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The Hibernicon and Visions of Returning Home:
Popular Entertainment in Irish America from the Civil War to World War I

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Abstract

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Combining a moving panorama, lecture, musical numbers, and comic sketches, the hibernicon depicted a return trip to Ireland for an Irish, Irish-American, or American tourist. Beginning in New York, the tourists board a ship, cross the Atlantic, and land in Ireland. They then proceed to tour Ireland's key historical, political, and religious sites and scenes. The tourists also visit natural marvels such as the Lakes of Killarney and the Meeting of the Waters. Interspersed with the lecturer and the Irish jaunting car driver's site descriptions and anecdotes, sketches illustrate the comic challenges facing the love affair between the jaunting car driver and an Irish peasant woman and songs compliment the panorama paintings and the love story. At the end of their visit, the tourists once again board their ship to return to America. From about the Civil War to World War I, the hibernicon performed in minstrel and variety houses as well as Catholic Church halls and basements throughout the country. Dozens of imitators copied the

original company and contributed to the hibernicon's emergence as a popular entertainment craze.

The hibernicon emerged after popular culture already had forged close connections between Irishness, Catholicism, and nationalism in the public imagination. My dissertation is an attempt to analyze and explain why and how the hibernicon successfully took advantage of these connections to become involved in the Irish ethnic community. Unlike other Irish-American popular entertainments, the hibernicon's appeal allowed it to infiltrate the Irish-American community to an unprecedented and unrecognized extent. I suggest why the hibernicon appealed to the Irish and Irish-American working class and earned enough respect that it became incorporated into Catholic Church fundraisers and community celebrations as well as Irish-American nationalist expressions and benefits. I argue that its relationship subverts narratives of opposition between popular entertainment, Irish ethnic community, and its institutions to illustrate how they developed a symbiotic relationship to survive.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1882, *Freund's Daily Music and Drama* described the Irish as “a curious people from a theatrical point of view. Misrepresent any other nationality upon the stage and there is a public protest immediately; but the Irish seem to enjoy being caricatured. They pay their caricaturists liberally; the worse the libel the greater the Irish popularity of the dramatist and actor.”¹

Although somewhat ironic in tone, *Freund's Daily Music and Drama's* comment highlights the writer's inability to understand why the Irish attended popular entertainments with Irish caricatures. The writer was not alone in his confusion. Other writers echoed his sentiments in articles with titles such as “How Our Irish Americans See Themselves Caricatured and Like It.”² The lack of records left by Irish and Irish-American audience members makes the other side of the story difficult to recover. What else did popular Irish performances offer to the Irish and Irish-American working class?

Although it is impossible to read audience members' minds, the hibernicon, an Irish-American popular entertainment, provides one way into the frequently erased perspective of Irish and Irish-American working class audience members and their relationship to popular entertainment.³ Combining a moving panorama, lecture, musical numbers, and comic sketches, the hibernicon depicted a return trip to Ireland for an Irish, Irish-American, or American tourist. Beginning in New York, the tourists board a ship, cross the Atlantic, and land in Ireland. They then proceed to tour Ireland's key historical, political, and religious sites and scenes, including

the Life of St. Patrick and the Old Parliament Building as well as various castles and church ruins. The tourists also visit natural marvels such as the Lakes of Killarney and the Meeting of the Waters. Interspersed with the lecturer and the Irish jaunting car driver's site descriptions and anecdotes, sketches illustrate the comic challenges facing the love affair between the jaunting car driver and an Irish peasant woman and songs compliment the panorama paintings and the love story. At the end of their visit, the tourists once again board their ship to return to America. After the hibernicon's debut in 1860, dozens of imitators copied the original company and contributed to the hibernicon's emergence as a popular entertainment craze. From about the Civil War to World War I, it performed in minstrel and variety houses as well as Catholic Church halls and basements throughout the country. Although my analysis focuses on the hibernicon in America, the entertainment eventually became so popular that its reach extended to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. As my dissertation illustrates, the hibernicon's imagery reimagined the diverse experiences and diasporic longings of Irish and Irish-Americans and targeted Irish and Irish-American working class audiences, which makes it a particularly fruitful case study.

The height of the hibernicon phenomenon and its later decline occurred during decades of great turbulence for the Irish-American community. During these years, in the eyes of many Americans, the Irish transformed from one of the most despised immigrant populations to the ideal, assimilable ethnic group. Instigated by the ramifications of the Industrial Revolution, the reshaping of working class culture led to the rise of unions and the development of working class institutions and leisure organizations, such as the saloon and ethnic clubs and lodges. The hibernicon provides a window into how popular entertainment intersected with these developments to appeal to a shifting and diverse Irish and Irish-American audience. In the first

decades of the twentieth century, social, economic, political, and theatrical changes led to the hibernicon's erasure from American cultural memory.

Unfortunately, prejudices in theatre and working class history contributed to the omission of entertainments like the hibernicon from historical study. As labor historian Herbert G. Gutman has acknowledged, historians frequently passed over studying working class leisure and ethnic heritage in favor of "the subject matter usually considered the proper sphere of labor history... trade union development and behavior, strikes and lockouts, and radical movements."⁴ In addition, throughout the first half of the twentieth century, academic and archival emphasis on play texts and legitimate theatre failed to preserve and analyze popular entertainment in the archive and theatre history. Many popular entertainments left behind few traditional records, which also made them difficult to document. The Irish-American community's rising status discouraged the study of Irish and Irish-American popular entertainment. By the first decades of the twentieth century, Irish-Americans finally gained a middle-class American image and began to lose their associations with the negative stereotypes of the nineteenth century. Middle-class Irish-Americans did not want reminders of their working class past and the negative popular stereotypes that they had recently escaped.⁵ With popular stage stereotypes and narratives frequently written out of the "real" tradition of Irish and Irish-American performance, Irish-Americans had few reasons to preserve performance evidence and write histories about this period in their entertainment past.

When Irish-American popular entertainment is addressed in theatre history, it is most commonly discussed in terms of how it negatively reflected on the Irish. This emphasis resulted in part from the available sources. The Irish-American middle class often recorded their negative impressions of popular entertainment attended by the Irish and Irish-American working

classes and their genuine puzzlement over audiences' support of Irish types. A writer for the *New York Irish-American* concluded that the "play-going Irish public are strangely apathetic to the influence the drama can wield over popular feeling. If the Irish public not only tolerate, but liberally patronize theatrical performances that ridicule and insult them, we cannot be surprised that we fail to attain that place in the public esteem to which the virtues and talents of the Irish race entitle us."⁶ Scholarship often reiterates these middle class arguments, which, while not invalid or inaccurate perspectives, erase from the record the considerations of the working class who attended these performances.⁷ These arguments also position popular entertainment in opposition to the serious concerns of the Irish ethnic community. As a result, Irish-American popular entertainment often becomes assessed in condescending terms, by contemporaries as well as twentieth and twenty-first century scholars, as quaint or frivolous and as an obstacle to respectability and assimilation. Arguments become framed ahistorically in terms of "realism," without considering how "accurate representation" was not necessarily the contemporary audience's criteria for acceptable stage performances. As theatre historian Susan Kattwinkel has stated, "it is almost a cliché of contemporary historical theory to excoriate the depiction of race" in American popular entertainment, "most especially the portrayals of Irish Americans."⁸ Although the stage perpetuated problematic, prejudiced representations of the Irish in America, these views of Irish and Irish-American performance do not encompass the entirety of the Irish and Irish-American theatre-going experience and they should not prevent the exploration of the more complicated aspects of Irish-American popular entertainment in theatre and working class history.

In recent years, scholars, such as Kattwinkel, have addressed the multi-faceted functions of Irish-American performance. Kattwinkel highlights the importance of examining Irish-

American stereotypes and representations particularly “when it was still downtown [in New York] and took place in the heart of the Irish community, for largely an Irish audience. These conditions created an atmosphere that demanded a more sophisticated depiction of local Irish and...complicated issues of interest to the Irish audience. The Irish characters depicted here [in Tony Pastor’s afterpieces] cannot be dismissed as mere stereotypes or simple vehicles for cheap laughs. They are far more multidimensional, representing the complex negotiations Irish-Americans were navigating.”⁹ Historian Stephen Rohs also has contributed the expanding scholarship analyzing the multiple purposes of Irish-American popular entertainment for the New York Irish and Irish-American community. Rohs explores how entertainers and playwrights such as Dion Boucicault and Edward Harrigan as well as the circulation of Irish-American songs created an “eccentric” notion of Irish identity that negotiated ideas of nation. Similarly, the hibernicon allows for the study of Irish-American imagery “in the heart of the Irish community, for largely an Irish audience.”¹⁰ As a result of its longevity and geographical reach and unlike other forms of Irish-American popular entertainment, it provides a unique opportunity to explore the flexibility of Irish-American popular imagery and its relationships to the Irish and Irish-American working class and community.¹¹

The lack of knowledge surrounding the hibernicon’s existence as a distinct entertainment, the absence of an archive, and the resulting scattering of its performance evidence contributed to the dearth of studies analyzing the hibernicon. In spite of the virtual erasure of the hibernicon from theatre studies, it receives brief mention in several studies of popular entertainment, especially in relation to variety and vaudeville star Jerry Cohan, father of George M. Cohan. However, the references are ambiguous and vague. Scholars refer to it as “a sort of Irish minstrel show,” “a sort of Irish variety show,” “an all Irish version of vaudeville,” and as a title for a

variety sketch.¹² A recent cultural history of tap dancing suggests that it “sought to maintain Irish song and dance traditions in America” without explanation.¹³ Although these studies’ goals are not to analyze the hibernicon, their failure to provide a clear idea of the entertainment further obscures it.

In the only analytical work on the hibernicon, theatre historian Laurence Senelick provides a glimpse into the entertainment’s comedy. By comparing Jerry Cohan’s 1880s variety repertoire, including his hibernicon sketches, to an earlier variety gagbook, Senelick illustrates how Cohan participated in the trend to clean-up variety comedy in the late nineteenth century. He also provides a general description of the hibernicon’s basic narrative: “a wealthy American couple hir[es] a pert young Irishman to chauffeur them on a motor-trip through the Emerald Isle...Episodes could be added or subtracted, depending on the strength of the company and the needs of the manager.”¹⁴ Senelick’s work is important for recognizing the hibernicon as a popular form of variety entertainment and musical comedy.

Yet, while the examination of a broader source base, including songsters, broadsides, sketches, and newspapers, enables a more in-depth study of the hibernicon, what can be learned from its analysis and what does situating the hibernicon in its context reveal about its significance in popular culture? My dissertation argues that the hibernicon promoted values and perspectives that served the diverse interests of Irish and Irish-Americans. I suggest why the hibernicon appealed to the Irish and Irish-American working class and earned enough respect that it became incorporated into Catholic Church fundraisers and community celebrations as well as Irish-American nationalist expressions and benefits.

Unlike other Irish-American popular entertainments, the hibernicon’s appeal allowed it to infiltrate the Irish-American community to an unprecedented and unrecognized extent. Its

relationship subverts narratives of opposition between popular entertainment, Irish ethnic community, and its institutions to illustrate how they developed a symbiotic relationship to survive. Each of the five chapters considers a broader sphere of cultural signification and community interaction to suggest the appeal of the hibernicon to Irish and Irish-American working class audiences and then how it assimilated into aspects of the Irish ethnic community.

Chapter One provides the foundation for the study by providing a history of the hibernicon. It analyzes the phenomenon starting with the rise of moving panoramas in the late 1840s and ending with the entertainment's disappearance in the 1910s. For decades, the hibernicon successfully negotiated middle class ideals and working class desires, which helped it transform to meet market and audience expectations. At the same time, it maintained values viewed as distinctly working-class and Irish-American, which contributed to the formation of long-term relationships between hibernicon companies and Irish-American communities.

Chapters Two and Three analyze how the hibernicon's variety, narrative, and form contributed to its flexibility and instability in reception. The chapters illustrate how formulaic narratives and stereotypes can be used to create unstable as opposed to static meanings, which demonstrates why it had the potential to appeal to a diverse Irish and Irish-American working class audience. In Chapter Two, variety performer Jerry Cohan provides a vehicle through which to examine a hibernicon performance. His hibernicon sketches negotiated both middle and working class notions of masculinity and American life. The negotiation of these perspectives enabled the Irish and Irish-American working class, with its diverse notions of success and community, to see their worldviews reflected in the performance. Chapter Three moves one step beyond the playhouse to consider the dialogue between hibernicon structure and travel literature. Its adaptation of travel literature led to the replication of dominant, romantic

travel narratives that circulated throughout the expanding culture of international travel. At the same time, the hibernicon's adept use of travel literature conventions allowed for a layered, subversive read that highlights its narrative's constructedness. This opens a space for Irish audience members to acknowledge how the hibernicon's illusions mask the current events and struggles of Ireland.

As a result of the flexibility of the hibernicon's imagery in relation to Irish and Irish-American audiences, Chapters Four and Five demonstrate how the hibernicon's broad appeal helped reshape theatre attendance as a form of Irish ethnic community participation. These two chapters expand the sphere of analysis to consider the hibernicons' involvement in local and national Irish-American communities. The chapters focus on two symbolic institutions of Irishness that played central roles in Irish and Irish American working class life. Chapter Four considers how the Irish and Irish-Americans assimilated the hibernicon into their local Irish Catholic communities. The hibernicon played a role in convincing priests and the Catholic laity that the church and popular entertainment could establish a healthy and mutually beneficial relationship. As a result of the hibernicon and other pro-theatre efforts by priests, performers, and Catholic community members, popular entertainment became a sanctioned, integrated part of Catholic economic and social life. Regardless of the church's official ideology, the hibernicon and popular entertainment comprised part of a practical plan to sustain Irish-American working class communities. Moving beyond the local ethnic community, Chapter Five considers the hibernicon's imagery in terms of Irish-American nation. Although music played a key role in the hibernicon's construction of Irish-American nationalism, the productions illustrate the importance of the visual in how performance reinforced and reimagined Irish-American nationalism for popular audiences. In spite of the productions' overt romanticism, the hibernicon

invented or reinvented the “real” Ireland for Irish and Irish-American audience members, who reaffirmed the nationalist cause and participated in the Irish-American community through their virtual witnessing.

Late-nineteenth century social conditions and perceptions of Irishness shape how the term “Irish” is used in my dissertation. Unless otherwise noted, when used in reference to American theatre audiences, “Irish” refers Irish Catholic emigrants. As historian Donald Akenson notes, this is a potentially limiting way of conceiving of Irish and Irish Americans since, technically, more Irish and Irish-American Protestant descendants lived in America.¹⁵ Yet, my dissertation is concerned with the popular imagery of Irishness that circulated in the late nineteenth and twentieth century. By the 1840s, playwrights, performers, and audiences assumed stage representations of the Irish were Catholic. In his introduction to the seminal *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: 1675-1815*, Irish historian Kerby Miller discusses how “In the late 1700s... ‘Irish’ became – both in Ireland and in the United States – a more inclusive and more favorable appellation than ever before or since.”¹⁶ Yet, Miller claims, “the moment soon passed.”¹⁷ In Ireland and America, religious and political conflicts increased between Protestants and Catholics during the first few decades of the nineteenth century. Between 1845 and 1852, the large influx of Irish Catholic immigrants fleeing the Great Famine helped redefine the Irish’s public image in America. Americans began to view Irish immigrants as a negative, uncivilized presence in American society. As a result, “[o]nce again ‘Irish’ became virtually synonymous with Irish Catholics alone, and among most Protestants, Irish and otherwise, once more the term designated a group laden with negative stereotypes.”¹⁸ By the late nineteenth century, Irish and Irish-American Protestants reclaimed the “old but formerly ambiguous term ‘Scotch-Irish’” to “describe all Protestants of Irish birth or descent.”¹⁹ Since many Americans as well as Irish

Protestants and Catholics viewed Catholicism as a major symbol and the religious affiliation of the Irish, my study relies on this conception of the term. Throughout my study, “Irish-American” refers to American-born Irish descendants.

The hibernicon emerged after popular culture already had forged close connections between Irishness, Catholicism, and nationalism in the public imagination. This dissertation is an attempt to analyze and explain why and how the hibernicon successfully took advantage of these connections to become involved in the Irish ethnic community. To begin this exploration, it necessary to start with a history of the hibernicon.

Notes

¹ *New York Freund's Daily Music and Drama*, 1 December 1882, 2.

² "How Our Irish Americans See Themselves Caricatured and Like It," *New York Irish-American* (New York), 24 February 1883, 7. See also "The Stage Irishman," *Chicago Pomeroy's Democrat*, 31 March 1877, 1; "The Church and Theater," *New Haven Register*, 4 March 1884, 3; John Finerty, "The So-Called Irish Drama," *Chicago Citizen*, 8 March 1884, 4.

³ Throughout the dissertation, "hibernicon" will be used to refer to the type of entertainment. "Hibernicon" refers to the title of a specific company.

⁴ Herbert G. Gutman, *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America* (New York: Knopf, 1976), 10-12.

⁵ Chris McNickle, "When New York Was Irish and After," in *The New York Irish*, eds. Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 337-356.

⁶ "How Our Irish Americans See Themselves Caricatured and Like It," 7.

⁷ For examples of such scholarship see James Dormon, "Ethnic Cultures of the Mind: The Harrigan-Hart Mosaic," *American Studies* 33, no. 2 (Fall 1992): 70-87; David Emmons, *The Butte-Irish: Class and Ethnicity in an American Mining Town, 1875-1925* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1990), 115-117; Douglas Gilbert, *American Vaudeville: Its Life and Times* (New York: Dover Publications, 1940); Margaret Lynch-Brennan, *The Irish Bridget: Irish Immigrant Women in Domestic Service in America, 1840-1930* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009), 78; Margaret Gardner Mayorga, *A Short History of the American Drama* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1932); Earl F. Niehaus, *The Irish in New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 120-131; Arthur Hobson Quinn, *History of American Drama from the Beginnings to the Civil War* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1923), 375-388; Arthur Hobson Quinn, *History of American Drama from the Civil War to the Present* (New York: F.S. Crofts and Co., 1943); Carl Wittke, "The Immigrant Theme on the American Stage," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 39, no. 2 (September 1952): 211-232; Wittke, *The Irish in America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1956), 253-263. Wittke's work often is referred to as the pioneering work about the Irish on stage in America.

⁸ Susan Kattwinkel, "Negotiating a New Identity: Irish Americans and the Variety Theatre in the 1860s," in *Interrogating America through Theatre and Performance*, eds. William W. Demastes and Iris Smith Fischer (New York: Palgrave, 2007), 47.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Stephen Rohs, *Eccentric Nation: Irish Performance in Nineteenth Century New York City* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2009). See also Owen Dudley Edwards, "The Stage Irish," in *The Creative Migrant*, ed. Patrick O'Sullivan (London: Leicester University Press, 1997), 83-114; Joyce Anne Flynn, "Ethnicity After Sea-change: The Irish Dramatic Tradition in Nineteenth Century American Drama" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1985); Robert W. Snyder, *The Voice of the City: Vaudeville and Popular Culture in New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 114.

¹² Stephen M. Vallillo, "George M. Cohan, Director." (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1987), 6; William H. A. Williams, "George M. Cohan," in *Ireland and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History, Volume 2*, eds. James Patrick Byrne, Phillip Coleman, and Jason King (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc, 2008), 192; Williams, *'Twas Only an Irishman's Dream*, 119; Snyder, 47-48.

¹³ Constance Valis Hill, *Tap Dancing America: A Cultural History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 29

¹⁴ Laurence Senelick, "Variety into Vaudeville: The Process Observed in Two Manuscript Gagbooks," *Theatre Survey* 19, no. 1 (May 1978): 1-15.

¹⁵ Donald Harman Akenson, *Being Had: Historians, Evidence, and the Irish in North America* (Ontario: P.D. Meany Publishers, 1985).

¹⁶ Kerby A. Miller, "Introduction," in *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan 1675-1815*, eds. Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, and David N. Doyle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 8.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

CHAPTER 1

A HISTORY OF THE HIBERNICON

Before leaving for Europe in May 1875, John MacEvoy attempted to sell his hibernicon panorama and “all its fixtures, wardrobe, etc.” by placing an advertisement in the *New York Clipper*.¹ He offered to sell not only his performance materials, but also the “RIGHT TO USE THE NAME OF MACEVOY and the Episodes of the Adventures of BARNEY THE GUIDE AND THE HAUNTED GUIDE, on favorable terms, for cash.”² The title of the advertisement suggests what MacEvoy believed he offered potential buyers: “A Fortune for Somebody.”³ Further emphasizing the entertainment’s profitability, MacEvoy explained how this panorama was one of several that he owned and that his children now toured with his cast offs. In one way the advertisement’s title simply functioned as a marketing ploy for MacEvoy who wanted to rid himself of the panorama before leaving the country. At the same time, he spoke truthfully of the earning potential for a touring hibernicon company with the name MacEvoy in the 1870s. Yet, why was the entertainment so lucrative? As a result of the hibernicon’s erasure from theatre history, Chapter One addresses this question through a history of the hibernicon, including its success and eventual disappearance.

Examining the hibernicon’s rise and decline illustrates the key role of adaptation in the form’s survival. The hibernicon’s longevity and success resulted from the rewriting and appropriation of the entertainment by a large number of managers and performers over several decades. The element of variety embedded within a familiar narrative contributed to its survival

by allowing it to adapt to popular entertainment trends and tastes in the late nineteenth century. Even though the same tastes and trends constrained how the entertainment transformed, the hibernicon became a successful experiment in early musical comedy. The history of the hibernicon also highlights how the entertainment and its performers began to establish a relationship with the Irish-American community and why this relationship proved beneficial to both parties.

