LORD! CADA
To conclude with a
MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT!
a
Selections by the Band
Comic Song (by request)—Mr.
Thomas Harding

Thursday July 4, 1872
Theatre Royal
CONCERT a
Comic and Sentimental Songs,
Recitations, Dances and
Negro Eccentricities
Cariboo Band and other local favorites
BONES AND CUFF, negro burlesque CADA

Saturday, August 10, 1872
Theatre Royal
The new and popular side-splitting
Farce
TO PARIS AND BACK FOR FIVE POUNDS
Concluding with
COMIC AND SENTIMENTAL SONGS, ETC. CADA

Saturday, September 21, 1872
Theatre Royal
The Original Romantic Drama in
two Acts
THE SEVEN CLERKS; or, the
THREE THIEVES AND THE DENOUNCER
Concluding with
RECITATIONS, SONGS, ETC. CADA

Saturday, October 12, 1872
Theatre Royal
BENEFIT OF FLORENCE WILSON
DONE BROWN
Musical Interlude
BETSY BAKER; OR, TOO ATTENTIVE
BY HALF CADA

Saturday, November 9, 1872
Theatre Royal
Performance Cancelled due to
illness of one of the cast and
other members leaving for the
lower country

Saturday, February 8, 1873
Theatre Royal
BENEFIT OF THREE CHILDREN
Who are dependent on public support
CAUGHT BY THE CUFF! CADA
followed by
VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC. a
Saturday, March 1, 1873
Theatre Royal
Benefit of David Jones
A GRAND CONCERT
The performance will conclude with
A MINSTREL ENTERTAINMENT
by the Cariboo Minstrel Troupe

Wednesday, July 1, 1874
Barkerville, main street
GRAND TIGHTROPE PERFORMANCE
by Mons. Garant
Stanley, Lightning Creek
OUTDOOR MUSIC
by the Stanley Band

Saturday, July 4, 1874
Stanley, Lightning Creek
OUTDOOR MUSIC
Stanley Band
Cariboo Masonic Lodge, Barkerville
SONGS AND MUSIC
Masonic Celebration

Saturday, October 23, 1875
Theatre Royal
J. T. Allingham's Comedy of
BORN TO GOOD LUCK; OR, THE
PLoughman Turned Lord
followed by
SONGS, RECITATIONS, ETC.
The Election Candidates will be reviewed by a prominent Amateur
The whole to conclude with God Save the Queen by full company and audience under the distinguished Conductorship of Hon. G. A. Walkem, Premier.

Saturday, November 13, 1875
Theatre Royal
Benefit of John Tindal, an old miner prostrated by sickness
SNOZZLE; or, A TRIP TO PARIS AND BACK FOR FIVE POUNDS