Beginnings

Even though moving panoramas remained quite popular for another decade, by the 1850s, the popular entertainment form had peaked with John Banvard and his grand Mississippi panoramas.⁴ For years, companies continued to imitate his paintings in an attempt to replicate his financial success. During the craze for American Western moving panoramas, a small group of lecturers and painters began touring with moving panoramas of Ireland. Through these panoramas, it is possible to trace experiments with scenery, narrative, and character that eventually led to the hibernicon's key components. The panorama troupes' creative choices also reflected the strong influence of current popular entertainment trends and commercial realities in shaping its form. At the same time, a dialogue emerged between members of the Irish-American community and the panorama of Ireland troupes. These conversations highlight issues, such as ethnic representation and community engagement, that characterized the relationships between the hibernicon and Irish-American communities for decades.⁵

In the early 1850s, the panoramas of Ireland emerged out of the increasing commercial viability of moving panoramas depicting foreign landscapes. In 1859, the *New York Times*

applauded the decade's shift away from moving panoramas of the American West. Reflecting a bias against American and rural life and in favor of European and urban culture, the writer praised "the public" for "wear[ing] of such idle slushing."⁶ The moving panoramas "of European places" were "better, because the grandness of a city require[s] grandeur of treatment."⁷ Yet unlike the *New York Times* writer's preferences, the panoramas of Ireland combined depictions of the urban and the rural to appeal to a variety of aesthetic tastes. Throughout the course of their journey, audiences visited Dublin as well as the Lakes of Killarney. The panoramas of Ireland's negotiation of popular taste in terms of structure as well as content led to the development of two primary forms. The first emphasized the traditional structure of a moving panorama and the second drew on minstrel and variety performance to supplement the panorama presentation.

The majority of the panoramas of Ireland companies in the early 1850s remained within the moving panorama tradition, which included the standard form of lecturer, mechanist (to crank the panorama canvas), and musician. Nagle's Grand Panorama of Ireland and O'Reilly's Original Grand Panorama of Ireland among others enjoyed a small period of popularity between 1851 and 1853.⁸ In January 1851, the *New York Irish-American* described a performance of Nagle's Grand Panorama of Ireland as "a very beautiful painting, presenting to the eye of the natives of the Emerald Isle scenes and memorials of the deepest interest. The gentleman – Mr. Campbell – who describes or points attention to the particulars of the painting is eloquent, witty, and historically lucid; perhaps a *leetle* too redundant."⁹ This review, among others, discusses how the lecturer tells stories and jokes about Ireland, its history, and people as music plays and the panorama scrolls. No additional characters or overarching narratives, other than "taking a trip to Ireland," seem to have been involved in the performance. Reviews and advertisements

also say little about the type of music played. At the time, moving panoramas often brought a piano player on tour with them. However, some panorama of Ireland companies occasionally hired a well-known Irish musician to play “during the exhibition” of the panorama.¹⁰ Charles Ferguson, a blind Irish union piper, played a series of shows with O’Reilly’s Original Grand Panorama of Ireland in 1852.¹¹

On occasion, the companies altered their programs to increase their commercial appeal. Yet, the changes remained within the same vein of standard moving panorama content. In 1851, Nagle’s Grand Panorama of Ireland added William E. Robinson, an Irish-American journalist, poet, and politician, to their exhibition. Robinson “deliver[ed] a lecture on the military character and exploits of Irishmen.”¹² His lecture was apparently a large enough draw that O’Reilly’s Original Grand Panorama worked with him a few months later.¹³ Although these lectures occurred after the presentation of the paintings, they conveyed similar information to the lecture during the panorama. A few moving panoramas did not focus solely on Ireland, but incorporated other paintings as well, such as Hubbard’s Panorama of the Hudson River and a Voyage to Ireland.¹⁴

However, the standard moving panorama format did not please everyone. Newspapers and audience members attempted to influence the productions early in their development. In 1851, the *New York Irish-American* complained about the role of music in Nagle’s Grand Panorama of Ireland. After criticizing the quality of music that accompanied the panorama, the paper suggested that “if illustrated and accompanied by Irish singing and music of a first rate order, [the panorama of Ireland] would create quite a furore [sic] amid every class – native and foreign – of the inhabitants of this good city of New York.”¹⁵ Apparently some members of the audience agreed with the paper’s assessment. During a performance a few months later, “one or

two gentlemen (amateurs) volunteered to sing, and as the Meeting of the Waters, and other scenes of loveliness were in view, delighted the audience by singing some of Moore's most exquisite melodies."¹⁶ The *New York Irish-American* favorably reviewed the performance, but the panoramas of Ireland did not make any permanent changes to their structure.

The troupes also initiated connections with the Irish-American community beyond the performance-audience relationship displayed in the newspaper dialogue and playhouse. Nagle's Grand Panorama of Ireland held a benefit for John O'Donnell, an Irishman who was facing political and economic troubles in Ireland and had received attention in the Irish-American press.¹⁷ The benefit illustrates the beginning of the panoramas' connections to Irish political causes and fundraisers for the community. The panorama of Ireland lecturers also created additional opportunities to profit from the Irish-American community. During the same week that Nagle's exhibition performed in New York, its lecturer, Mr. Campbell, gave separate lectures on early Christianity in Ireland that seemed to target the Irish and Irish-American community.¹⁸

Aside from these exchanges and connections, an 1851 *New York Irish-American* review provides insight into the potential reasons for the relationship cultivated by the hibernicon with the Irish-American community in future decades. After reviewing a performance, the *New York Irish-American* scolded the panoramas of Ireland, and Nagle's in particular, for not properly respecting their symbiotic relationship with the Irish-American community. The paper "remind[ed] [the panoramas] that they stand in their own light, and act, not only in an unbusinesslike manner, but unpatriotically, when they omit to insert their public notices or advertisements in Irish-American Journals which circulate amongst and constantly approach that class of the population on which the exhibitors must mainly depend."¹⁹ The Irish-American

community was learning to wield its political and economic power in other arenas of American life and the paper's comments indicated it would not hesitate to organize against the panoramas if they used the Irish-American community for profit without giving back. Especially since the *Irish-American* had only existed since 1849 and the newspaper business was tenuous, obtaining advertising was crucial to its continued survival. The paper took their accusations one step further by aligning the contribution to Irish-American businesses with patriotism. Any patriotic gestures in performance were not enough to solidify their status as Irish patriots. Calling out the panoramas as unpatriotic had the potential to deter Irish-American audience members. Since Nagle's benefit for O'Donnell occurred less than a month and a half after this public scolding, it is possible that the company hoped to make amends with the Irish-American community through the patriotic gesture of the donated profits. This disagreement suggests that the relationships built between the hibernicon companies and Catholic churches, Irish-American nationalist causes, and community organizations in subsequent decades were perhaps not only a marketing ploy or product of personal connections, but also the result of economic pressure from the community itself.

At the same time that these companies toured, the MacEvoy family took a different approach to a panorama of Ireland that drew from a wider variety of popular entertainment trends. During the 1850s, the family played with form and characters and their experimentation led directly to the development of the hibernicon around 1860. The MacEvoys' show, called McEvoy's Grand Panorama of Ireland as well as McEvoy's Grand Panoramic Mirror of Ireland, started performing in Illinois and Wisconsin in the autumn of 1852. Following the major lines of transportation south, the company made stops along the Mississippi River, including Natchez,

Vicksburg, and New Orleans. It also performed in the cities and towns along the Nashville-Chattanooga-Charleston and Memphis-Tuscumbia (Alabama) railroad lines.²⁰

The MacEvoy family advertised their shows as a family performance that showcased the talents of their children. Although families had comprised the heart of theatrical touring companies for hundreds of years, their approach reflected the more recent trend of the “infant phenomenon.” After the success of child performers such as Master Betty and Clara Fisher in early nineteenth century England, children became a novelty attraction in antebellum American theatre. In the mid-nineteenth century, novelties such as the infant phenomenon became increasingly important as the growing number of touring companies competed for audiences. Although there were male child stars in America like John Howard Payne, most of the infant phenomenon were girls, such as the Bateman sisters who were popular stars on the American stage between 1846 and 1854. The children’s specialization in adult roles distinguished the infant phenomenon from previous and subsequent child performers. Scholars have attributed the attraction of these child stars to their perceived “natural simplicity” and the “naturalness of their innocence” as well as to male-dominated Western rural and mining communities’ desire to see women, even if only on stage.²¹

John MacEvoy, who served as the troupe’s lecturer and occasional composer, took advantage of this trend to market his panorama of Ireland. Aside from promising high quality paintings of Ireland, MacEvoy also presented the “Young Irish Minstrels,” otherwise known as his children Charles, Mary, and Kate. Charles, whose advertisements claimed was twelve years old around 1853, “designated from his brilliant execution on the Violin, the modern Paganini, will perform some of DeBroit’s finest pieces. Also, pieces from the works of the Great Strakosh on the Piano Forte; Wallace’s Grand Polka de Concert, etc.”²² Charles was characteristic of the infant phenomenon because as Laurence Hutton noted in his 1890s work *Curiosities of the*

American Stage, “the baby musician never plays baby tunes.”²³ Mary similarly was a musician, who played Irish tunes on the harp. Advertisements claimed she was only five years old in 1853, but census records suggest she was closer to twelve. Lying about a child performer’s age was not an uncommon occurrence and it allowed her to display a level of skill that seemed remarkable for someone supposedly so young.²⁴ Yet, the performance’s star was nine-year-old Kate. Dubbed the “celebrated INFANT POWER” and “the only youthful delineator of Irish character,” Kate performed the role of “Barney Brallaghan, the Irish Guide and Car Driver.”²⁵ As Barney, Kate “call[ed] forth uproarious applause, especially from the younger portion of the audience.”²⁶ Cross-dressing to perform the role of a male adult, Kate worked in a similar line to the Bateman sisters, except that she specialized in only popular comedic performance and never achieved comparable national fame.

Tapping into the infant phenomenon altered the panorama of Ireland in several ways. Unlike the previous panoramas of Ireland, “vocal music” performed by the children played a regular role in the performances.²⁷ Although it is unclear to what extent the shows introduced a narrative, Kate’s Barney added a variety character to the performances that drew on contemporary notions of Irish ethnic comedy in her songs and comic bits. This allowed the MacEvoyes to exploit the popularity of similar Irish characters in minstrel shows, variety shows, and plays.²⁸ Throughout the 1850s, the MacEvoyes tried to profit from other novel attractions in combination with their panorama, such as Mr. Allhead, “the Irish dwarf.”²⁹ Yet, only their addition of vocal music and ethnic comedy characters like Barney later would become an integral part of the hibernicon formula. Perhaps the family’s ability to draw on popular entertainment trends and novelty helped their company last longer than the other panoramas of Ireland. Evidence indicates that they toured consistently at least from 1852 to 1856.³⁰

A sensational murder trial in 1856 Chicago provides a window into the operations of the MacEvoy's moving panorama company during this time. One June evening in 1856, Thomas Applebee, "a highly respectable citizen, the proprietor of the family grocery store," was brutally murdered with an ax.³¹ With no indication of forced entry, the police assumed that the murderer knew the victim, killed him, and then stole his store's funds. Rumors of a disagreement between John MacEvoy and Applebee over money to buy panorama canvas and MacEvoy's exit from town on the night of the murder led to his arrest and trial.³² Subsequent witness testimony illustrates the personal and financial struggles of touring companies and the tenuous profitability of panoramas of Ireland at mid-century.

A man with the MacEvoy's company gave detailed testimony about the troupe's operations around the night of the murder:

[I] have been acquainted with the accused about two months; first saw him two or three years ago at Madison, Wis.; formed his acquaintance at LaSalle about two months ago, joined his theatrical company there...played last at Peoria on Monday night, prior to [McEvoy's] leaving for Kentucky...our company all stopped at the same hotel...the hotel agreed to keep the company for seventy-five cents each per day – we were to stay four nights; Mr. McEvoy left Peoria on Tuesday...I was told he took the receipts of the two nights performances with him; we did not pay our bill at the hotel, because we had no money to do so with, we left his carriage and scenery there as security...[McEvoy] gave as reason for leaving, that he was going to Kentucky for a tent...the canvass [sic] was intended to be used for his exhibition...Mr. McEvoy on leaving told us to play at Peoria the two following nights, and then at the intervening towns until we got back to LaSalle; did not do so because the hall was pre engaged...Do not know what money McEvoy had on arriving at Peoria – don't think he had much. I applied to him for [illegible] and he said he had no money to spare, as he wanted enough to pay his expenses to Kentucky and back.³³

The testimony illustrated that the MacEvoy's company was not successful enough in 1856 to pay their bills. Their need to play the "intervening towns" and their inability to find available performance spaces indicates the rough material situation facing the company. In some ways, the man's story supported the prosecution's assertions that MacEvoy might have been desperate

enough to murder for money. The man mentioned that their panorama was given to the printing office to help the company pay their bills. In combination with the financial panic and recession the following year, the loss of the panorama and the company's financial difficulties might explain why the MacEvoy's may have stopped touring between 1856 and 1860.

Luckily for MacEvoy, the judges dismissed the case against him for lack of evidence.

The *Chicago Times* reported:

Upon the announcement of [the not guilty verdict], the audience, which was very large during the entire day, gave three long and heartfelt cheers. Mrs. McEvoy, who was also present during the examination, advanced and was tenderly embraced by her husband. The scene was one which affected all present, not one of whom can entertain the least suspicion against the party whose misfortune it has been to be wrongfully suspected of so heinous a crime ... It is proper to add that the prosecuting attorney... as well as the other offices of the people, were fully convinced of the entire innocence of the accused.³⁴

The following year, the court tried and acquitted a former Applebee clerk for the crime. The case remained unsolved.³⁵ After the trial, MacEvoy and his family seemingly disappeared from the newspaper record for the next four years. When they returned to the stage in 1860, it would be with a new formula for their panorama of Ireland that unexpectedly started a new performance craze.

“Haste to Make the Tour of the Ireland”: The MacEvoy's and Early Musical Comedy

By the late 1850s, the MacEvoy's seemed to have given up their company and settled in Chicago. In spite of their previous difficulties, they rebounded financially and lived alongside middle-class city dwellers including clerks, book dealers, school teachers, merchants, clergy, and physicians in Chicago's Third Ward. The 1859 and 1860 Chicago City Directories list John MacEvoy as a music teacher while the 1860 census grants him the title “Professor of Music.”

Mary, now nineteen, also worked as a music teacher. In addition to listing Kate, called Catherine, the census also records two other MacEvoy children, twelve-year-old Teresa and seven-year-old John, and a boarder named O'Neill, who was identified as an artist. When John MacEvoy decided to launch another touring company in the autumn of 1860, Teresa, John, and O'Neill would become integral parts of his next experiment with popular performance.³⁶

MacEvoy decided to re-enter the theatre business during a contentious time. Michael B. Leavitt, an American theatre manager and entrepreneur remembered that "[in] the years 1859-60-61 many of the leading managers were at their wits' end to find attractions strong enough to draw current expenses, although rents, salaries and stage productions were exceedingly low."³⁷ The possibility of Abraham Lincoln's November election "threatened immediate dissolution of the Union...and the stage suffered severely."³⁸ The threat of southern succession and possible war also created a problem for touring troupes whose routes encompassed Southern cities and towns.³⁹

In spite of these political and economic challenges, MacEvoy introduced several innovations to his previous panorama of Ireland formula that he hoped would appeal to audiences. When his new Cyclorama of a Tour Through Ireland first appeared in Chicago in September 1860, his advertisements bragged about the brand new panorama paintings "by Mr. Jas O'Neil, from sketches taken in Ireland" that depicted "principal cities, public buildings, magnificent lake scenery, and all places of interest in Ireland."⁴⁰ Teresa and John also would replace their elder siblings as the show's child stars, even though Charles, Mary, and Kate still sang and played music throughout the performance. From this point on, a male actor, in this case the boy John, instead of a girl, played Barney the Irish Guide and MacEvoy added an Irish peasant girl character, played by Teresa, to the performance.⁴¹

The sheet music for “The Dublin Jaunting Cart,” composed by Charles MacEvoy and published in the early 1860s, provides a glimpse into how the company conceived of the new Barney the Guide during these early performances (Fig. 1). The sheet music cover depicts a picture of John Spalding MacEvoy, who advertisements pronounced “to be the Greatest Prodigy of the day,” superimposed over a sketch of the Old Parliament Building in Dublin and a jaunting car with waiting passengers.⁴² Even though advertisements and reviews reference Barney’s comic turns, Barney is not dressed in the characteristic stage Irishman costume of a “clay pipe stuck in front, an open collar shirt, a three-caped coat, knee-breeches, worsted stocking, and cockaded brogue shoes.”⁴³ Instead, he is well dressed in a collar shirt, tie, vest, hat, and coat. His hair is neatly parted and he wears no apparent make-up. His shoes even shine. Holding a riding stick, he gestures to the onlooker to join him on his cart. Newspaper comments that Barney “kept the Hall in a roar by his humorous songs and comic delineations” suggest that he was meant to be a comic character.⁴⁴ Yet, it seems that Spalding’s performance of Barney may have leaned toward a romantic stereotype that avoided certain extremes of caricature, at least in his costume. The company still tried to market itself as a show with an infant phenomenon, so this depiction also would allow for the production to play up a romanticized idea of childhood innocence.

I suggest that a softer representation of a stage Irish character may have been a tactical choice for a company that knew a large segment of its audience might be Irish. As illustrated through its commentary in the *New York Irish-American*, members of the Irish-American community expressed concerns about stage Irish characters decades before any large-scale organized protests against Irish caricatures on the American stage. In the mid-1860s, the



Fig. 1 John Spalding MacEvoy in “The Dublin Jaunting Car”

newspaper published “General Remarks” that reminded performers how “we have often before said, the recognized stage Irishman is no Irishman; and here we give notice to managers and their minions or employees, who assume to represent Irish character on the stage, that they must do so henceforth legitimately and rationally...or expect personal notices in these columns of their delinquencies.”⁴⁵ If a segment of the Irish-American community publically branded a performer’s work as derogatory, it had the potential to affect business negatively. The threat may have been enough for some companies to tone down their stage Irish characters while still maintaining the key comic characteristics of the popular type.

Yet, MacEvoy no longer had to depend solely on his children’s talents, the expertise of the paintings, or the entertainment value of his lectures to sell his show. His addition of stronger narrative and a different method of incorporating song into his show caused audiences and reviewers to perceive his entertainment as something new. His innovations warrant the entertainment’s inclusion in the early history of musical theatre. MacEvoy indicated the altered relationship between the Irish scene and the music in the advertisements for the first Chicago performances. His advertisement explains that the scenes depicted in the panorama are “particularly those immortalized by the genius of [Thomas] Moore in his Irish melodies.”⁴⁶ This small comment is reflective of a broader structural change for the performances. The other parts of the show no longer existed as bonus entertainment with a loose connection to an idea of Ireland. The performance elements now worked in concert with each other, even if only in the way the topics of Moore’s songs helped to determine the scenes displayed for the audience.

Although the overarching narrative of “a trip to Ireland” remained, MacEvoy personified the trip onstage by adding the character of a tourist and his female companion. The male character was typically referred to as an Irish gentleman, Irish American, or American. In some

instances, the lecturer played the tourist, which gave him a reason to appear onstage.⁴⁷ After the tourists' arrival in Ireland, Barney the Guide joined the lecturer in explaining the sites and the tourists became involved in a romantic and comic plot. The additional plot usually involved various obstacles such as an overprotective mother, other suitors, political events, and mistaken identities, that threaten to separate Barney and his girlfriend. As one puff for the *Charleston Courier* succinctly summarizes, "[t]he course of true love never did run smooth, and Barney and Miss Julia, in their regard for each other, were considerably worried by the old lady, who would come in just at the wrong moment. We find, however, that 'all's well that ends well,' and Barney and Miss Julia are finally made happy, though, however, through many vicissitudes."⁴⁸ The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* described how "the running comment furnished by the romantic experience of Barner [sic] Brallaghan, spices the entertainment to suit all tastes."⁴⁹

Within the presentation of this loose narrative, MacEvoy attempted to connect the songs and specialties to plot and character points. A notice explains the novelty of the performance. It claims that "What renders the whole thing particularly interesting is the accompaniment...Each scene has its song...as it passes before the gaze of the audience...The Whole is explained by a rollicking young man, styling himself 'Barney the Guide,' and by Prof McEvoy himself, in a lecture upon the songs and scenery of Ireland."⁵⁰ Even if this notice is a puff piece, it shows the company's belief that their approach of matching songs with scenes was novel enough to be used as a selling point.

Published about ten years after MacEvoy established the form, a broadside for one of John MacEvoy's companies provides the most detailed glimpse into the structure of these performances.⁵¹ The show lasted about two hours and was split into three distinct parts. Part One focuses on the tourist's journey and a trip around Dublin. The show's opening number,

“Come to the Shamrock’s Home” is performed by the female tourist or “lady.” Even though the song is simplistic and reflects the clichés of popular romantic Irish tunes, it also functions as an opening number that tells the audience about the subsequent performance. Before the tourists board the ship, the lady sings, “Come to the Shamrock’s home, love, My bark awaits for thee, And through that dear isle we’ll rove. For Erin our home will be.”⁵² The following three songs connect loosely to the paintings scrolling across the stage, but they do not develop character or plot points. For example, during a sequence depicting Irish nationalist Robert Emmet’s life and execution for rebellion against the British Crown, a member of the company sings “Oh! Breathe Not His Name!” which Thomas Moore wrote for his friend Emmet after his death in 1803. While the paintings show a battle between the Danes and the Irish, someone sings Moore’s “The Minstrel Boy,” a song about a boy who dies in battle.⁵³

Part Two begins with the introduction of Barney the Guide, who sings a song with a similar premise to “Come to the Shamrock’s Home” called “Oh! Come with Me.” Although I have not tracked down the lyrics to this particular song, the J.L. MacEvoy songster includes multiple songs that echo the theme implied by the title. Both “Barney the Jarvey” and “Barney the Driver Lad” introduce Barney and explain his function in the performance. He sings, “I wish to introduce myself and tell from where I came, I drive a Dublin Jaunting Car and Barney is my name, I’m always ready for a job to drive you near or far, So try the value of my words by jumping on my car.”⁵⁴ After introductions and after Barney starts to show the tourists the sites, the main comedic plot is quickly introduced. “Barney serenade[s] Miss Nora Callaghan” with a song entitled “Nora, Darling, ope [*sic*] the Window.”⁵⁵ The title implies that the song revolves around Barney trying to convince Nora to open the window. Such a moment has the potential to reveal information about the characters and their relationship. When Nora’s mother interrupts

Barney and Nora's moment, a new conflict emerges that Nora attempts to solve through her pleading song "Oh! Mother, dear Mother!" A series of historical and religious scenes pass along with corresponding songs, such as "The Meeting of the Waters" sung during the painting depicting the Meeting of the Waters in Wicklow. Barney then "meets a Recruiting Sergeant, who persuades him to enlist in the 88th or Connaught Rangers," the Irish regiment in the British army. After Barney sings "The Connaught Rangers," the audience sees "Barney going to War" and the "parting of Barney and Nora."⁵⁶ Paintings of St. Bridget's Abbey and the song "Hark! The Convent Bells" ends part two.

Part Three finds the tourists visiting Cork and Killarney. It is unclear how the Barney and Connaught Rangers plot is wrapped up, if it is addressed at all. Two out of the three songs in Part Three are tangential to the plot and relate to celebrating the nation and landscape of Ireland. After dropping off the "Tourists at Lee Hotel," Barney sings "Widow Marrone" to try and "win [a hotel-owning widow's] hand by the power of wit and song."⁵⁷ During the song, Barney tells the Widow about a dream in which her dead husband came to him and agreed that Barney should marry his wife.⁵⁸ The Widow rejects him. After visiting the famed Lakes of Killarney among other scenic locations, the tourists leave and Barney is reunited with Nora. His happiness causes him to dance an Irish jig. The show closes with a scene entitled, "The Future of Ireland."⁵⁹

As illustrated by the broadside, MacEvoy added an additional narrative that tied the various performance elements together into a more cohesive whole. His songs not only complimented the panorama paintings, but also helped develop character, conflict, and plot, albeit in a simple manner. MacEvoy's entertainment predates similar musical shows given credit in musical theatre histories as early progenitors of musical comedy. The MacEvoy's

involvement in the development of early musical comedy complicates the standard narratives of nineteenth century musical theatre history.⁶⁰

In particular, Nate Salsbury's place as a "forefather of musical comedy" is problematized when viewed in relation to the MacEvoy's shows. I am not arguing that Salsbury is not important in musical theatre history, but I suggest that the historical development of the musical comedy forms attributed to Salsbury is more complex than previously discussed. Musical theatre historians Gerald Bordman and Cecil Smith attribute the development of farce-comedy, which Bordman defines as "little more than an extended, elaborate variety sketch" to Salsbury in the mid to late 1870s.⁶¹ Farce-comedy had a thin story that assigned variety performers a character and provided the opportunity for them to perform their specialties. Not all of the songs were originally written for the performance and the performers drew on variety songs and comic bits already in circulation. Salsbury's earliest piece in this vein, *Patchwork*, focused on the antics of kitchen servants.⁶² Although the term farce-comedy has never been used to describe the MacEvoy's work, Bordman's description applies quite well to their shows. The only main distinction in structure appears to be their introduction of more plot twists, such as Barney joining the army, into the story.

Salsbury's *The Block* seems to reflect the structure of a moving panorama. In the panoramas of Ireland, the tourists sail across the Atlantic, have their adventures in Ireland, and then return home. *The Block* followed a group as they took a riverboat to a picnic spot. The picnic provided the opportunity for the performance of specialties and then the group returns home. The way historians describe Salsbury's rise to fame also parallels the MacEvoy's. The family toured the country before their New York performances in 1863, which seemed to launch the national popularity of the form. Bordman and Smith describe how Salsbury experimented

with and perfected farce-comedy while touring before finally bringing it to New York in 1879.⁶³ One vital difference is that Salsbury's performances only were popular in New York for about five years, even though they remained popular on the touring circuit until the end of the century. The MacEvoys had longer success in New York, but their popularity also lasted longer on the road.⁶⁴

In his introduction to Salsbury, Bordman acknowledges the problem of crediting Salsbury with the development of this early musical comedy form. He notes that even nineteenth century reviewers commented that the Vokes Family's *Belles in the Kitchen* inspired Salsbury's *Patchwork*. "Whatever the reason," he comments, "even in the nineteenth century Salsbury was frequently awarded the palm as a forefather of musical comedy, while the Vokes Family was politely waved away. Perhaps when we become more familiar with the stage pieces of this era, the Vokes Family and some of their other competitors also may be awarded a niche in our musical theatre's history."⁶⁵ Bordman suggests that historians and contemporaries often brushed the Vokes Family aside because they came from England and it is possible that as Irish immigrants, the MacEvoys also were viewed differently. The entertainment's focus on Ireland as opposed to America also potentially caused them to be overlooked. Salsbury was often praised for portraying domestic stories that did not require elaborate spectacle, which may have caused contemporaries and historians to give him more prominence. Salsbury's later success with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show also placed him in a position to be more thoroughly studied than the MacEvoys and Vokes, whose theatrical success was defined by their musical comedy endeavors. In combination with the Vokes Family, I suggest that the MacEvoy family and their dozens of imitators, who performed for years before Salsbury, illustrate that the history of musical theatre cannot be reduced to a list of "innovators." It seems possible that multiple

troupes experimented with similar variety and musical comedy structures at the same time and that it is not reasonable to praise one “inventor,” Salsbury, MacEvoy, or otherwise.⁶⁶

The “Everlasting” Hibernicon: Popularity and Commercial Success

With this new formula, the MacEvoy's toured their Cyclorama, or Tour through Ireland, between 1860 and 1862. Sometime between the end of 1862 and January 1863, the MacEvoy's renamed their company the Hibernicon.⁶⁷ The name Hibernicon was well known enough by January 1863 that the *New York Observer and Chronicle* published a comic anecdote entitled “Pat’s Hibernicon.” In the story, the Irishman named Pat accidentally attends a Protestant Mass while trying to find the Hibernicon. By the time he figures out his mistake, Pat makes “his way to the exhibition hall of the Hibernicon, just in time to see the crowd coming out – the performance being over.”⁶⁸ The writer never explains the Hibernicon even though it is mentioned multiple times in the story. This suggests that he believes his audience has some frame of reference for the term. The story reflects the tradition of jokes and stories told at the expense of the supposedly ignorant Irishman and the writer implicitly extends his low opinion of the Irishman to the Hibernicon’s audiences when he reports that the performances are “attended by the Celtic population of that city.”⁶⁹

Even though the MacEvoy's seemingly had success with their exhibition as they toured the nation, their performances in New York and Brooklyn in the spring and summer of 1863 helped their form become more popular.⁷⁰ Performing in New York and Brooklyn, the MacEvoy's’ business proved consistent enough that they moved from house to house performing for months. Until this point, their time in New York was their longest touring residency. The

family likely benefited from the boom in business experienced by other New York variety entertainments during the Civil War. The influx of soldiers into New York contributed to the success of variety shows at the same time that legitimate theatres struggled.

The MacEvoy's followed their New York performances with tours in upstate New York, New England, the Mid-West, and the South.⁷¹ Part of the difficulty in tracing the company in these years results from troupes copying the MacEvoy's' family and company name. At least by 1864, other hibernicon troupes began to tour and the MacEvoy's felt the need to defend their company. While touring in Oswego, New York in 1864, the newspaper reported that "We are requested to inform our readers that this is not the bogus show that traveled some time ago with the name McEvoy's Hibernicon, but the original tour of Ireland."⁷² In 1865, San Francisco had its own local hibernicon company. The *San Francisco Daily Dramatic Chronicle* explained, "The Hibernicon – This panorama, which will be on exhibition at the Academy of Music on Monday night is not the original Hibernicon now being successfully exhibited by Mr. McEvoy in the East; but we have no doubt that it is a very credible home production."⁷³ In 1866, there was at least one company touring the west and visiting San Francisco, Southern California, and Virginia City, Nevada.⁷⁴

By the late 1860s, the form was lucrative enough that the marketing device of the "family MacEvoy" disappeared as the children launched their own hibernicon companies. In the mid-1880s, the *New York Clipper* reflected back on the explosion of companies and dissolution of the MacEvoy's as a touring family company:

When it was seen that there was big money in it, 'enterprising' managers lost no time in stealing the originators idea and the names of McEvoy and Hibernicon soon grew to assume new shapes and disguises and the roads was so filled up with the new style of entertainment. McEvoy's sons and daughters eventually 'got in themselves...even cousins and in fact, anyone who could lay claim to the McEvoy name, had a 'picture' slapped up to order and Wandering Hibernians were numerous. A sister Mary, a brother

John, and a brother Charles all dabbled in their father's ideas: but Charles was perhaps the only one who made anything out of it.⁷⁵

Charles not only launched his own company in the late 1860s that successfully toured for over a decade, but he also continued to write and perform music, which he published in songsters and sheet music. Mary continued to tour with Hibernicons until at least the 1880s, but Kate left the family line of business to try her hand at opera in 1868 (Fig. 2).⁷⁶

Newspapers, Internal Revenue Service tax assessment lists, and census records provide a partial view of the financial success experienced by John MacEvoy and his family in the 1860s. The *New York Clipper* claimed that the “distinctive line of entertainment known as the Hibernicon coined money when first introduced.”⁷⁷ John MacEvoy's obituary in 1893 credits him with giving “a great deal of pleasure to the generation of the sixties” and echoes the *Clipper* when it asserts that the hibernicon “brought its inventor a considerable fortune.”⁷⁸ In the decade since the Applebee murder trial, MacEvoy went from not having enough money to pay a seventy-five cent a night hotel fee to owning real estate in Westchester County, New York with an estimated value of fifty thousand dollars in 1870. The family moved to their Eastchester, Westchester County farm by 1866. In 1870, MacEvoy was apparently taking a break from the stage and he reported his occupation as farmer. On top of his real estate, MacEvoy also had what the census refers to as “personal estate” worth three thousand dollars.⁷⁹

Tax assessment lists illustrate how MacEvoy quickly accrued such large funds. At a time when unskilled workers made on average two hundred and fifty dollars a year and the urban middle class earned between five hundred and two thousand dollars a year, the company brought in three thousand six hundred and fifty dollars during December 1865. While playing in New York in January 1866, his company brought in one thousand, twenty four dollars. The next



Fig. 2 Mary MacEvoy as pictured in J.S.C. Hagan's *Records of the New York Stage, 1860-1870*, Volume 11 in the Harvard Theatre Collection.

month their profits increased by over one hundred percent with MacEvoy reporting two thousand eight hundred and seventy dollars in gross receipts. Other stops brought in less, such as when they played only a few nights in West Virginia and New Jersey.⁸⁰ Yet, their reported income placed them well above the income of other variety performers. Although it is incredibly difficult to assess the wages of variety performers, top performers probably made around two hundred dollars a week during these years and it seems that top minstrels possibly earned similar wages. Earning a few thousand dollars a month was well below the pay of legitimate theatre stars like Joseph Jefferson, who earned fifteen thousand during a month's work in 1869 Boston, but by the late 1860s, the MacEvoy's were making enough to place them in the upper class.⁸¹

Hibernicon business took off in the 1860s, but it was not until the 1870s that dozens of companies toured America and Canada. Although some companies simply called themselves the Hibernicon or MacEvoy's Hibernicon, troupe names also played on words and phrases such as Hibernia, Erin, and Mirror of Ireland. Even when some of the companies marketed themselves as panoramas of Ireland, they still reflected the characteristics of the MacEvoy's 1860s performances. A selection of companies touring in the late 1860s and 1870s include Charles MacEvoy's Famous Original Hibernicon, Dare's Hibernicon, Blaisdell's Gigantic Panorama of Ireland known as the Hibernicon, Dailey's Hibernicon Minstrels, John MacEvoy's New Hibernicon, Frank McEvoy's New Hibernicon or Ireland in America, Sullivan and Emmett's Panorama of Ireland, Bordwell's Mirror of Ireland, Healey's Hibernian Minstrels and Mirror of Ireland, Flaherty's Mirror of Ireland, McGill and Strong's Mirror of Ireland, Dr. Correy's Panorama or Ireland in Shade and Sunshine, Howarth's Mirror of Ireland, Erin and the Brennans, John MacEvoy's Erinopticon, John Burke's Tableaux of Erin, and Dr. Barlow's Mirror of Ireland.⁸² The entertainment became so profitable that occasionally two companies performed in

town at the same time. The *Providence Evening Press* reported that “two panoramas of Ireland now on exhibition in this city – the Hibernicon at the Academy of Music, and the Mirror of Ireland at the Opera House.”⁸³ Documenting the arrival of one “everlasting” hibernicon after another in his *Annals of the New York Stage*, Odell complained that “I am inured to visits of MacEvoy's Hibernicon” and “I cannot wax enthusiastic about this apparent rivalry” between touring companies.⁸⁴

The explosion of companies led to the MacEvoy's' attempts to protect what they viewed as their entertainment. Charles emerged as the public defender of his family's claim to “inventing” the hibernicon form. Charles valued the idea of the “original” company. He published a preface to his 1872 songster that claimed:

[The hibernicon's] extraordinary success...has recently induced unprincipled speculators to imitate it. And, although the title, episode, and other accessories are protected by the latest ‘copyright’ laws, these miserable ‘Frauds’ usurp the legal rights of the proprietor under cover of mere technicalities; palm off their miserable *daubs* and plagiarisms on the public as the genuine article. Hence the word ‘Original’ is used to distinguish it from the many counterfeits now traveling through the country.⁸⁵

As evidenced by naming his company the Famous Original Hibernicon, Charles not only saw the claim to originality as a selling point, but he also wanted to mark the “real” hibernicon to prevent others from cutting into his profits. Charles eventually tried to trademark the word

“Hibernicon.” When he failed, he appealed the decision in court:

[T]he Assistant Commissioner decided that the trade marks which the law contemplated referred solely to marks to be used on articles of trade, and that the purpose of a trade mark was to denote the origin or ownership of the articles of trade to which it was attached, and that therefore a trade mark connected with an amusement was something not contemplated by the law, and the examiner's decision was therefore affirmed.⁸⁶

John MacEvoy seemed less concerned about others' imitations and adaptations. He eventually started a company called the New Hibernicon in the early 1870s. The name highlighted the

company's novelty as opposed to its replication of an entertainment first performed a decade earlier. This made economic sense, especially since the touring circuit thrived on new attractions. In spite of Charles's fears, articles on the entertainments' decline in the 1880s and obituaries remembered the MacEvoy's as the "inventors" of the form.

The popularity of other hibernicon companies suggests that audiences cared less about the form's provenance. Aside from the show's novel approach to musical comedy, other factors contributed to the entertainments' continued success for decades and explain the proliferation of companies in the late 1860s and 1870s. Although companies benefited from transportation improvements before the Civil War, the rapid expansion of railroad in the 1860s increasingly eased travel for touring companies and made it more cost effective to travel to different markets. The opening of the first transatlantic railroad line in 1869 finally made it practical for companies to travel from coast to coast by land instead of by ship. The growth in hibernicon companies reflected the general increase in touring companies that these advances in transportation supported.⁸⁷

The emergence of theatrical agents also allowed for a more organized and efficient touring system. At mid-century, theatrical agents made connections between actors and managers, but they did not become the essential middlemen of the touring system until the 1870s. The growth of combination and touring companies and the increased number of theatres in towns and cities created a need for managers to book talent and companies to find venues. In the 1870s, the theatrical agents stepped in to help book and advertise companies' tours, "thus controlling the heart of the dramatic enterprise."⁸⁸ In his anecdotal travel guide of the St. Lawrence River, E.F. Babbage, Charles MacEvoy's agent in the 1870s, described the range of his duties. He "secure[d] all dates, la[id] out the routes, order[ed] all printing, and d[id] all of the

business connected with the success of the entertainment...[MacEvoy] follow[ed] in my track, pa[id] all bills contracted by me...I didn't see them sometimes for six weeks.”⁸⁹ This organization appeared to be a radical change from the touring system described during MacEvoy's 1856 murder trial.

The novelty aspects of the production catered to trends in variety performance. Irish music and dancing became increasingly popular on variety and minstrel stages during mid-century, especially Irish jigs performed by male performers. The hibernicon also emerged at a time of increasing popularity for Irish ethnic comedy and it benefited from the central role Barney provided male Irish comedians. Male variety comedians typically rooted their acts in character songs that allowed the performer to create “a central character, a narrative full of comic events, and an opportunity to interpolate longer comic monologues or commentary within the songs.”⁹⁰ By incorporating these elements in a way that differed from a typical variety house bill, the hibernicon provided a novel way to experience the popular acts of the day.⁹¹

By the late 1860s, the hibernicon had adapted to reflect the increasing popularity of Irish male comedians. Instead of a boy playing the Irish Guide, a man now assumed the role. Similar to the MacEvoy performances of the 1850s, the guide remained the star. However unlike when the role was relegated to children, who would undoubtedly outgrow it, Irish male comics made a living for years performing the Irish tour guide (Fig. 3). Many spent their careers moving from hibernicon company to company playing the role. The character was played under various names, including Rody the Rover and Shaun O'Reilly, but Barney the Guide and Dublin Dan were the most frequently used names for the Irish tour guide and jaunting car driver.



Fig. 3 *W.F. Lawlor's Barney the Guide Songster*. Lawlor played Barney in Charles MacEvoy's Original Hibernicon

Actors who played the character became local stars. One puff piece described how John Burke gave “the excellent character act of the active Irish boy, introducing innumerable songs and dances, and his great acrobatic ending astonished and bewildered the enthusiastic audience, who demanded a repetition.”⁹² Irish comics like J.H. Ryan emphasized how the character “never sullies his lips by profanity or vulgarity to raise a laugh from the thoughtless or win the applause of the ignorant.”⁹³

For performers, bragging about their connection to multiple hibernicon companies and claiming a place in the lineage of the character’s performance became an advertising tactic. The advertisements also highlight how actors were able to establish their entire careers based on hibernicon entertainments. In 1873, a broadside for a hibernicon company called The Emerald Isle claimed that Tim Cohan was “the greatest of Irish Guides the original ‘Dublin Dan; formerly leading attraction of ‘Erin and the Brennans,’ and Principal Artist with the ‘Tableaux of Erin’.”⁹⁴ Both Dan Nash and Dan Morris (sometimes called Dan Morris Sullivan) performed with MacEvoy hibernicons and later went on to start their own companies in the 1880s. They both used their previous associations with the MacEvoys and Barney and Nora to sell their shows.⁹⁵ Bryan O’Lynn, who also was a prominent Irish comedian and dancer for Tony Pastor, started out as an “infant wonder” before “being connected for five seasons with McAvoy's Hibernicon, [and] Howarth's Hibernicon for five seasons.” When he died in 1889, Chicago’s *Daily InterOcean* wrote that “[h]is sudden death will be mourned by a large circle of friends, both in and out of the profession, who will always remember the quaint drolleries of Dublin Dan and Barney, the guide.”⁹⁶ William McGann’s obituary in the *New York Dramatic Mirror* claimed he had “created the character of Dublin Dan. He had been connected with Owen B. Brady, the McAvoy, McGill and Strong, and Howarth’s Troubadours, Brian O’Lynn, Tim Cohn [*sic*], John

M. Burke, the Crosby Dramatic co. and other well known troupes.”⁹⁷ John M. Burke also bragged that he invented the “original character of Dublin Dan, the Guide.”⁹⁸

An 1890 article in the *St. Albans (Vermont) Daily Messenger* illustrates the importance of the guide character in defining the career of an Irish comic. Even after achieving national stardom with their family, Jerry and Nellie Cohan, George M. Cohan’s parents, still were remembered for their time performing with hibernicon companies. “Jerry Cohan has, during twenty odd years, been before the public in the character of ‘Dublin Dan,’ originated by him years ago in MacEvoy’s Hibernicon,” the writer claimed, “and played in almost every city, town and village in the United States, with Brennan’s, Howorth’s and other companies. His wife, Nellie Cohan, is the original Nora.”⁹⁹ The frequency of performers’ claims to “originating” the character suggests that the advertising tactic may have attracted audience members.¹⁰⁰

The small additions and tweaks to the standard key hibernicon components reflected the managers’ sensitivity to current popular entertainment trends and their continued willingness to adapt their shows to shifting audience demands. By constantly rewriting the show, companies gave audiences a reason to attend multiple performances. Even as early as 1864, MacEvoy’s Hibernicon informed audiences that there was a “change of songs and scenery every night.”¹⁰¹ *McGill and Strong’s Mirror of Ireland* program reminded audiences that “the selections at each entertainment will include New and Meritorious Plays, Songs, and Dances.”¹⁰² In a large 1874 ad in the *New York Clipper*, John Burke advertised one of his final performances before his summer break. At the end of the advertisement, Burke explains that he is “contemplat[ing] various changes and improvements which will be effected” after the summer because he “hopes by providing fresh attractions every season, to maintain the patronage of the public for whose amusement he has so successfully catered for the past five years.”¹⁰³ Newspapers, songsters, and

broad­sides advertised Barney's new adventures in sketches and comic bits entitled *Irish Hearts*, *Barney the Guide*, *Poor Paddy Malone or A Search for a Mammoth Potato*, *Barney the Jarvey*, *A Trip Through the Emerald Isle*, *Barney in Search of a Job*, and *Barney and the Ghost or the Haunted Guide*.¹⁰⁴ As illustrated by the similarity of the titles, the sketches maintained specific character and narrative threads, but each promised to be new enough to justify another visit to the show.

Part of reworking the show involved incorporating other elements of variety performance, such as Dutch and, more rarely, blackface comics, who were also popular with audiences during the period. It is not always clear if these characters were incorporated into the romantic narrative or simply functioned as a variety diversion during the performance. For example, in Jerry Cohan's hibernicon sketches, Cohan incorporates a Dutch comic character into the story of Barney and Nora. The Dutch comic character enters as a potential suitor for Nora and provides yet another obstacle to the show's central couple.¹⁰⁵ *Frank MacEvoy's New Hibernicon Songster* even includes a song for a Chinese character.¹⁰⁶ Other companies brought popular musical acts on tour with their company, such as the Swiss Bell Ringers who toured with a local San Francisco troupe in the late 1860s.¹⁰⁷ By the 1880s, some of the added specialties moved further away from the basic of hibernicon components. One reviewer commented that "[t]he best portion of [Morrissey's Hibernicon] was the exhibition of ventriloquism by Mr. William Wells."¹⁰⁸ The tendency to include non-Irish comedians and acts increased in the late 1870s and early 1880s, but the core of the show remained focused on a panorama of Ireland and Irish comedic and musical talents.

As a form that changed paintings and songs from night to night, the entertainment continually appeared as an adaptation of itself, regardless of whether a MacEvoy or an imitation

company performed. The opportunity for novelty met the demand of variety audiences at the same time that the overarching narrative and well-known characters could appeal to audience members who wanted a more familiar experience. This combination of novelty and familiarity was key to the entertainment's ability to continually please audiences for decades. As scholar Linda Hutcheon writes, the pleasure of adaptation sometimes emerges "simply from repetition with variation, from the comfort of ritual combined with the piquancy of surprise. Thematic and narrative persistence combines with material variation, with the result that adaptation are never simply reproductions that lose the Benjaminian aura. Rather, they carry that aura with them."¹⁰⁹ Although Hutcheon makes this point in relation to film adaptations, this observation seems to fit the hibernicon experience as well.

In the early 1880s, another period of growth for hibernicon companies suggests that managers succeeded at sustaining the shows' popularity through their adaptations of the form. At the same time, the most popular hibernicon companies of the 1860s and 1870s declined or disappeared as new companies organized. As John MacEvoy entered his seventies, his family's companies played less frequently (Fig. 4). Companies that successfully toured in the 1870s, like Burke's *Tableaux of Erin* and McGill and Strong's *Mirror of Ireland*, disappeared when their star performers died or the companies merged with more successful hibernicon companies. New companies such as Morrissey's *Grand Hibernicon* and *Panorama of Ireland*, Wells and Hayden's *Mirror of Ireland* and *Comedy Company*, Dan Nash's *Hibernicon* and *Irish Specialty Company*, Dan Morris Sullivan's *Mirror of Ireland*, Harrigan's *Tourists*, and Healey's *Minstrels* emerged. Howarth's *Grand Hibernia*, which toured in the 1870s, expanded their number of performances in major urban areas.¹¹⁰ Some of these new companies performed on and off for another twenty to thirty years. The changing programs and business tactics of the newer companies in the late

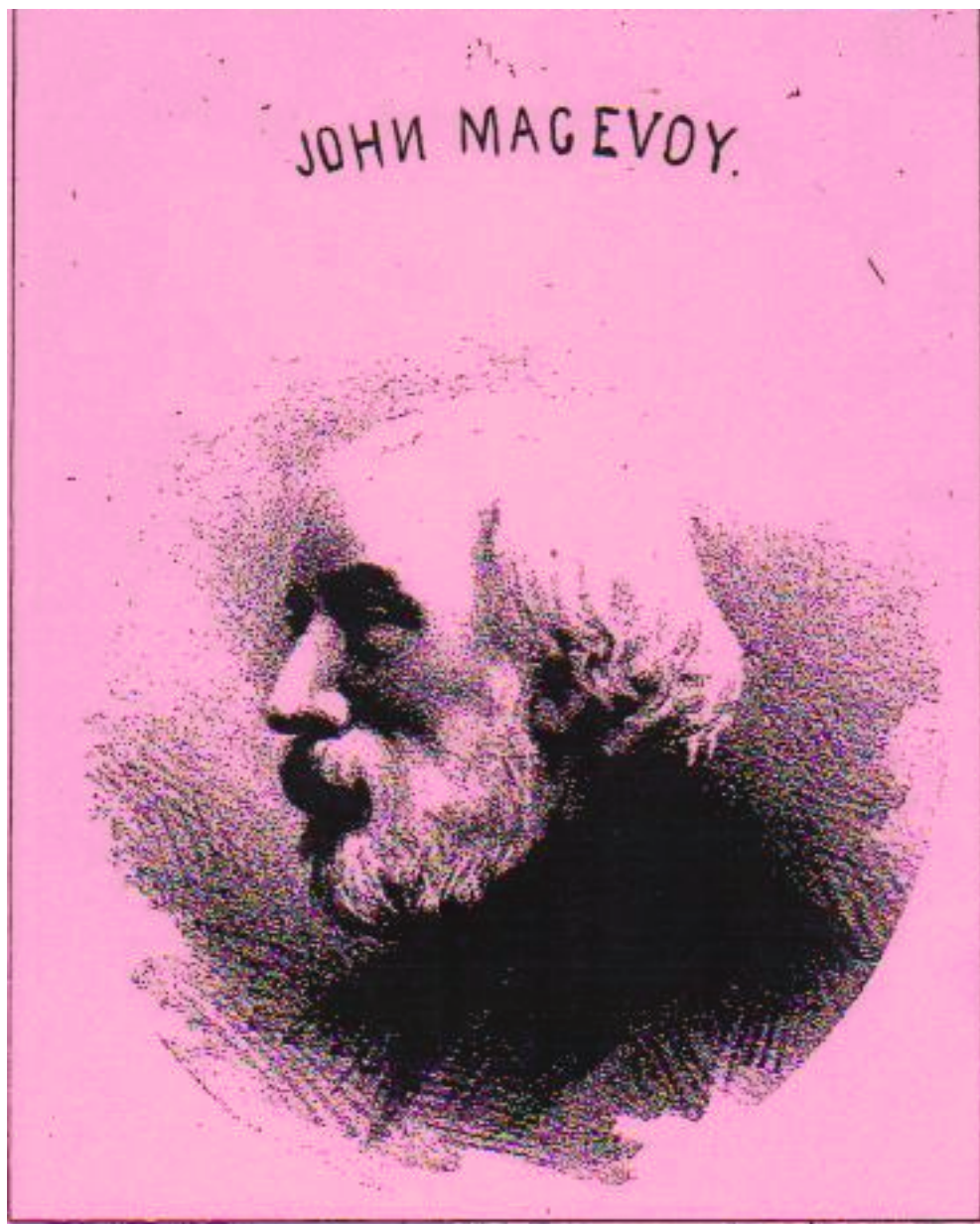


Fig. 4 John MacEvoy as pictured in J.S.C. Hagan's *Records of the New York Stage, 1860-1870*, Volume 11 in the Harvard Theatre Collection

1880s and beyond resulted from, among other reasons, the rise of vaudeville and how it reshaped popular entertainment audiences, economics, and organization. However, before discussing these shifts, it is important to analyze the audiences of hibernicon companies during the peak of their success from the 1860s to the early 1880s.

Audience and the Irish-American community, 1860-1880s

The Panic of 1873 and the resulting economic depression of the 1870s devastated America's variety theatres, especially in New York. With increasing numbers of their target audience, working-class men, unemployed or unwilling to spend their limited income on an evening's performance, variety managers devised new strategies to fill their theatres. Two marketing tactics emerged that influenced the development of popular performance throughout the following decades. Managers like Tony Pastor targeted a wider market that included women and children. Referring to their shows as "high-class" variety, Pastor and others developed acts that reflected middle class values and started to give regular matinee performances specifically targeted at "respectable" women and children. These experiments eventually led to the emergence of vaudeville. The Metropolitan Theatre and Robinson Hall, among other smaller variety houses, tried another tactic to bring their traditional, working-class male audiences back to the theatre. Exhibiting scantily clad dancers who performed the Can Can, the Metropolitan Theatre and Robinson Hall tested how far they could push the bounds of middle class morality and the Anti-Concert Saloon Law of 1862 before the police shut them down. The Can Can dancers played to full houses and the resulting controversies provided the theatres with what amounted to free advertising in both working-class and middle-class newspapers.¹¹¹ The

controversy surrounding the Can Can highlights how the hibernicon benefited from the rise of “high-class” variety and learned to successfully negotiate the shifting entertainment landscape to create their cross-class appeal.

When the Can Can initially became popular in the late 1860s, it attracted little controversy. Yet, the “questionable embellishments” added by the Metropolitan Theatre and copied by other variety theatres led newspapers and middle class reformers to attack its “strongly objectionable” nature.¹¹² In his *Annals of the New York Stage*, George Odell bemoans how he is “forced to make a separate entry for Robinson Hall,” which “opened on August 10, 1874.” “[T]hat wretched form of ‘art,’ the Can-Can,” Odell claims, “then beg[an] to lay waste the citadel of public morality.”¹¹³ By highlighting the dance’s French origins with performers named Mlle. Delacour or Mme. Rentz's Female Minstrels, advertisements attempted to give the performances a veneer of respectability. As illustrated by the performance entitled *Female Bathers, or, Peeping Tom at Long Branch*, at other times the managers made no attempts to hide the performances’ voyeuristic and sexualized nature.¹¹⁴

The newspaper coverage of the police raids and legal issues triggered by these performances provides a window into the atmosphere of late nineteenth century variety performances and the audiences who attended them. In response to the continued Can Can performances at the Metropolitan Theatre after an August police raid, the authorities planned another series of arrests in December 1874. The coverage of the raid in the *New York Times* describes a typical variety audience, young, male workers, who attended the show. The reporter describes how “[t]he place was nightly crowded with young boys, clerks, and students, gathered from all quarters, to witness a disgusting exhibition which was Parisian only in name... The gallery was jammed full of boot-blacks and errand boys, who were demanding a repetition of the

dance. The parquet was filled with clerks, shop men, and gamblers.”¹¹⁵ After the police jumped on stage to arrest the dancers and the crowd made a panicked rush for the doors, “Mr. Harry Clifford, the stage manager, came to the front and told the audience to return to their seats and they would not be interfered with.”¹¹⁶ Even without the Can Can girls, the theatre promised to fulfill the entertainment needs of its working-class audience.

The lawsuit filed by Robinson Hall against the Society of Progressive Spiritualism illustrates how some New Yorkers perceived the Can Can as detrimental to more than just the men in the audience. In March 1875, Robinson Hall filed a lawsuit to obtain unpaid rent by the Society of Progressive Spiritualism, who rented the hall on several Sundays. The Society explained in court that the presence of Can Can dancers during weekday performances prevented them from holding their Sunday services. Attempting to justify the lack of payment, the defense claimed that “the hall was not only contaminated by [the dancers’] presence, but the parity of the society was sullied by the placards which were place at the door announcing the exhibition...there was not and could be no affinity or association between the spirit and the flesh...the spirits resolved to take flight, and did so.”¹¹⁷ Ruling in favor of the defense, “the jury were of the opinion that the spirits had the constitutional right in this land of religious liberty to float untrammelled amid the upper and pure air of their imaginations without the embarrassment of a company of dancing damsels chained to their receding heels.”¹¹⁸ Although it is not surprising that the court ruled against the purveyors of the scandalous Can Can, the claims of the Society, which the court validated through its ruling, indicate the fear of a two-part contamination. First, the lawsuit suggests that the immoral content of the weekday shows somehow tainted the performance space. Second, the ruling validated the view that performing in the same house as the dancers tarnished the reputation of other acts also appearing there.

In spite of these associations and the on-going controversy at Robinson Hall, the hibernicon performed there for several weeks in April 1875. As Odell notes, the “never-fading Hibernicon” was “certainly harmless enough after the Can-Can and Mme. Rentz.”¹¹⁹ Its appearance did not indicate a change of tactics for the Hall, which exhibited “Two Hours in Paradise, with Mme. Blanche and ‘her continental troupe of beautiful young ladies’ directly following the Hibernicon’s run.”¹²⁰ In mid-April 1875, the hibernicon was a smart choice for Robinson Hall. Booking the hibernicon suggests that the Hall’s managers believed it appealed to their regular audience. At the same time, the hibernicon was respectable enough to take police pressure off the theatre at least for a few weeks. For the hibernicon company, the choice to perform there is less obvious. Considering the public associations with the theatre, appearing there might taint their troupe, especially its female performers. The hibernicon’s on-going relationship with Catholic parishes also complicated its choice to appear at a small variety house that had a citywide reputation for scandal. The history of the hibernicon indicates how many hibernicon companies skillfully negotiated the shift toward middle class tastes in popular entertainment and maintained their appeal to working class audiences. In this case, even though Robinson Hall had a traditional variety audience, the hibernicon still held matinees, which targeted women and children along the lines of other high-class variety shows playing in New York.¹²¹ Performing a precarious balancing act around its “educational” lectures and spectacular panorama, singers, and dancers, it seemingly avoided any negative press and filled Robinson Hall for weeks.

The composition of the hibernicon’s audience and its transformation between the 1860s and 1880s illustrates the hibernicon’s dedication to its Irish and working class audience and its increasing appeal to the middle classes. Alfred Doten, a young journalist living in Virginia City

during the mining boom, demonstrates the cross-class appeal of the hibernicon. He spent the evening of November 11, 1870 at the “Opera House to see McEvoy’s New Hibernicon.”¹²² By this time, Piper’s Opera House had “bec[o]me a required venue for any touring musician, lecturer, actor, or performer of any sort” and Doten’s diary notes his frequent attendance at the venue.¹²³ His short diary entry records that he viewed the hibernicon as a “Very good panorama of scenery in Ireland – with some good illustrative singing, dancing and acting.”¹²⁴ He enjoyed the performance enough that he returned the following week to see it again.¹²⁵ Seventeen years later, Doten saw “Dan Morris Sullivan’s ‘Mirror of Ireland’ show, at Pipers Opera House – Panorama and incidental Irish songs, dances, acting, etc – Pretty fair show – good house.”¹²⁶ The entries illustrate that the hibernicon appealed to Doten both as a rising journalist and bachelor as well as a bankrupt former newspaperman and investor almost two decades later.

Doten’s diary provides only a brief glimpse into the hibernicon’s audience. Tantalizing tidbits pepper diaries and newspapers, but the bulk of popular audiences did not record their experiences in archivable forms. Where evidence does exist, it is often uncertain or reflective of only one person or group. Yet, in order to understand how the hibernicon established and maintained its popularity over decades and how it functioned within working class culture, it is necessary to address the question of audience. Approached from numerous directions, it is possible to construct a partial view of hibernicon audiences and their concerns between the 1860s and mid-1880s.

As they toured the country, hibernicon companies performed in a range of venues. In cities with multiple theatres, like New York or Boston, the companies typically appeared at a local minstrel or variety house.¹²⁷ Although the venues did not all invite scandal in the same way as Robinson Hall, the choice of performance space limited the class and gender range of

audience members to some extent. For example, in 1863, the MacEvoy's Hibernicon or Tour of Ireland had a successful run at New York's Hope Chapel. Having "a brief moment in the theatrical sun" [and] "then disappear[ing] from view," Hope Chapel was a variety and minstrel hall in the 1860s.¹²⁸ Selling tickets for twenty-five cents, the performance circumstances suggest that its audience would mainly be working class and male. However, there are hints that the entertainment was considered family variety, along the lines of the minstrel halls that appealed to families in the 1850s and 1860s. For example, during one hibernicon performance in Brooklyn, a stampede occurred after a false fire alarm. The two injured audience members were a Miss Fowler and an eight-year-old child.¹²⁹ Printed in an 1865 Cleveland newspaper, a comic anecdote revolves around the adventures of a couple attending the hibernicon together.¹³⁰

When touring in towns and cities with only one or two main theatres, the graduated ticket prices indicate that a combination of classes attended the performances, even if the shows were relegated to houses featuring variety entertainment. For example, in 1872, Roberts' Opera House in Hartford charged thirty-five cents and fifty cents. The companies began performing in houses with similar price structures in New York in the 1870s and 1880s. At New York's St. James Theatre, MacEvoy's New Hibernicon charged thirty-five, fifty, and seventy-five cents respectively. In the 1880s, companies still charged between twenty-five and seventy-five cents for tickets. Even when the hibernicon companies performed at popular variety and minstrel houses, these prices suggest that the companies increasingly drew a mixed class audience. The persistence of the twenty-five cent ticket suggests that while companies happily welcomed more well off audience members who were willing to pay higher prices, they also wanted to maintain the ability for working-class audience members to attend their performances.¹³¹ As David Nasaw discusses in reference to mid-1880s Boston, "at a time when the average hourly wage in

manufacturing was twenty cents and the average daily wage for unskilled labors was under one dollar and fifty cents,” charging fifty cents for an evening entertainment would be prohibitive for most of the working class.¹³²

Although the performance spaces and ticket prices allow for speculation about what classes may have attended the performances, first person accounts by audience members provide a view of the audience from inside the playhouse. Even though Doten does not describe the audience in his diary, his presence as a rising professional indicates the mixed class audience at least in Virginia City. In a diary entry for September 30, 1872, a Canadian judge, Robert A. Harrison, also recorded his trip to an Ontario performance of McEvoy’s Hibernicon: “After tea Mrs. Scobie, Johanna and I went to the St. Lawrence Hall to see McEvoy’s Hibernicon. The panorama was the same as we had seen on a former occasion and was patronized by a dirty, filthy rabble - with few exceptions...The performance was over at 10 o’clock. We were pleased with the performance though displeased with the audience.”¹³³ Attending the show with his wife, Harrison’s entry indicates that he viewed the performance as respectable enough for a middle class woman’s presence. However, Harrison’s description of the audience as “dirty, filthy rabble” highlights that he perceived the audience as mainly working class.

Other audience reports echo his assessment and most describe its Irish character. A reviewer for the *New York Tribune* revealed his “intrusive suspicion that two-thirds of the vast and enthusiastic audience had dined on beef-steak and onions.”¹³⁴ A few years later, a writer for the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* commented, “It is worthy of remark that the audience last evening appeared to be mainly composed of the humbler classes.”¹³⁵ Sarah Davis, wife of Supreme Court Justice, Senator, and former Abraham Lincoln campaign manager David Davis, remarked on the hibernicon’s draw for her Irish servants on two occasions in Bloomington, Illinois. In

1872, Davis recorded that “A show in town called the ‘Hybernian’ a sort of panorama of Irish life as near as I can find from Willie, has been attracting the Irish.”¹³⁶ In November 1874, she commented on her servants’ attendance again and wrote, “The servants in town are being entertained at Durley Hall with the Hibernicon in a new dress—Willie and Julia went last night.”¹³⁷ In many of these reports, “low class” and Irish are conflated.

Newspaper anecdotes about the hibernicon also created a public image of the audience’s Irish and working class character and reinforced nineteenth century Irish cultural and stage stereotypes. In 1867, the *Jersey Journal* reported the arrest of three men with Irish-sounding last names. The writer asserts that they “must have been seeing the Hibernicon and had their national proclivities aroused” before they “indulg[ed] in a friendly fight a la Donnybrook.”¹³⁸ After a fire interrupted an 1865 hibernicon performance at Brainard Hall in Cleveland, Ohio, the city’s *Cleveland Leader* remarked “[t]hat the most ridiculous things always happen on serious occasions.”¹³⁹ The subsequent story focuses particularly on the blunders of the Irish:

Irish Billy ----, who plies the shoemaker’s awl in an establishment on Superior Street, and who is noted chiefly for his extensive, Falstaffian girth and high number of pounds avoirdupois, accompanied his wife to the Hibernicon on that trying night. “Billy” seemed to be enjoying the painting and the singing immensely, when suddenly the alarm was given. He immediately jumped up, tore off his coat and, totally oblivious of his wife, took a straight cut over seats and chairs for the door, and drove like Jehu through the crowd till he reached the street. Nor did he stop there. His fright stung [sic] him on...he tore up the street, taking a beeline for his home.¹⁴⁰

It was not until his other relatives inquired about his wife that he realized he left her behind. The story ends happily with his wife safely leaving the theatre with a friend, “anxious to learn the whereabouts and state of the gallant husband.”¹⁴¹ The newspaper reports the incident almost as if “Irish Billy” was a comic character in a stage show. He is not only comically overweight like Falstaff, but too selfish to care about more than himself.

Along with “Pat’s Hibernicon,” these anecdotes appear mainly in the 1860s. This timing coincides with the hibernicon companies’ most visible efforts to appeal to Irish audience members in the 1860s and 1870s. As scholar Erin Smith notes in her study of working-class reading and pulp fiction, another way to consider questions of audience is through studying of the producers: “Whom did they think their most important consumers were? In what ways did they shape their cultural production to meet the needs of these [audience members]?”¹⁴² Hibernicon advertisements reveal their attempts to attract the Irish to the theatre. With the large numbers of Irish immigrants and their children in the late nineteenth century, this was not a bad marketing ploy. During their time at Hope Chapel, MacEvoy’s Hibernicon directly targeted Irish audience members with advertisement headings such as “Attention Irishmen.”¹⁴³ The company also pled that “Every true Irishman and woman should visit Hope Chapel.”¹⁴⁴ The company wanted its Irish audience members to see their evening’s entertainment as not only a fun diversion, but also an expression of “true” Irishness.

Brief notes in newspapers that read like puff pieces are even more direct in targeting an Irish audience. One note bragged that the hibernicon “during the past week attracted immense crowds of our Irish citizens, to whom it is peculiarly adapted to entertain and amuse.”¹⁴⁵ Towards the end of the same run, a short paragraph explained how the show “remains very attractive to our Hibernian fellow citizens, who nightly fill the little theatre.”¹⁴⁶ Some puffs highlighted the hibernicon’s wide appeal, but still mentioned it as a specific draw for Irish immigrants. A piece in the *Chicago Tribune* reported, “the show is pleasing for its variety to the average amusement seeker, but more especially to natives of Ireland for its songs, dances, and other sparking reminiscences of the Green Isle, whence they come.”¹⁴⁷ Some companies pointed out how the issues presented in the exhibition were “dear to every Irish heart.”¹⁴⁸ Other

advertisements played on Irish immigrant desires to return home and the unlikelihood of immigrants' visiting Ireland. A New Orleans advertisement noted, "all Irishmen who have not the time nor the money to return to the old country but who, nevertheless, would like to get a glance at her green fields, will find it the last chance they will probably get."¹⁴⁹ Attempting to target the increasing number of Irish Americans, a hibernicon company in Cincinnati reminded its audience members, "The Irishmen of the city, and their descendants to the remotest degree will find a fitting place to spend an evening during the stay of the Hibernicon."¹⁵⁰

Playing on Irish immigrants' diasporic longings characterized the hibernicon's advertisements in the *New York Irish-American* in the 1860s and 1870s. The MacEvoy's first major tour in New York particularly emphasized these themes. A March 1863 ad explained that the performance "comprises all the most agreeable features of a glimpse at the old scenes of our childhood."¹⁵¹ In April, the MacEvoy's reminded their Irish audience that their show "cannot fail to excite the enthusiastic love of our people for the spot which they hail as that of their birth. All speak in the highest terms of this truly Irish entertainment."¹⁵² By the end of the month, the MacEvoy's started framing the entertainment as vehicle for reinforcing Irish ethnic identity and pride. When attending a performance, Irish immigrants, the ad claimed, "will with pleasure recognize the dear old scenes of their youth; and the little ones will feel a renewed pride in being descended from the people of fair Ireland."¹⁵³ This ad in particular characterized the show as a family event that the newspaper note "advise[d] every father and mother in New York to see...and take their children to it."¹⁵⁴ Later in the decade, the puffs suggested that supporting the productions helped the Irish-American community because "our talented countryman" ran the show.¹⁵⁵

The hibernicon companies emphasized their connection to the Irish-American community by publishing endorsements from prominent community members. After claiming there were “many complimentary testimonials presented to Prof. MacEvoy by the clergy and laity with reference to his exhibition,” the *New York Irish-American* published a letter of support supposedly from John O’Reilly, M.D. O’Reilly complimented the performance’s music and acting and then commented on how the “scenery represented is true to nature.”¹⁵⁶ He then stated that “Irish-American citizens, as well as native American citizens, should not lose the opportunity afforded them of seeing some of the most beautiful scenery in the world.”¹⁵⁷ In the 1870s, the *New York Irish-American* republished a letter of thanks to McGill and Strong’s *Mirror of Ireland*, which had given a donation to an Irish-American organization. The letter emphasized how attending the hibernicon benefited the Irish-American community: “we recommend the *Mirror of Ireland* as a great work of art, and hope that our countrymen and all lovers of art throughout the cities and towns of the United States which they may visit will not fail to patronize their exhibition as they will be amply compensated.”¹⁵⁸

Although actual reviews of the hibernicon from the Irish-American papers are rare, an 1868 *New York Irish Citizen* review suggests why the performances had continuing support from Irish Americans. The review begins by explaining that “upon the whole, [the show is] very well worth seeing.”¹⁵⁹ It then critiques the panorama paintings and points out that “[t]he public buildings of Dublin, although not conveying a true idea of their imposing beauty, were not badly represented.”¹⁶⁰ Reflecting the paper’s concern with the stage representation of the Irish, the writer notes that “The delineation of the character of a wild young Irish car driver by Mr. Charles McEvoy, as ‘Barney the Guide,’ was better than such representation on the stage generally are – attempts of the sort degenerating more or less into caricatures.”¹⁶¹ This comment implies that the

MacEvoy's continued to downplay some of the worst stage Irish characteristics and their efforts did not go unnoticed by the Irish-American community.

In addition to newspaper advertisements, songs and songsters also provide hints about the ideal hibernicon audience. McGill and Strong's *Mirror of Ireland* claims that it created its show "[i]n the desire of presenting to the Irish people of America an entertainment of unexceptional merit, and of offering an artistic realization of the incomparable beauties of the dear old land."¹⁶² Although most companies forefront the Irish as ideal audience members, McGill and Strong's program suggests it created its entertainment solely for this audience. Charles MacEvoy's *Original Hibernicon* and Howorth's *Grand Hibernica* took a broader approach that singled out the Irish, while arguing that a broad American audience also could enjoy the show. "Invitation to the Hibernicon" provides a plot summary for the audience through its lyrics. Aside from highlighting the exciting historical sites and scenery, the lyrics begin by stating, "Hibernians! Haste to make the Tour of Ireland"¹⁶³ A few verses later, the song splits their audience into two groups. In one verse, it proclaims, "Come on then Irishmen, come ye Mac Connells', Mac Ginns, Mac Graths, Mac Cartheys, and Mac Faddens."¹⁶⁴ The next stanza declares, "Come on Americans, ye generous true boys, For whom young Irish Meagher bravely fought."¹⁶⁵ The lyrics remind Americans that they owe Thomas Meagher, an Irish immigrant and commander of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment in the Civil War. Comprised primarily of Irish Americans, the "Fighting Sixty-Ninth" and Meagher earned national acclaim for their valiant behavior during the Civil War. The song separates the Irish from the Americans, but it unites them in a common community through this verse. Even though the show is about a trip to Ireland, the song suggests that the audience should be united by a common American patriotism.

In a 1880s songster for Howorth's Grand Hibernica, John Howorth discusses the history and significance of his company in the opening preface. On the subject of audience he comments:

[I]t may be safely said, without fear of contradiction, that there is none so pre-eminently and undeniably deserving the hearty, cordial support of all classes, both high and low, rich and poor, young and old, as the delicate and refined entertainment we have now the pleasure of presenting to your notice... The result can be duly appreciated, not only by the true-born son of Erin, who gazes with fond delight and unspeakable emotion on the familiar scenes of early days, but also by all lovers of true art and refine amusement.¹⁶⁶

Howorth's call for a broad audience of "all classes" is indicative of several shifts. First, it reflects the attempts to draw a cross-class audience, which the more frequent graduated prices illustrate during these years. These tactics also reflect the broader trend in variety entertainment to expand the market to include women and children as well as to make working class popular entertainment more "respectable."

Howorth's continued plea to the Irish indicates that they still comprised an important market, but they were no longer the central target group as they were for MacEvoy's Hibernicon performances at Hope Chapel in 1863. By the late 1870s and 1880s, newspaper pleas targeting the Irish specifically almost completely disappeared and the companies advertised less frequently, if at all, in Irish-American publications.¹⁶⁷ Since the Irish certainly were not considered respectable as Harrison and the *Tribune* reporter's comments indicate, this change may be a ramification of the shift towards a more "respectable" audience. At the same time, by the mid-1880s, changes in the Irish and Irish-American communities may have made the shift to a broader audience necessary for the hibernicon's survival. As the *New York Clipper* noted, "for no matter how the 'ould Dart's' attractions may move them, an Irish audience cannot be reasonably expected to want to look at the Giant Causeway or the Hill of Howth [sic] *all* the

years of their lives”¹⁶⁸ More Irish-Americans also had moved into the middle classes by the 1880s. Increasing numbers of Irish Americans did not feel a strong connection to their homeland and many even purposely distanced themselves from their Irish heritage.¹⁶⁹ Emphasizing the show’s appeal to Irish immigrants might have alienated these potential audience members. The rise of vaudeville also altered the popular entertainment landscape, including its economics and audiences, and forced the hibernicon companies to once again adapt to survive.

“The Hibernicon Then and Now”: Decline

In 1884, the *New York Clipper* sounded the death toll for the hibernicon:

[The hibernicon] is coining very little money in these days for anybody. It has been worked out pretty thoroughly... So the audiences have not scrambled in with the cheerful and robust haste of yore, and quiet and peace are apt to often reign around the present Hibernicon ticket office.... at the present day the majority of the Hibernicon parties are crawling around in a very modest and careful way, 'working' [illegible] at distressingly disheartening terms...[performing] a temperance society benefit or...sandwiching their entertainment in chunks between different glowing features of a church fair.”¹⁷⁰

Although the *Clipper* correctly assessed the decrease in the number hibernicon companies, as a result of the panic of 1884, theatre professionals remembered the 1884-5 season as the worst in years both for New York and for touring companies. The decline observed by the *Clipper* was representative of the industry in general and the entertainment bounced back in subsequent years.¹⁷¹ Yet, it would never regain its popularity of the 1860s and 1870s. The hibernicon maintained modest success on the touring circuit before the last documented performance around 1910. The companies’ ability to survive resulted from their adaptation to the changes in the theatre business at the turn of the twentieth century.

B.F. Keith and Edward Albee established their vaudeville houses in the late 1880s and 1890s. Keith and Albee observed the changes in popular entertainment over the preceding decades and developed a successful business model based on the most promising developments. Vaudeville houses started charging ten cents for the cheapest admission and shows that previously had charged twenty-five cents for their cheapest tickets could not compete. Although high-class variety houses attracted mixed audiences for years, Keith and Albee's entertainments became known for their appropriateness for women and children. Keith experimented with continuous performance in 1885 and years later it became a key component of his vaudeville shows. The creation of their touring circuit streamlined how regional houses booked acts and helped make vaudeville a more reliable business for theatre managers. Aside from the decrease in the number of available performance spaces and the draw of cheaper entertainments, the loss of popular performers, like Jerry Cohan who left the hibernicon behind to enter the more lucrative business of vaudeville, also hurt the hibernicon companies.¹⁷²

The hibernicon companies adapted to this altered theatrical and economic landscape in four ways. First, companies like Howorth's Hibernica continued to play at halls and opera houses across the country (Fig. 5). Yet, they altered their performances to include a broader variety of performers and changed their program's structure to more closely resemble variety bills. In 1896, the company alerted audiences to their "eleven specialty artists, brass band and orchestra, new specialties, novelties, music, double jigs, songs, reels, and dances."¹⁷³ During these years, the company is often advertised as Howorth's Double Show and Dublin Dan Comedy Company, which points to the altered structure. Although the Irish car driver story continued to loosely run through the panorama and specialties, the bulk of the story was now performed at the end of the show. In this respect, the performance reflected the olio/afterpiece



Fig. 5 Howorth's Hibernica

structure of variety. Healy's Hibernian Minstrels claimed to resemble MacEvoy's show, but with improvements. They advertised "two Irish endmen, and nineteenth vaudeville artists and...[an] Irish brigade band and orchestra."¹⁷⁴ A puff piece for MacEvoy's Hibernicon Company, featuring a Joseph Louis MacEvoy, illustrates how they incorporated more variety while maintaining the hibernicon's reputation as a fundamentally Irish entertainment. To appeal to the local audience, the company incorporated a local entertainer, James A. Lavery, who recited a piece entitled "Kelly's Dream." They also featured Ernest Jarrold or "Mickey Finn," a writer for the *New York Sun*, who told stories and sang tunes. It is not clear how his additions were related to the scenes or story. Barney still provided entertainment to the audience as exhibited by MacEvoy who "was a typical Irish lad, and his humor kept the audience in laughter whenever he appeared."¹⁷⁵ Enough companies seemed to be touring that, in 1889 at least, Howorth's indicated continued "concern" about competing companies "tricking" audiences into believing they provided genuine hibernicon experiences. A notice asked that their company "not be confounded with the worthless fakes going around the country with alleged panoramas of Ireland."¹⁷⁶ Ticket prices decreased during these years to make their entertainments more competitive with vaudeville and dime museums. For example, at one performance, Howorth's charged between fifteen and fifty cents.¹⁷⁷

Second, the economic downturn in 1884 and 1885 spurred the growth of dime museums, some of which practiced continuous performance, and many cities saw the establishment of permanent museums during this time. Dime museums helped reenergize variety by presenting it in a family environment. The performances typically involved a series of acts and often concluded with a one-act play. In the 1880s, museum advertising changed to emphasize the variety entertainers over the exhibits.¹⁷⁸ Advertisements for the hibernicons performing at dime

museums reflect a similar trend. Between 1886 and 1893, some hibernicon companies, such as Paddy Miles's Hibernicon, The New Hibernicon, Dan MacEvoy's Hibernicon, Miles Morrison's Hibernicon, and Morrissey's Hibernicon, appeared in dime museums for weeks at a time. It appears that companies condensed their act, but maintained the key components of a panorama of Ireland, Irish song and dance, and basic narrative involving an Irish guide. Some companies, such as Dan Nash and Mirror of Ireland and Specialty Comedy Co. at Epstein's New Dime Museum in Chicago, performed hourly.¹⁷⁹ The dime museums presented the first opportunity for an audience of all ages to see a version of the hibernicon for only ten cents.¹⁸⁰ Finally, hibernicons and panoramas of Ireland continued to be part of Irish community and religious celebrations as well as local state fairs. Especially at a 1915 performance, the show resembled more the MacEvoy panorama of Ireland production of the 1850s than hibernicon.¹⁸¹

The hibernicon's decline resulted from a confluence of causes in addition to the rise of vaudeville. As previously mentioned, many old performers and company managers died in the late 1880s and 1890s and others moved into vaudeville. Bryan O'Lynn, who played Barney for well over a decade, died in 1889. John MacEvoy died in 1893 and his obituary describes several reasons for the form's decreasing popularity. The writer describes how "before the days of theatrical realism [the hibernicon] was considered a very wonderful and instructive entertainment. It brought its inventor a considerable fortune before progress and more elaborate rivalry placed it on the shelf as a back number."¹⁸² As this article notes, the emergence of newer entertainments that upstaged the panorama's "realness" was key to its decline. The *Clipper* reasoned that Irish audiences became bored with the hibernicon, but the audiences also became enthralled with other new and exciting spectacles. In the late nineteenth century, acts with stereopticons started to display photographs of Ireland for audiences to see in vaudeville acts and

on the Chautauqua circuit. In a 1918 lecture entitled “A Merry Ramble Round Ireland,” Seumas MacManus presented a “brilliant travelogue” lecture illustrated by “one hundred ‘colored stereopticon views portraying the numerous places of local and historical interest in the Emerald Isle’.”¹⁸³ Compared to the photographs, the panorama paintings looked crude.

After the arrival of film and nickelodeons, the number of hibernicon companies dropped to the single digits for the first time in decades. At the last performance of the hibernicon in its full form that I have located, the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* acknowledged the impact film had on the hibernicon. The paper stated that “Those who remember MacEvoy’s ‘Hibernicon,’ with its quaint panorama, will be delighted to learn that that pleasing form of entertainment has not been entirely squelched by the advent of moving pictures.”¹⁸⁴ Aside from the liveness of the hibernicon performance, film could replace the visual, narrative, and musical components of the hibernicon at a substantially cheaper price. Presenting actual moving pictures of Ireland made the moving panoramas irrelevant.¹⁸⁵

In terms of Irish-American imagery and performance, the appeal of Irish landscapes and ethnic comedy also declined at the turn of the century. In his study of Irish-American music, scholar William H.A. Williams observes that “the use of landscape on Irish song covers increased during the 1860s and 1870s and then dwindled to almost nothing in the less romantic decades of the late nineteenth century.”¹⁸⁶ As the Irish tourism business organized, a revival in the popularity of landscape covers did not occur until after the 1910s.¹⁸⁷ The trends in sheet music cover imagery may be a small indicator of the broader decline in romantic Irish landscape’s appeal. At the turn of the century, Irish-Americans became more organized and protested against the cruder caricatures, which led to the exit of many Irish ethnic comics from the stage.¹⁸⁸

Changes within the Irish-American community, especially in terms of Irish-American nationalism, also potentially affected the hibernicon's popularity. Catholicism and nationalism became the two major symbols of Irish-American ethnicity that the hibernicon used to market its performances. During the 1880s, the meanings associated with Irish-American nationalism shifted. The 1880s saw many Irish and Irish Americans become disenchanted with the Irish-American nationalist movement. Unhappy with the decisions on Irish land reform in 1881, Patrick Ford, the editor of the Irish-American working class newspaper the *New York Irish World*, began focusing more on how to organize the Irish to influence political causes in America than Irish reform. Even though the Home Rule Movement in Ireland led by Charles Parnell drew Irish-American middle class support, the Clan na Gael, an Irish nationalist organization that did not shy away from violence, became more powerful in certain Irish-American nationalist organizations, especially in Chicago. Its prominence scared away many middle class and conservative Irish-Americans from the movement.¹⁸⁹ The failure of the first home rule bill in 1886 and Parnell's divorce scandal in 1890-1 "exacerbated divisions and demoralization among Irish-American nationalists."¹⁹⁰ As a result, Irish-American nationalism seemed "moribund" in the 1890s, even though it did not disappear. These events may have tarnished the appeal of hibernicon performances that often sold themselves on their displays of Irish patriotism.¹⁹¹

The rise and decline of the hibernicon highlights not only a missing piece of performance history, but also a vital piece of evidence in narratives of Irish and Irish-Americans' relationship with representations of Ireland. Dating the Irish ethnic community's growing interest in travel and travel imagery to the 1910s, historian Marian Casey references a stereopticon performance by popular author Seumas MacManus.¹⁹² Casey argues that the Irish ethnic community's interest in travel imagery did not begin until *after* the "host society" established the imagery and second

and third generation Irish Americans lost touch with their ancestral home.¹⁹³ During a time of high Irish immigration, the popularity of the hibernicon in the nineteenth century illustrates how this interest existed fifty years prior. The hibernicon's success demonstrates how romanticized landscape imagery was not only something that Irish Americans enjoyed after they lost ties to Ireland. Although Irish Americans had not yet achieved the political and social power that would allow them to police their public image in the twentieth century, the hibernicon uproots top-down narratives about the construction of Irish popular culture imagery. The MacEvoys, who were Irish immigrants, helped shape these travel images, even if they conformed to certain popularly accepted stereotypes and conventions to sell their performances. The condoning of such imagery by Irish Catholics and nationalists also contributed to its construction and longevity. My project suggests that the trends discussed by Casey were the continuation of the Irish community's long-standing interest in travel imagery as opposed to the beginning of a new preoccupation.

Notes

¹ *New York Clipper*, 20 May 1875, 67.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The hibernicon resulted from a confluence of entertainment trends, including minstrelsy and variety, but two key influences were the moving panorama and “Irish evenings.” Scotsman Robert Barker developed circular panoramas in the late eighteenth century. Circular panoramas were staged in a special rotund theatre space. The audience stood in the center and witnessed a three hundred and sixty degree view of a landscape, historical episode, or current event. Although quite popular in Europe, the cost of the massive canvas and specialized performance space led to ticket prices that only the upper classes could afford. In contrast, the moving panorama used smaller, flat strips of canvas that companies unrolled across a proscenium stage. As a result, touring companies could easily travel with the moving panoramas and most American towns had a theatre or church hall in which to set them up. Consequently, ticket prices dropped and the middle and lower classes attended performances. Moving panoramas originally provided the audience with one perspective from an imaginary horse car or boat on a continuous journey across a city, country or the body of water. Scenic moving panoramas were one subset of moving panoramas. They did not present one continuous view, but rather a series of thematically connected scenes that moved through time and space without any necessary logical justification. The flexibility of the form also did not restrict its creators to one view or a single story. This enabled scenic moving panoramas to advocate for and support a variety of agendas through a range of narrative, visual, and aural tactics. As “rational amusements” or “entertainment that carried elements of instruction under the sugar coating of aesthetic or sensational diversation,” panoramas, the upper and middle classes presumed, allowed for the imposition of higher morals and the improvement of the lower classes through educational scenes and lecture material. Mimi Colligan, *Canvas Documentaries* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2002), 6. The panorama’s development from lower class popular entertainment forms, such as peep shows, and the lecturer’s transformation into more of a comic entertainer than an authority figure problematized this agenda.

Typically, moving panoramas were accompanied by a lecturer, who explained the sites and increasingly adopted a comic persona, and a musician, usually a piano player. Advances in technology and a desire to appear novel led to the use of a variety of terms to refer to moving panorama performances. In the 1820s, Frenchman L. J. M. Daguerre helped develop the diorama, which incorporated cut-outs in the panorama fabric, machinery, lights, and fog to create spectacular effects like full moons or light shining through cathedral windows. The success of dioramas led many moving panorama proprietors to adapt the effects. This led to companies and newspapers using the terms diorama, moving panorama, and later cyclorama interchangeably. Moving panoramas toured the United States by the late 1830s, but they did not become an entertainment for mass American audiences until John Banvard debuted his Mississippi Panorama in 1846. Moving panoramas’ popularity peaked with Banvard in the early 1850s, but

even after their decline, companies still made their livelihoods with the entertainment on the touring circuits. Moving panoramas experienced a revival in the 1880s, but they failed to cause the same excitement Banvard created decades earlier. In scholar Stephen Oettermann's study of panoramas, he found "only one moving panorama on exhibit" in 1884 New York, *The Mirror of Ireland*. Stephan Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium* (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 343.

For more on circular and moving panoramas, see John Bell, "The Sioux War Panorama and American Mythic History," *Theatre Journal* 48, no. 3 (1996): 279-299; Bernard Comment, *The Panorama* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999); Curtis Dahl, "Mark Twain and the Moving Panoramas," *American Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (Spring 1961): 20-32; Curtis Dahl, "Artemus Ward: Comic Panoramist," *New England Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (December 1959): 476-485; Llewellyn Hedgbeth, "Extant American Panoramas: Moving Entertainments of the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1977). Erkki Huhtamo, "Peristrepheic Pleasures: On the Origins of the Moving Panorama," in *Allegories of Communication: Intermedial Concerns from Cinema to the Digital*, eds. John Fullerton and Jan Olsson (Rome, Italy: J. Libbey Publishing, 2004), 215-248; Ralph Hyde, *Panoromania!* (London: Trefoil Publications, 1988); Angela Miller, "Panorama, the Cinema, and the Emergence of the Spectacular," *Wide Angle* 18, no. 2 (April 1996): 34-69; Richard Moody, *America Takes the Stage: Romanticism for American Drama and Theatre, 1750-1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955), 234-8. Hudson John Powell, *Poole's Myriorama!: A Story of Travelling Panorama Showmen* (Bradford on Avon: ELSP, 2002).

Two major writers and performers performed "Irish Evenings" in the 1840s, Irishmen Samuel Lover and John Brougham. Although Lover and Brougham's performances were slightly different, they involved Irish songs, comic anecdotes, and impressions. See William H.A. Williams, *'Twas Only an Irishman's Dream: The Image of Ireland and the Irish in American Popular Song Lyrics, 1800-1920* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 29-30; William Bayle Bernard, *The Life of Samuel Lover, R.H.A., Volume 1* (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1874), 245; Vera Brodsky Lawrence, *Strong on Music: The New York Music Scene in the Days of George Templeton Strong* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 410; Pat M. Ryan, "The Hibernian Experience: John Brougham's Irish-American Plays," *MELUS* 10, no. 2 (Summer 1983): 33-4.

⁵ For more on the height of moving panoramas in America, see Stephan Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium* (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 342-3; Erkki Huhtamo, "Peristrepheic Pleasures: On the Origins of the Moving Panorama," in *Allegories of Communication: Intermedial Concerns from Cinema to the Digital*, eds. John Fullerton and Jan Olsson (Rome, Italy: J. Libbey Publishing, 2004), 221; Ralph Hyde, *Panoromania* (London: Trefoil Publications, 1988), 131-5. For more on Banvard, see John Hanners, *'It Was Play or Starve': Acting in the Nineteenth-Century American Popular Theatre* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1993), 35-53.

⁶ "Amusements," *New York Times*, 24 February 1859, 4.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ It is possible the companies continued to tour after 1853, especially in rural areas that received limited newspaper coverage, but so far I have not uncovered any evidence.

⁹ “Panorama of Ireland,” *New York Irish-American* (New York), 25 January 1851, 3. The critical comments at the end indicate that this article is a review and not a puff piece. For a selection of panorama of Ireland shows during the 1850s, see *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 2 January 1851, 3; *New York Irish-American*, 25 January 1851, 3; *Olympic (New York) Weekly Herald*, 15 February 1851, 1; *New York Daily Tribune*, 19 February 1851, 1; *New York Daily Tribune*, 7 March 1851, 4; *New York Irish-American*, 15 March 1851, 3; *Olympic (New York) Weekly Herald*, 3 May 1851, 141; *New London (Connecticut) Daily Chronicle*, 7 August 1851, 2; *Portsmouth Journal of Literature and Politics*, 21 February 1852, 2; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 20 April 1852, 3; *New York Daily Tribune*, 23 April 1852, 5; *Baltimore Sun*, 24 November 1852, 2; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 18 January 1853, 2; *Cleveland Herald*, 15 January 1853; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 21 April 1853, 3; *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 6 and 9 August 1853.

¹⁰ “The Irish Union Pipes,” *New York Irish-American*, 1 May 1852, 3. See also *New York Daily Tribune*, 23 April 1852, 5.

¹¹ A well-known piper in Ireland, Ferguson came to America on tour with the singer Catherine Hayes in 1851 and he decided to stay. “Death of Chas. Ferguson, the Celebrated Irish Piper,” *New York Irish-American*, 1 May 1869, 5; Francis O’Neill, *Irish Minstrels and Musicians* (Chicago: The Ragan Printing House, 1913), 222-3. For more on the tour that brought Ferguson to America, see Joseph Roach, “Barnumizing Diaspora: The ‘Irish Skylark’ Does New Orleans,” *Theatre Journal* 50, no. 1 (1998): 39-51.

¹² “John O’Donnell, of Ballingarry,” *New York Irish-American*, 15 March 1851, 3; “The Panorama of Ireland – Mr. O’Donnell,” *New York Irish-American*, 7 March 1851, 3.

¹³ “The Irish Union Pipes,” 3. See also *New York Daily Tribune*, 23 April 1852, 5.

¹⁴ *Portsmouth Journal of Literature and Politics*, 21 February 1852, 2.

¹⁵ “Panorama of Ireland,” *New York Irish-American*, 25 January 1851, 3.

¹⁶ “John O’Donnell, of Ballingarry,” 3.

¹⁷ “The Panorama of Ireland – Mr. O’Donnell,” 3.

¹⁸ “Early Christianity in Ireland,” *New York Irish-American*, 7 March 1851, 3.

¹⁹ “Panorama of Ireland,” *New York Irish-American*, 25 January 1851, 3.

²⁰ Many of these towns and cities had a substantial Irish population, including Chicago, Nashville, Charleston, and New Orleans. For a selection of the MacEvoy's performances, see *Daily Missouri Republican*, 22 November 1852, 2; *Mississippi Free Trader*, 19 January 1853, 1; *Mississippi Free Trader*, 16 February 1853, 1; *Daily Alabama Journal*, 15 and 23 March 1853, 2; *Charleston Courier*, 17 and 20 June 1853; *Nashville Union and American*, 18 and 21 August 1853; *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 17 December 1853; *Auburn (New York) Daily American*, 26 June 1856; "Continuation of the Examination of McEvoy Accused of the Murder of Thomas Applebee," *Chicago Times*, 3 July 1856, 3; Earl F. Niehaus, *The Irish in New Orleans: 1800-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 123.

²¹ In songsters, newspapers, legal documents, census, and tax records, the MacEvoy name is spelled several different ways, including MacEvoy, McEvoy, and McAvoy. The most frequent spelling is MacEvoy, so I use that spelling throughout the dissertation. Jane O'Connor, *The Cultural Significance of Child Stars* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 42; David Grimsted, *Melodrama Unveiled* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 103-4. For more on the infant phenomenon, see Hanners, 57-67; Heather M. McMahon, "Profit, Purity, and Perversity: Nineteenth Century Child Prodigies Kate and Ellen Bateman" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 2003), 10-17; Robert Badall, "Kate and Ellen Bateman: A Study in Precocity" (Ph.D. diss. Northwestern University, 1971), 10, 22, 24; Laurence Hutton, *Curiosities of the American Stage* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1891), 209-254; David Dempsey and Raymond P. Baldwin, *The Triumphs and Trials of Lotta Crabtree* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1968), 4-10, 110-114; Constance Rourke, *Troupers of the Gold Coast or the Rise of Lotta Crabtree* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928).

²² *Charleston Courier*, 17 June 1853, 2; *Charleston Courier*, 20 June 1853, 3; *Mississippi Free Trader*, 19 January 1853, 1.

²³ Hutton, 218.

²⁴ *Charleston Courier*, 20 June 1853; *Charleston Courier*, 17 June 1853, 2. *Mississippi Free Trader*, 19 January 1853, 1; 1860 United States Census, Chicago Ward 3, Cook County, Illinois, p. 615, family number 593, dwelling 441, lines 12-18, June 4, 1860, Family History Library film M653_165, Image 65, Ancestry.com (803165).

²⁵ *Charleston Courier*, 20 June 1853.

²⁶ *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 17 December 1853.

²⁷ *Daily Alabama Journal*, 26 March 1853, 2.

²⁸ There is no indication that she performed in sketches or plays during the course of the performances. *Charleston Courier*, 20 June 1853, 3; *Daily Alabama Journal*, 15 and 23 March 1853, 2.

²⁹ *Daily Missouri Republican*, 22 November 1852, 2; *Nashville Union and American*, 21 August 1853, 2, 18 August 1853, 3. It seems quite possible that Mr. Allhead's name was a pun.

³⁰ *Daily Missouri Republican*, 22 November 1852, 2; *Mississippi Free Trader*, 19 January 1853, 1; *Mississippi Free Trader*, 16 February 1853, 1; *Daily Alabama Journal*, 15 and 23 March 1853, 2; *Charleston Courier*, 17 and 20 June 1853, 2; *Nashville Union and American*, 18 and 21 August 1853; *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 17 December 1853; *Daily American* (Auburn, NY), 26 June 1856; "Continuation of the Examination of McEvoy Accused of the Murder of Thomas Applebee, *Chicago Times*, 3 July 1856, 3.

³¹ "Murder of a Merchant in Chicago," *Boston Atlas*, 17 June 1856. For the coroner's testimony see *Chicago Times*, 19 June 1856, 4.

³² *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 21 June 1856; *Daily American* (Auburn, NY), 26 June 1856.

³³ "Continuation of the Examination of McEvoy Accused of the Murder of Thomas Applebee, *Chicago Times*, 3 July 1856, 3.

³⁴ Ibid. See also "McEvoy's Case-Correction," *Chicago Times*, 3 July 1856, 2.

³⁵ "Alleged Murderer of Applebee Arrested," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 30 September 1857, 1; "Murder of Thomas Applebee: Examination of Phillip Jordan, the Alleged Murderer," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 8, 9, 10 October 1857, 1; "Philip Jordan Discharged From Custody," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 19 October 1857, 1.

³⁶ *Smith and DuMoulin's Chicago City Directory* (Chicago: Smith and DuMoulin, 1859), 261; T.M. Halpin, *D.B. Cooke and Co.'s Chicago City Directory* (Chicago: D.B. Cooke and Co., 1860), 455; 1860 United States Census, Chicago Ward 3, Cook County, Illinois, p. 615, family number 593, dwelling 441, lines 12-18, June 4, 1860, Family History Library film M653_165, Image 65, Ancestry.com (803165). Since the family in the 1860 census matches the names and the ages of the MacEvoy performers, it is likely that they are the same family. The census record is unclear on what Charles was doing in 1860. The census lists a "Chas O'Neil" living with the family and his occupation is listed as "artist." Yet, since the painter of their new panorama's name was James O'Neil it is likely this is not Charles, but James. Both men would be around the same age, so it is possible that the census taker confused the information. I have been unable to locate Charles in any of the census records.

³⁷ M.B. Leavitt, *Fifty Years in Theatrical Management* (New York: Broadway Publishing Co., 1912), 75.

³⁸ Ibid., 76.

³⁹ Ibid., 77; Richard Butsch, *The Making of American Audiences: From Stage to Television, 1750-1990* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 84.

⁴⁰ In the 1880s, the term cyclorama was used to describe the circular panoramas, which had a revival. In the instances that I have seen the term used in the 1860s, it referred to a moving panorama. For more on the use of the term cyclorama in the 1880s, see Colligan, 157; For a selection of performances of the MacEvoy's Cyclorama, or a Tour through Ireland, see *Chicago Tribune*, 4-7 September 1860; "The Cyclorama," *Wisconsin Daily Patriot*, 26 September 1860, 3.; "The Cyclorama of Ireland," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 6 October 1860; *Daily Milwaukee News*, 7 October 1860; *Detroit Free Press*, 22 November 1860, 2; *Daily Cleveland Herald*, 14 and 21 December 1860; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 19, 21, 22 December 1860, 3; *Canton Repository* (OH), 8 May 1861; *Buffalo Daily Courier*, 3 June 1861; *Detroit Free Press*, 29 December 1861, 2. A preface by Charles MacEvoy in a hibernicon songster claims that their first performance occurred in New York in 1860. I have yet to find any evidence of this claim. Charles MacEvoy, "Preface," in *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Hibernicon* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1872), Borowitz Collection, Kent State Special Collections, 3.

⁴¹ *Chicago Tribune*, 4-7 September 1860. In the early ads, the actor playing Barney is listed as John Spaulding, John Spaulding MacEvoy, and Spaulding MacEvoy.

⁴² *Canton Repository* (OH), 8 May 1861. Charles MacEvoy, "The Dublin Jaunting Car," (Boston: Oliver Ditson and Co., 1863). The Robert Cushman Butler Collection of Theatrical Illustrations. Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University Libraries Digital Collections (Butler1043).

⁴³ Maurice Bourgeois, *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theater* (London: Constable, 1913), 109-10.

⁴⁴ "The Cyclorama," *Wisconsin Daily Patriot*, 26 September 1860, 3.

⁴⁵ "General Remarks," *New York Irish-American*, 30 June 1866, 3.

⁴⁶ *Chicago Tribune*, 4-7 September 1860.

⁴⁷ *MacEvoy's New Hibernicon*, broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle), American Broad-sides and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8); *Gavin and Ryan's Emerald Isle* program, *Rody the Rover Songster* (New York: Robt M. De Witt, n.d.), Mick Moloney Irish-American Music and Popular Culture Collection, Part IV, Box 48, Folder 29, Archives of Irish America, Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives; *McGill and Strong's Mirror of Ireland Programme*, (Worcester, MA: 1872), 3, American Broad-sides and Ephemera Series I: 1760-

1900; “The Emerald Isle,” broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle, 1873), American Broadsides and Ephemera, Series 1: 1760-1900 (24041).

⁴⁸ *Charleston Courier*, 4 May 1867, 2.

⁴⁹ *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 24 December 1860, 3.

⁵⁰ “The Cyclorama of Ireland,” *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 6 October 1860.

⁵¹ *MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon*, broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle), American Broadsides and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8). The American Antiquarian Society supported database questions the date of the broadside’s publication, but speculates that it was published around 1850. However, the term hibernicon was not used until 1863 and the company of performers indicated on the broadside did not tour together until the early 1870s. The broadside also makes reference to the hibernicon touring for about ten years before the current production, which would also date the show to the early 1870s. Sheet music published by MacEvoy in connection with this performance was not printed until 1873. The other programs that I have located to date do not provide a moment-by-moment synopsis of the show, but they support the idea that this structure reflects the basic structure of other hibernicons.

⁵² John MacEvoy, “Come to the Shamrock’s Home” (Detroit: C.J. Whitney and Co., 1873), 4-5, Library of Congress, Music Division, American Memory (sm1873 07225).

⁵³ *MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon*, broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle), American Broadsides and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8); Thomas Moore, *Irish Melodies and Songs* (New York: George Routledge and Sons, 1887), 18 and 129; Linda Kelly, *Ireland’s Minstrel: A Life of Thomas Moore* (New York: I.B. Tauris and Co, 2006), 2.

⁵⁴ *J.L. MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon Songster* (New York: DeWitt, 1881), Brown University, Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Songsters, 53-4.

⁵⁵ *MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon*, broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle), American Broadsides and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* There are several versions of “The Connaught Rangers” and it is unclear which was performed.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ John MacEvoy, “Widow Mavrone” (New York: C.H. Ditson and Co., 1872), Library of Congress, Music Division, American Memory (sm1872 03984).

⁵⁹ *MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon*, broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle), American Broadsides and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8).

⁶⁰ Laurence Senelick refers to the hibernicon as an “embryonic musical comedy.” He does not analyze the form or place it within the context of musical theatre history. His article is mainly concerned with using Jerry Cohan’s repertoire book, of which the hibernicon sketches are only one part, to illustrate shifting trends in variety comedy. Laurence Senelick, “Variety into Vaudeville, The Process Observed in Two Manuscript Gagbooks, *Theatre Survey* 19, no. 1 (May 1978): 11.

⁶¹ Gerald Bordman, *American Musical Comedy: From Adonis to Dreamgirls* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 33-5.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Cecil Smith and Glenn Litton, *Musical Comedy in America* (New York: Theatre Art Books, 1950; reprint, New York: Routledge, 1996). See also Katherine K. Preston, “American Musical Theatre Before the Twentieth Century,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, eds. William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 19-20; Bordman, 33-5.

⁶⁵ Bordman, 33.

⁶⁶ Ibid. For more on Nate Salsbury, see Joy S. Kasson, *Buffalo Bill’s Wild West: Celebrity, Memory, and Popular History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000); Roger Allan Hall, “Nate Salsbury and His Troubadours: Popular American Farce and Musical Comedy, 1875-1887” (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 1974). This area is a fruitful place for further study. The published songs of the MacEvoy provide a good starting place. Many of their original compositions develop character or the conflict between Barney and Nora and imply a connection between the story and the musical accompaniment. Further exploring the anti-European bias in relation to variety touring companies and how it influences musical theatre historiography also may suggest productive routes of inquiry. In musical theatre scholarship, scholars have discussed this bias particularly in relation to burlesque. See Robert C. Allen, *Horrible Prettiness: Burlesque and American Culture* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina UP, 1991).

⁶⁷ *Boston Herald*, 10 and 17 February 1863, 3; *Boston Herald*, 7 January 1863, 4; *Providence Evening Press*, 4 March 1863, 3.

⁶⁸ “Pat’s Hibernicon,” *New York Observer and Chronicle*, 8 January 1863, 2.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ *New York Herald*, 17, 18 and 24 March 1863; 4, 6, 11, 12, and 20 April 1863, 7; 1, 2, 17, 19, 23 May 1863. *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 3 and 11 June 1863, 1; *New York Irish-American*,

14, 28 March 1863; 4, 18, 25 April 1863, 1; The same year I have only traced one other panorama of Ireland that played in New England. *New Haven Daily Palladium*, 16 December 1863.

⁷¹ *Albany Evening Journal*, November 1863; *Albany Evening Herald*, December 1863; "A Tour of Ireland," *Syracuse Daily Courier*, 22 January 1864; "Resolutions," *Utica Daily Observer*, 23 January 1864; *Oswego Daily Palladium*, 18 February 1864; "A Fearful and Exciting Scene: Twelve Hundred People in a Burning Hall," *Chicago Tribune*, 7 March 1865, 2; *Daily Ohio Statesman*, 17 April 1865; *Daily Ohio Statesman*, 10 April 1865; "Miscellaneous," *New York Clipper*, 15 April 1865, 22; "Amusements," *Daily Dramatic Chronicle* (San Francisco), 10 January 1866, 3; *Utica Morning Herald and Daily Gazette*, 29 May 1866, 2; *Jersey Journal*, 25 and 26 September, 1 October 1867; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 14 and 16 October 1867; *Providence Evening Press*, 29 November 1867, 3; "McEvoy's Hibernicon," *Hartford Daily Courant*, 13 and 18 April 1868, 2; *New York Tribune*, 24 August 1868, 8; "The Hibernicon at Pike's," *New York Tribune*, 23 September 1868, 2; *Schenectady Daily Evening Star*, 3 March 1869; *Portsmouth Journal of Literature and Politics*, 8 May 1869, 3; "Hibernicon," *Chicago Tribune*, 20 and 21 September 1869, 4; *Chicago Tribune*, 5 and 6 October 1869.

⁷² *Oswego Daily Palladium*, 12 February 1864. It is possible that the MacEvoy's were complaining about Dare's Hibernicon, which toured in upstate New York in 1864. *Oswego Commercial Times*, 12 June 1864.

⁷³ "Theatrical Intelligence," *San Francisco Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, 30 December 1865, 3.

⁷⁴ *San Francisco Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, 30 January 1866, 1; *San Francisco Daily Morning Chronicle*, 21 December 1868, 1; Peter E. Palmquist and Thomas R. Kailbourn, "JH Warwick," *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West: A Biographical Dictionary, 1840-1865* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 578.

⁷⁵ "The Hibernicon Then and Now," *New York Clipper*, 1 November 1884, 519.

⁷⁶ *Mount Vernon (New York) Chronicle*, 2 January 1880; George C.D. Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage, vol. 8: 1865-1870*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), 472; "Middle, Kate M'Evoy," *New York Irish-American*, 31 October 1868. The *Irish American* reported Kate's performance in Chicago as "prima donna in Maretzek's Italian Opera Troupe." Some of Charles's sheet music includes Charles MacEvoy, "Molly Doolan," (New York: Ditson, C. H., 1878), from Library of Congress, *Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885*, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/sm1878.08600> (accessed September 10, 2010); MacEvoy and A. Thompson, "This Pretty Little Flower," (New York: Harris, Charles W., 1875), from Library of Congress, *Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885*, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/sm1875.07263> (accessed September 10, 2010); MacEvoy, "Good Night Serenade," (Detroit: Whittemore, Swan & Stephens, 1871), from Library of Congress,

Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/sm1871.08626> (accessed September 10, 2010); MacEvoy, "That Game of Poker," (New York: Pond & Co., Wm. A., 1878), from Library of Congress, *Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music 1870-1885*, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/sm1878.02711> (accessed September 10, 2010); MacEvoy, "Gay Spirits Fantasia," (Boston: Ditson, Oliver & Co., 1885), from Library of Congress, *Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885*, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/sm1885.12187> (accessed September 10, 2010).

⁷⁷ "The Hibernicon Then and Now," 519.

⁷⁸ *Baltimore Sun*, 21 December 1893, 7.

⁷⁹ 1870 United States Census, Eastchester, Westchester County, New York, p. 131, family number 1061, dwelling 933, lines 2-10, August 15, 1870, Family History Library film M593_1114, Image 525, Ancestry.com (552613); U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918, District 10, New York, line 19, May 1866, National Archives M603, Roll 94, Ancestry.com. It is possible to know that the family in the 1870 record is MacEvoy's because the names and ages of his wife and children match previous records.

⁸⁰ U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918, District 30, New York, lines 36-7, December 1866, National Archives M603, Roll 208, Ancestry.com; U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918, December 1865, National Archives M760, Roll 7, Ancestry.com. U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918, District 4, New Jersey, line 11, September 1866, National Archives M603, Roll 9, Ancestry.com; See also U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918, Maryland, line 11, January 1866, National Archives M771, Roll 16, Ancestry.com; U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918, District 15, New York, line 30, May 1866, National Archives M603, Roll 129, Ancestry.com; U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918, District 1, West Virginia, line 33, January 1866, National Archives M795, Roll 2, Ancestry.com. U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918, District 3, New Jersey, line 15, September 1865, National Archives M603, Roll 26, Ancestry.com; Louise L. Stevenson, *Victorian Homefront: American Thought and Culture, 1860-1880* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), xxxi.

⁸¹ Gillian M. Rodger, *Champagne Charlie, Pretty Jemima: Variety Theatre in the Nineteenth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 213, n. 7; Thomas Allston Brown, *A History of the New York Stage from Its First Performance*, Volume 2 (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1903), 351; Kit Clarke, "Some Cork and Sawdust 'Thinks' of the Past," *New York Clipper*, 17 February 1912.

⁸² For a small selection of reports about these companies, see "A Tour of Ireland" *Syracuse New York Daily Courier*, 22 January 1864; "A Fearful and Exciting Scene: Twelve Hundred People in a Burning Hall," *Chicago Tribune*, 7 March 1865, 2, reprinted from the *Cleveland Herald*, 4 March 1865; *Daily Ohio Statesman*, 17 April 1865; *San Francisco Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, 30 January 1866, 1; "The Hibernicon," *Hartford Daily Courant*, 14 April 1868, 2. "The Hibernicon at Pike's," *New York Tribune*, 23 September 1868, 2; "Dramatic and

Musical," *San Francisco Daily Morning Chronicle*, 21 December 1868, 1; "The Hibernicon," *Chicago Tribune*, 21 September 1869, 4; *New York Daily Tribune*, 27 January 1870, 4; "The Hibernicon," *Atlanta Constitution*, 15 February 1870, 4. "Musical and Theatrical Notes," *New York Herald*, 25 April 1870, 3; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10 September 1870, 4; *Sacramento Bee*, 2 November 1870; *Hartford Daily Courant*, 22 November 1870, 2; *New York Irish-American*, 18 March 1871, 5; *Auburn (New York) Daily Bulletin*, 15 April 1871, 2; *Hartford Daily Courant*, 1 September 1871, 2; *Lowell Daily Citizen and News*, 11 September 1871; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4 April 1872, 2; *New York Times*, 14 April 1872, 9; *Lowell Daily Citizen and News*, 18 April 1872; *New York Times*, 7 May 1872, 7; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 21 May 1872, 3; *Hudson (New York) Daily Herald*, 18 January 1873; *Hartford Daily Courant*, 30 August 1872, 3; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 9 September 1872, 1; *Lowell Daily Citizen and News*, 14 and 19 October 1872; *Cleveland Morning Daily Herald*, 4 March 1873; *Lowell Daily Citizen and News*, 26 March 1873; *Hartford Daily Courant*, 2 April 1873, 4; *New York Evening Telegram*, 10 April 1873, 1; *St. Albans (Vermont) Daily Messenger*, 20 May 1873, 3; *Lowell Daily Citizen and News*, 12 and 15 September 1873; "The Drama," *Boston Daily Globe*, 24 November 1873, 1; *Lowell Daily Courier*, 27 December 1873; *New York Herald*, 28 February 1874, 2; *Elkhart (Indiana) Daily Review*, 24 March 1874, 3; *Augusta (Georgia) Chronicle*, 11 April 1874, 2; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 23 May 1874, 1; *Bangor (Maine) Daily Whig and Courier*, 9 July 1874; *New York Times*, 26 July 1874; *Lowell Daily Citizen*, 28 September 1874; *Augusta (Georgia) Chronicle*, 12 February 1875, 4; *Oswego (New York) Daily Times*, 10 March 1875, 2; *New York Clipper*, 21 August 1875, 167; *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 4 October 1875, 5; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 31 December 1875, 1; *Bangor (Maine) Daily Whig and Courier*, 26 August 1876; *Utica (New York) Morning Herald*, 8 May 1876; *Syracuse Daily Courier*, 17 May 1876; *St. Albans (Vermont) Daily Messenger*, 29 May 1876, 3; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 19 October 1876; *Lowell Daily Citizen*, 22 November 1876; *New York Times*, 12 November 1877, 8; *Daily Commercial*, 12 March 1878, 1; *New York Irish-American* (New York), 28 December 1878, 5. Burke's Tableaux of Erin featured his four-year-old daughter as part of the attraction. *Lowell Daily Citizen*, 27 November 1876.

⁸³ *Providence Evening Press*, 28 September 1871, 2.

⁸⁴ George C. D. Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage, vol. 9: 1870-1875* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), 195, 244, 373.

⁸⁵ Charles MacEvoy, "Preface," 3. An advertisement for John MacEvoy's panorama claims that "The title GREAT HIBERNICON, was given DISTINGUISHABLE FINE WORK OF ART from two others of a similar fame an character, formerly owned by Prof MacEvoy, but now in the possession of his members of his family via THE ORIGINAL HIBERNICON and the NEW HIBERNICON." *New York Clipper*, 20 May 1875, 67.

⁸⁶ "Patent Office Matters," *Scientific American*, 9 February 1878, 84.

⁸⁷ John F. Stover, *The Life and Decline of the American Railroad* (New York: Oxford University, 1971); Jane Stewart Barnette, "Locomotive Leisure: The Effects of Railroads on

Chicago Area Theatre, 1870-1920" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2003). In terrains without railroads, hibernicon companies still traveled by land. One 1885 newspaper report about Dan Morris Sullivan's *Mirror of Ireland* described the dangers of touring in Montana. While driving, a "bear emerged from the woods and crossed the road about forty yards in from of [their vehicle]...Tom Cannon, the athlete and wrestler, who is now traveling with the company, bounded from the vehicle when the bear appeared and attacked it...[fought] by a well directed and crushing blow the bear was stunned and a few more blows ended its life." Commercial motives also seemed to be behind telling this story. A wrestler strong enough to defeat a bear without suffering any major injuries had the potential to draw in audiences. "The Wrestler and the Bear," *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*, 30 September 1885, 3.

⁸⁸ Benjamin MacArthur, *The Man Who Was Rip Van Winkle: Joseph Jefferson and Nineteenth Century American Theatre* (New Haven: Yale University, 2007), 262.

⁸⁹ E.F. Babbage, *'Phat Boys': Eighteen Years on the St. Lawrence. The People Met and the Things Seen* (Rochester: Democrat and Chronicle Print, 1891), 24-5. Babbage describes his duties to Lotta Crabtree's agent, who he tells of his jealousy. However, Crabtree's agent tells Babbage that in addition to the business duties described by Babbage, he also sees to the comfort of Lotta and her mother, walks their dog, sells tickets, and must be ready to fill in for any member of the company who is ill or quits. He told Babbage that his salary was ten dollars more than his and that unlike MacEvoy, Lotta never had money to spare to help him execute his job. At the end of their conversation, Lotta's agent states that "Taking everything into consideration I am of the opinion that you are the one to be envied, and not you to envy me."

⁹⁰ Rodgers, 98-9.

⁹¹ See also Don Meade, "Kitty O'Neil and her 'Champion Jig': An Irish Dancer on the New York Stage," *New Hibernia Review* 6, no. 3 (Autumn 2002): 9-22. Cite Pastor's books, Williams, 120-2; Rodgers, 49, 72.

⁹² *Lowell Daily Citizen*, 22 November 1876.

⁹³ "J.H. Ryan's Great Personation of the Irish Guide," *J.H. Ryan's Dublin Bard Songster* (New York: DeWitt, 1877), 3, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

⁹⁴ "The Emerald Isle," broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle, 1873), American Broadside and Ephemera, Series 1, (24041). An ad in the *Baltimore Sun* proclaimed Charles MacEvoy as the first Barney. *Baltimore Sun*, 7 May 1870, 2.

⁹⁵ *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4 April 1872, 2; *Syracuse Morning Standard*, 19 March 1881, 1; *Grand Forks Herald*, 28 July 1883, 1; *Daily Picayune*, 25 January 1887;

⁹⁶ *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 18 March 1889, 4; See also Broad­sides and Playbills March and June 1871 in Program Book, 1871-1880, Tony Pastor Collection, *T-Mss 1995-028, Billy Rose Theatre Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

⁹⁷ *New York Dramatic Mirror*, 20 June 1908.

⁹⁸ *Bangor (Maine) Daily Whig and Courier*, 30 August 1872.

⁹⁹ *St. Albans (Vermont) Daily Messenger*, 8 October 1890, 4.

¹⁰⁰ The writer of the songs "Sidewalks of New York" also started his career playing Barney in a MacEvoy's Hibernicon. See "Al Smith's Song has Stirring Echo," *New York Times*, 11 March 1923, 3. Audiences' investment in the character is indicated in the memories of coal miners living in the anthracite region of Pennsylvania. While interviewing elderly miners about folk and work songs during the mid-twentieth, Archie Green ran into few popular stage songs that became part of the folk tradition. One such song, "Down in a Coal Mine," has been attributed to various stage performers, including Tony Pastor. However, the miners remembered that "'Down in a Coal Mine' was introduced by comedian 'Dublin Dan' Burke to the anthracite region from the platform of Howerth's [sic] Hibernica, a travelling circus which appealed to Irish coal diggers in the New World. The stage song was so completely accepted by the Pennsylvania hard coal miners that its original identity was lost." Archie Green, "A Discography of American Coal Miners' Songs," *Labor History* 2, no. 1 (1961): 17. For more on Pastor and "Down in the Mine," see *New York Dramatic Mirror*, 31 March 1906, 18.

¹⁰¹ *Oswego (New York) Palladium*, 24 February 1864. See also *Jersey Journal*, 1 October 1867, 1.

¹⁰² *McGill and Strong's Mirror of Ireland*, (Worcester, MA: 1872), 3, American Broad­sides and Ephemera Series I: 1760-1900.

¹⁰³ *New York Clipper*, 20 June 1874.

¹⁰⁴ *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1872), Borowitz Collection, Department of Special Collections and Archives, Kent State University Libraries and Media Services.; *J.L. MacEvoy's New Hibernicon Songster* (New York: DeWitt, 1881), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University; and *Howorth's Grand Hibernica Songster* (Trenton: Wm. S. Sharp, 1885?), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University; "Morrissey's Hibernicon," *Bangor (Maine) Whig and Courier*, 10 July 1885; *Chester (Pennsylvania) Times*, 17 May 1882, 3; *Waukesha (Wisconsin) Daily Freeman*, 9 September 1882, 2; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4 May 1872, 4.

¹⁰⁵ MS Thr 226 J.J. Cohan, Cohan Family Repertoire-Book, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University. See also *Wisconsin State Register* 28 April 1877; *Richmond Whig*, 5 May 1874, 3.

¹⁰⁶ *Frank MacEvoy's New Hibernicon Songster* (Philadelphia: Merrihew and Son, 1874), 6, American Antiquarian Society.

¹⁰⁷ "Theatrical Intelligence," *San Francisco Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, 30 December 1865, 3.

¹⁰⁸ "Morrissey's Hibernicon," *Bangor (Maine) Whig and Courier*, 10 July 1885.

¹⁰⁹ Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 4.

¹¹⁰ In 1877, the *New York Times* reported how a hibernicon performed named Ms. Mosley became deranged and addicted to opium. John Burke also died in the late 1870s. His company continued after his death and his widow married another hibernicon proprietor. McGill and Strong's Mirror of Ireland also merged with other performers to eventually become Howorth's Grand Hibernica. *New York Times*, 12 November 1877, 8; *Morning Oregonian*, 6 August 1881, 5; *Kalamazoo (Michigan) Gazette*, 19 April 1882; *Waukesha (Wisconsin) Daily Freeman*, 9 September 1882, 2; *St. Albans (Vermont) Daily Messenger*, 31 October 1882, 3; *Athchison (Kans.) Globe*, 18 January 1883, 1; *Grand Forks Herald*, 28 July 1883, 1; *Glendive (Montana) Times*, 17 November 1883; *Boston Daily Globe*, 23 December 1883, 10; *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 March 1884; *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*, 17 April 1884, 10; *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*, 25 April 1884, 10; *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, 25 May 1884, 1; *New York Clipper*, 30 August 1884, 374; *Bangor (Maine) Whig and Courier*, 9 July 1885; *Oregonian*, 6 April 1885, 2; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 30 May 1886, 7; 4; *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 14 November 1886, 13; *Sentinel*, 22 November 1886, 2; *Daily Picayune*, 25 January 1887; "Mirror of Ireland," *Los Angeles Times*, 19 March 1887, 1; *Mount Vernon (New York) Chronicle*, 2 January 1880; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 8 March 1880.

¹¹¹ Butsch, 79; Rodger, 150-4. For more on variety in the 1870s see Alan Gevinson, "The Origins of Vaudeville: The Aesthetic Power, Disquietude, and Cosmopolitanism in the Quest for an American Music Hall" (Ph.D. diss., John Hopkins University, 2007).

¹¹² "City Summary," *New York Clipper*, 12 September 1874. "The City Theatres," *New York Times*, 16 August 1874, 3, 7; Rogers, 150-4.

¹¹³ George Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage, Vol. 9: 1870-1875*, 607.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.; "The City Theatres," *New York Times*, 16 August 1874, 7.

¹¹⁵ "The Can Can," *The New York Times*, 24 December 1874.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. When the police failed to obtain warrants for all performers and management associated with the Metropolitan, they had to settle for arresting the female performers and the theatre's lease holder. The refusal of the court to grant warrants for the male performers locates the illegal and sinful performance aspects primarily in the women. As was typical in these cases, the law refused to assign any culpability to other management or male performers who encouraged, created, or supported such performances.

¹¹⁷ "Inconsistent Uses of Robinson Hall," *New York Times*, 25 March 1875, 2.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. For a report of a later raid on Robinson Hall, see "The Police Raid Robinson Hall," *New York Times*, 15 October 1876.

¹¹⁹ Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage, Vol. 9: 1870-1875*, 608. For other records of the hibernicon performances at Robinson Hall, see *New York Clipper*, 24 April 1875 and *New York Daily Tribune*, 12 April 1875, 7.

¹²⁰ Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage, Vol. 9: 1870-1875*, 608.

¹²¹ *New York Clipper*, 24 April 1875.

¹²² Alfred Doten, *The Journals of Alfred Doten, 1849-1903* volume 2, ed. Walter Van Tilburg Clark (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1973), 1109.

¹²³ Ronald M. James, *The Roar and the Silence: A History of Virginia City and the Comstock Lode* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998), 208.

¹²⁴ Doten, 1109.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Alfred Doten, *The Journals of Alfred Doten, 1849-1903* volume 3, Ed. Walter Van Tilburg Clark (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1973), 1686. He saw the performance on November 7, 1887.

¹²⁷ The other common venue for hibernicon companies was Catholic fairs and church halls. This will be addressed in Chapter 4.

¹²⁸ Mary C. Henderson, *The City and the Theatre* (New York: Backstage Books, 2004), 95. According to Henderson, Hope Chapel was located at "720 Broadway just below Eighth Street...[it] began as a religious assembly hall, then housed miscellaneous entertainments before the minstrels took it over in 1855. Its most famous managers were Edwin Kelly and Francis Leon, who was the leading female impersonator of his day, and as Kelly and Leon's it enjoyed its greatest success in the 1860s."

¹²⁹ *New York Herald*, 1 February 1872, 10.

¹³⁰ *Cleveland Leader*, 7 March 1865, 7.

¹³¹ *New York Herald*, March – April 1863; *Syracuse Daily Courier*, 22 January 1864; *San Francisco Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, 30 January 1866, 1; "The Mirror of Ireland," *Hartford Daily Courant*, 1 September 1871, 2; *New York Evening Telegram*, 10 April 1873, 1; *Oswego (New York) Daily Times*, 10 March 1875, 2; *Decatur (Illinois) Review*, 13 October 1882, 5; *Utica (New York) Morning Herald*, March 1881; *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 5 March 1884, 4. For more on opera houses and regional theatres, see William Faricy Condee, *Coal and Culture: Opera Houses in Appalachia* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005).

¹³² David Nasaw, *Going Out: the Rise and Fall of Public Amusements* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1993), 13.

¹³³ Robert A. Harrison, *The Conventional Man: The Diaries of Ontario Chief Justice Robert A. Harrison, 1856-1878*, ed. Peter Oliver (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 454.

¹³⁴ "The Hibernicon at Pike's," 2.

¹³⁵ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 31 May 1876.

¹³⁶ Sarah Davis to David Davis, Clover Lawn, 21 January 1872, David Davis Papers, Box 8, Folder B23, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

¹³⁷ Sarah Davis to David Davis, Clover Lawn "At Home Tuesday 10 P.M.," 10 November 1874, David Davis Papers, Box 9, Folder B27, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

¹³⁸ *Jersey Journal*, 1 October 1867, 1.

¹³⁹ *Cleveland Leader*, 7 March 1865, 4.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² Erin A. Smith, *Hard-Boiled: Working Class Readers and Pulp Magazines*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), 9.

¹⁴³ *New York Herald*, 4 April 1863, 7.

¹⁴⁴ *New York Herald*, 6 April 1863, 7.

¹⁴⁵ "The Stage," *New York Evening Telegram*, 8 April 1872, 2.

¹⁴⁶ "Announcements for the Week," *New York Evening Telegram*, 22 and 29 April 1872, 2.

¹⁴⁷ *Chicago Tribune*, 23 June 1872, 3. For similar pleas, see *Jersey Journal*, 26 September 1867, 1.

¹⁴⁸ *Charleston Courier*, 4 May 1867, 2.

¹⁴⁹ *Times Picayune*, 21 March 1874, 8.

¹⁵⁰ *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, 26 December 1870, 1.

¹⁵¹ *New York Irish-American*, 14 March 1863, 2.

¹⁵² "The 'Hibernicon,'" *New York Irish-American*, 4 April 1863, 2.

¹⁵³ "Erin Go Braugh!," *New York Irish-American*, 25 April 1863, 1. See also "Ireland in America," *New York Irish-American*, 13 April 1872, 1.

¹⁵⁴ "Erin Go Bragh!" *New York Irish-American*, 25 April 1863, 1.

¹⁵⁵ "The 'Hibernicon'," *New York Irish-American*, 5 September 1868, 4.

¹⁵⁶ "The 'Hibernicon'," *New York Irish-American*, 18 April 1863, 2.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ "The 'Mirror of Ireland'," *New York Irish-American*, 7 January 1871, 8.

¹⁵⁹ "The New Hibernicon," *New York Irish Citizen*, 26 September 1868, 5.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² *McGill and Strong's Mirror of Ireland*, (Worcester, MA: 1872), 3,

¹⁶³ "Invitation to 'Hibernicon'," in *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1872), Borowitz Collection, Department of Special Collections and Archives, Kent State University Libraries and Media Services, 1.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 8.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ *Howorth's Grand Hibernica Songster* (Trenton: Wm. S. Sharp, 1885?), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 1.

¹⁶⁷ It is possible that the Irish audience for the hibernicon was established enough that the companies did not feel the need to publically target them anymore.

¹⁶⁸ "The Hibernicon Then and Now," 519.

¹⁶⁹ Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 510-11.

¹⁷⁰ "The Hibernicon Then and Now," 519.

¹⁷¹ See "The Stage and Box Office," *New York Times*, 11 September 1884, 2; H.H. Soule, "On and Off the Stage," *Washington Post*, 4 January 1885, 3; "The Theatrical Business," *New York Times*, 7 December 1884, 3; Gevinson, 332.

¹⁷² Nasaw, 19-25; Robert W. Snyder, *The Voice of the City: Vaudeville and Popular Culture in New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 26-41.

¹⁷³ *Grand Rapids Press*, 25 March 1896, 2.

¹⁷⁴ *Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) Patriot*, 20 September 1881, 4.

¹⁷⁵ *Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle*, 31 January 1895, 8.

¹⁷⁶ *Wheeling (West Virginia) Register*, 16 February 1889, 4. Other companies appearing in halls and opera houses during this time include Wells and Hayden's Mirror of Ireland and Comedy Company, Morrissey's Grand Hibernicon, Dan Morris Sullivan's Mirror of Ireland and Irish Comedy Company, and several unidentified Mirror of Ireland companies. For more on hibernicon performances post-1884, see *Bridgeton (New Jersey) Evening News*, 2 January 1884, 1; *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 28 February 1884, 8; *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 1-5 March 1884; *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*, 9 March 1884; *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*, 17 April 1884, 10; *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, 25 May, 1884, 1; *New York Clipper*, 30 August 1884, 374; *Oregonian*, 6, 8, 10, 12 April 1885; *Bangor (Maine) Daily Whig and Courier*, 9 July 1885; *Niagara Falls Gazette*, 3 March 1886, 4; *Oswego (New York) Daily Times Express*, 31 March 1886; *Elkhart (Indiana) Daily Review*, 24 April 1886, 2; *Long Island City Star*, 22 October 1886, 2; "Harrigan's Double Hibernian Company," *Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) Patriot*, originally from the *Oswego Express*, 25 October 1886, 4; "Irish Tourists," *Kalamazoo (Michigan) Gazette*, 21 December 1886, 4; *Batavia (New York) Daily News*, 17 January 1887; *Jefferson County (New York) Journal*, 1 February 1887, 8; *New York Dramatic Mirror*, 19 March 1887, 5; "Mirror of Ireland," *Los Angeles Times*, 19 March 1887, 1; *San Francisco*

Chronicle, 11 April 1887, 1; *Daily Register*, 16 May 1887, 1; *Kalamazoo (Michigan) Gazette*, 13 December 1887, 2; *Chatham New York Republican*, 31 January 1888, 5; *Bridgeton (New Jersey) Evening News*, 16 November 1888, 4; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 20 July 1889, 5; *Oregonian*, 26 January and 6 February 1890; *Idaho Statesman*, 23 February 1890; *Repository (Ohio)*, 8 March 1890, 6; *Boston Herald*, 13 July 1890, 18; *Boston Herald*, 14 September 1890; *Chicago Herald*, 22 February 1891; *Elkhart (Indiana) Daily Review*, 25 February 1891, 3; *Repository (Ohio)*, 24 February 1892, 4; *Philadelphia North-American*, 19 April 1892, 1; *Jersey Journal*, 13 September 1892, 3; *Boston Herald*, 14 March 1893; *Jersey Journal*, 14 June 1893; *Cold Spring Recorder*, 1 September 1893; *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 24 September 1893; *Little Falls (New York) Evening Times*, 27 September 1893; *Little Falls (New York) Evening Times*, 4 October 1893; *Fayetteville (New York) Recorder*, 5 October 1893, 1; *New York Clipper*, 14 December 1894, 647; *Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle*, 31 January 1895, 8; *Grand Rapids Press*, 25 March 1896, 2; *Cleveland Leader*, 1 July 1896; *Muskegon (Michigan) Chronicle*, 3, 5, 8, 11, and 15 July 1902, 3; *Salem (Oregon) Daily Capital Journal*, 12 November 1906, 5; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 16 April 1910, 3; *New York Times*, 16 March 1915, 6.

¹⁷⁷ *Grand Rapids Press*, 25 March 1896, 2. This is clearly a decrease from the late 1880s when Howorth's still charged the typical twenty-five, thirty-five, and fifty cents prices. *Daily Register*, 16 May 1887 1.

¹⁷⁸ Nasaw, 10-18; Andrea Stulman Dennett, *Weird and Wonderful: The Dime Museum in America* (New York: New York University Press, 1997). For more on dime museums and Keith's involvement in the before the establishment of the vaudeville circuit, see Gevinson, 332-8.

¹⁷⁹ *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 16 October 1887, 13.

¹⁸⁰ *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 30 May 1886, 7; *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 14 and 17 November 1886, 13; *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 22 November 1886, 2. *Daily Picayune*, 25 and 26 January 1887; *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 16-20 October 1887; *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 2-21 April 1887; *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 January 1888, 1; *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, November 1890; *Chicago Sunday Inter Ocean*, 28 December 1890, 12; *Chicago Sunday Inter Ocean*, 4 January 1891, 12; *Chicago Daily InterOcean*, 8 and 10 January 1891, 7; *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 23-28 February 1891, 7; *Chicago Sunday Inter Ocean*, 24 September 1893, 29; George Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage, vol. 13: 1885-1888* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), 574.

¹⁸¹ *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 30 November 1890, 28; *Bangor (Maine) Daily Whig and Courier*, 16 July 1897; *Maine Farmer*, 29 July 1897, 5; *New York Times*, 16 March 1915. For more on how they remained involved in the community, see Chapter 4.

¹⁸² *Baltimore Sun*, 21 December 1893, 7. Marie MacEvoy, who is believed to have married Charles or Frank MacEvoy, died in 1893 as well. *Long Island City Star*, 25 November 1893, 2.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 259; Charles Musser, *The Emergence of Cinema: The American Screen to 1907* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 30-40, 258.

¹⁸⁴ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 16 April 1910, 5. The company was Dan Morris Sullivan's Hibernicon. If it was indeed the same Dan Morris Sullivan, he performed with hibernicons on and off from the 1870s. Aside from the "good old reel of paintings" of Ireland, "those favorites of our childhood days, Barney the Guide and Norah O'Callahan, with song and jest and a few jogs and reels, will be on hand."

¹⁸⁵ Musser, 417-90; Tom Gunning, "'The Whole World Within Reach: Travel Images Without Borders,'" in *Virtual Voyages: Cinema and Travel*, ed. Jeffrey Ruoff (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 25-41.

¹⁸⁶ Williams, 36.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. See also Marion Casey, "Ireland, New York, and the Irish Image in American Popular Culture, 1890-1960" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1998), 224-260.

¹⁸⁸ Paul Distler, "The Rise and Fall of the Racial Comics in American Vaudeville" (Ph.D. diss., Tulane University, 1963); M. Alison Kibler, *Rank Ladies: Gender and Cultural Hierarchy in American Vaudeville* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 56.

¹⁸⁹ Miller, 540-1. See also Thomas N. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism, 1870-1890*. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980).

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 541.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Casey, 224-260.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

CHAPTER 2

NEGOTIATING CLASS: THE HIBERNICON AND THE COHANS

As a result of their vaudeville success, as well as George M. Cohan's celebrity and long career on the New York stage, Jerry and Nellie Cohan entered the newspaper and archival record in a way that distinguishes them from other hibernicon performers. Starting in the 1910s, writers interviewed Jerry and Nellie about their experiences in the theatre in order to better understand their son. Biographers recorded the memories and experiences of the Cohans' friends and fellow performers. Archives preserved Jerry's writings. The Cohans not only left behind an official record of their hibernicon performances, but they also lingered in the memory of audiences. Several audience members remembered their hibernicon performances as life-changing experiences. Before relating anecdotes about his time working with James O'Neill, George Bernard Shaw, the Irish Players, and a wide range of American and European stage stars in his autobiography, prolific American theatre producer and manager, George C. Tyler reminisced about how he fell in love with the theatre:

Fifty years ago even so small a place as Chillicothe [Ohio] was blessed with a steady stream of touring companies – live actors, not second-hand shadows on a screen – and Father, as proprietor of a newspaper, was always pretty well supplied with passes. My first theatrical entertainment – witnessed when I was a good deal less than knee-high was Jerry and Helen Cohan, George M. Cohan's father and mother, in Haworth's [*sic*] Hibernica – a program that consisted largely of the Cohans and a panorama background on hand-cranked rollers. A few seconds earnest twisting of the crank brought about a miraculously quick change of scene from the Giant's Causeway to the Streets of Dublin to Lakes of Killarney and so forth through the whole gamut of Irish scenery – and the Cohans did something gloriously exciting in front of each scene: a song and dance, or a jig, or a reel, or a sentimental ballad perhaps. They were grand performers – George

Cohan comes by his theatrical wizardry as naturally as I did by my taste for the theatre – and their show was out and away the most magnificent thing I’d ever seen. I was just paralyzed with excitement, and from that day on went to whatever play was in town whenever I could persuade Father that I needed a ticket worse than some other member of the family.¹

Tyler was not the only American theatre professional to remember Jerry and Nellie Cohan’s hibernicon performances fondly. Charles Ludwig Wagner, a lecturer, concert manager, and Broadway producer, also recalled how all the “popular road favorites” played at Parker Opera House, which he helped run. “What an amusing revival this play would make for a modern revue!,” Wagner exclaimed over the Cohans’ performance in Howorth’s *Hibernica*, “From two vertical rollers at either side of the stage a canvas screen was suspended on which was painted a picturesque Irish panorama. The comedians romped and sang all over the stage, pointing to the features of their canvas landscape as they danced about before it.”² Even for less successful performers, the Cohans and their hibernicon performances provided inspiration. John Holloran, eighty-two, spoke to an upstate New York newspaper about his attempts to restart his career as a comic magician after his retirement from the health department. “What started us on our professional tour [in my youth],” Holloran explained, “was seeing Jerry Cohan, father of George M. Cohan, who afterwards became famous, playing at the pavilion in Prospect Park, where he put on a *Panorama of Ireland*.”³

By the time the Cohans appeared on Broadway at Keith’s Union Square Theatre in 1893, Jerry and Nellie had incorporated their children, Josephine and George, into their act entitled the *Four Cohans*. They eventually became one of the highest paid families in vaudeville. Their act also provided a platform for George to launch his career as a songwriter, performer, librettist, and manager. The press celebrated George as “the man who owned Broadway” and his fame and success soon overshadowed the rest of his family.⁴

As a result of the remaining record, Jerry Cohan provides a vehicle through which to examine a hibernicon performance and the lives of Irish ethnic performers. The Cohans make an important case study because they starred in hibernicon productions on and off for twenty years. Many variety performers established long careers in American popular entertainment through the hibernicon. Following the Cohans' career path highlights the instability of life as a variety performer. It also illustrates the reliability of the hibernicon for a variety performer during the late nineteenth century. The effort to document his family's work led to the preservation of Jerry Cohan's 1880s repertoire book, which contains the only remaining hibernicon sketches. His work reveals how the malleability of the hibernicon form allowed Jerry Cohan to shape his hibernicon companies and performances to suit his own needs and the demands of the market. His sketches also demonstrate how the hibernicon's basic narrative and comic gags negotiated both middle and working class notions of masculinity and American life. The negotiation of these perspectives enabled the Irish and Irish-American working class, with its diverse notions of success and community, to see their worldviews reflected in the performance.

The Early Career of Jerry Cohan

At the age of thirteen, Jerry Cohan, a first generation Irish-American, started practicing the skills that would help him build a long career on the American stage. Early in the Civil War, he enlisted in the Union Army where, according to one report, he "danced himself into the hearts of the soldiers."⁵ After the war ended, he returned to Springfield, Massachusetts and worked as a harness maker's apprentice, but he continued to practice his dancing with friends in the local lumberyard. According to one Cohan interview, when a minstrel troupe in need of a dancer

arrived in Springfield, Cohan convinced the manager to let him perform. That night, the manager offered him a position with the company.⁶

Cohan later bemoaned how the press forgot about his minstrel past and reduced his career to Irish comedy. He explained, “The papers make me sore when they give people the impression that I started out in the variety shows and that the only work I have ever done was the swinging of an Irish shillelagh in a hoe-down. No, sir, I made my start in a minstrel show, and I’m proud of it.”⁷ In spite of Cohan’s protests to the contrary, he started performing Irish ethnic comedy soon after he began travelling with various minstrel troupes. In addition to playing harp and violin, Cohan performed primarily as an end man and Irish dancer. In numbers such as “The Irish Dancing Master” and “The Dancing Professor,” his Irish dancing typically involved clogging.⁸ Clogging was a standard on the minstrel and variety stage by the 1860s. As one *New York Times* writer commented, rhythm was essential to skilled clogging:

the art and merit of this style of performance consists in producing with the heels of the clogs a lively accompaniment to the tune. The air must be loudly sounded by the beating of the clogs, or the performance is aught. The clog dancer will perform a hornpipe, and every note of the music will have a faithful echo from the clog. Also he will imitate the approach of a locomotive and various other sounds, and will combine all this with intricate crossing of his legs and feet. He does not attempt to be graceful. He is immovable from the waist upward, and only his legs move. His face is contracted with a grace frown, and were he not really executing with his heels a lively obligate the performance would seem the most ridiculous imaginable. It is true that sometimes great rapidity of motion is required, but the real quality essential is precision of time.⁹

Like Dick Sands, who Cohan bragged he once beat in a New England clogging competition, it is probable that Cohan did not appear in blackface when performing his Irish dances, but rather as a comic Irishman.¹⁰ After a few months in minstrelsy, Cohan met the MacEvoyes and joined their hibernicon. In his article on Jerry and Nelly Cohan’s life, Verne Hardin Porter explains that “To this work he gave seven years of his life.”¹¹

The dates of the Cohans' hibernicon performances are not as clear as Porter assumes. Other sources document how the Cohans relied on the hibernicon performances for much of the 1870s and 1880s. The first record of Jerry Cohan's performance with a MacEvoy hibernicon troupe appears in 1869. Cohan is listed in the show's central role, Barney the Guide. In a newspaper puff, the *Daily Cleveland Herald* claimed Cohan "made a great hit as 'Barney the Guide,' presenting the rollicking fun and contagious humor of the proverbial Irishman."¹² During the same visit, another Cleveland newspaper illustrates how Cohan continued to profit from his clogging. The paper referred to Cohan as "one of the best dancers in the business."¹³ He continued to play the guide character, sometimes called Dublin Dan, and by the early 1870s, he decided to try his hand at managing his own hibernicon company. When discussing his 1874 courtship of Nellie, Cohan explained that he had "owned my own Hibernicon for several years by that time."¹⁴ After they married, Nellie joined her husband on the road as the company's business manager and treasurer, even though she had no theatre experience. When the company's lead actress quit unexpectedly, Nellie made her stage debut, presumably as Nora, with the words, "Sure I can't tell one from the other." "I spoke those words, my first on the stage," Cohan remembered, "and I am proud to say that the show, 'The Two Barneys,' was written by my husband. The date was September 27, 1874."¹⁵

During these years, the depression of the 1870s "hit the Cohan pocketbook" hard and debts mounted.¹⁶ Jerry Cohan performed in a wide range of troupes to pay his family's bills. He continued to work in minstrelsy and variety, but his acts often adapted bits from the hibernicon or traded on his reputation as an Irish performer. An 1876 broadside for The Great Aiken Combination listed Jerry Cohan as the "Irish Guide and Dublin Dancing Master."¹⁷ Throughout the late 1870s and early 1880s, the Cohans frequently toured with their sketch *The*

Molly Maguires as part of a variety troupe. With origins in Ireland, the Molly Maguires were a secret Irish-American labor organization that faced a series of late 1870s arrests in the Pennsylvania anthracite region. At one point, the *New York Clipper* refers to the Cohans and *The Molly Maguires* touring with an “Irish variety show,” terminology that occasionally referred to the hibernicon. Yet, it also may have referred simply to a group of Irish comedians that toured with the piece.¹⁸ Even when not touring with the hibernicon, the Cohans still had success with pro-Irish pieces as the advertising for *The Molly Maguires* indicates. One ad boasts that “the play abounds in sentiment, elevating in its nature, showing how political intrigue, wire pullers and capitalists, used the secret order of the Molly Maguires to carry out their wicked and tyrannical [sic] designs.”¹⁹ Its apparently pro-labor, pro-Irish, anti-capitalist leanings in combination with Cohan’s dancing and the production’s promised spectacle held enough appeal that the Cohans performed the sketch on and off through the late 1880s.

Regardless of their other ventures, the Cohans kept coming back to the hibernicon, which suggests its continued viability and the Cohans’ belief that the entertainment provided them with a way of supporting their family. After Cohan’s run with the minstrel Aiken Combination in 1876, he performed again with MacEvoy’s Hibernicon as the guide.²⁰ In the early 1880s, the Cohans also ran two additional hibernicon companies called the Cohan, Sellon, and Burns Company and Jerry Cohan’s Irish Hibernia.²¹ According to the *New York Clipper*, in 1884 and 1885, Jerry Cohan held a stake in the Lyceum Dime Theatre in Halifax, Nova Scotia, but he sold it and the family returned to Boston.²² During the same two years, the Cohans also toured with Howorth’s Hibernica, sometimes called Howorth’s Irish and American Tourists.²³ Many of the sketches in Jerry Cohan’s 1880s repertoire book are not Irish comedies, so the family continued to try their luck with other types of variety sketches. Yet, even in the late 1880s, according to

George M. Cohan, after touring with a production involving a Daniel Boone sketch, Jerry Cohan started another hibernicon company called the Irish Hibernia.²⁴ The career instability represented by the Cohans implies that variety and minstrel performers had to change their acts frequently to attract audiences. It also suggests that even when the Cohans played the starring roles in their hibernicon companies, their troupes were not profitable enough to continue for more than a few months and in less common cases, years. The most successful hibernicon companies played in New York on their tours and perhaps the Cohans' seeming lack of New York engagements reflects their inability to break into the top ranks of hibernicon companies.

The Cohans' hibernicon experiences and how some scholars have dealt with them illustrate reasons for some hibernicon companies' erasure from the historical record. They also highlight the marketing techniques used by these troupes to keep their entertainments novel. In the late 1870s and early 1880s, the Cohans performed on and off with Healy's Hibernian Minstrels. Jerry Cohan had partnered with a man named Healy as early as 1874 with the hibernicon company, Healy and Cohan's Hiberniana, but it is unclear if it is the same man.²⁵ Like Cohan, John E. Healy, who later became famous for running the Kickapoo Indian Medicine Company with Charles Bigelow, was born in New England and served in the Union Army. After the war, Healy worked as a peddler, shoe salesman, and door-to-door salesman before he began selling the King of Pain liniment. He used his profits to start Healy's Hibernian Minstrels, which performed from around 1878 to 1881.²⁶

Many scholars refer to the company as a minstrel show, but they discuss it in this manner solely based on the company name. Healy's Hibernian Minstrels demonstrates how this is an incorrect assumption and that the term "minstrel" could be used to refer to non-blackface entertainments in the nineteenth century as well. Confusion over the show's relationship to

minstrelsy already existed in the early twentieth century. A 1920s article on the medicine show and Healy directly confronts descriptions of Healy's Hibernian Minstrels as a minstrel show and clarifies the nature of the performance:

There was no black face about his show. His troupers wore green velvets and billycocks, twirled blackthorns, sang Irish ballads and danced Irish jobs for a generation of immigrants still homesick for Erin. No such minstrel was complete without an Irish panorama elucidated comically by Barney the Guide. Among his troupe was Jerry Cohan, father of George M. The senior Cohan, then a youth, was known as the Dancing Philosopher. As he jigged, he commented on the day's follies much as Will Rogers was to do later with a lariat and a wad of gum.²⁷

As this article indicates, Cohan's success as a variety performer continued to rely substantially on his dancing skills, which were key for an Irish ethnic comic during these years.

Confirming the *Saturday Evening Post's* assessment, late nineteenth century advertisements for the troupe place the company firmly within the hibernicon tradition. One ad described the show as "something similar to, yet different from the Hibernicon here a short time ago, the plan of Healy's Minstrels being of broader scope and greater magnitude, more expensive, and better in every respect."²⁸ An article that originally appeared in the *Atlantic Constitution* detailed the advertising practices of the company as well as discussed the performance in terms of hibernicon entertainments:

The street parade of the minstrels was particularly fine, and attracted the attention of the streets to an unusual degree. The performers were all first class and the pieces were very fine indeed. At night, the overture was particularly fine. The ballads and jokes were full of that genuine humor and laughter-provoking mirth that is inseparable from the Irish character. These Hibernians are 'genuiners' – They are Irish to the backbone, and their pieces partake of all the humor and eccentricity, which we have learned to expect from them. The 'Mirror of Ireland' was an enchanting presentation of such scenes as would most interest the student of Irish history or the traveler in that portion of the world. This was a most appreciable part of the evening's performance.²⁹

As theatre historian Brooks McNamara discusses, advertising through street parades or “dragging the town” began with circuses, but many traveling popular entertainments also copied the practice to advertise their performances in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.³⁰

Similar to how hibernicon companies used the MacEvoy name to imply a connection to the original troupe, one hibernicon company that Cohan performed with between 1885 and 1887 also tried to profit from using a more well known Irish-American performer’s name. Harrigan’s Tourists, sometimes called Harrigan’s Double Hibernian Company, tried to use the popularity of Edward Harrigan and his Mulligan characters to appeal to audiences.³¹

Even though Jerry Cohan’s career highlights the instabilities of some variety performers’ lives and the entertainment market’s frequent need for novelty, Cohan performed in almost the same sketch in his hibernicon companies for almost fifteen years. Harrigan’s Tourists showcased the sketch entitled *The Two Barneys*, which Cohan wrote at least by 1874. It is possible that it was not actually Cohan’s script and it is unclear how the sketch may have changed other than by adding a reference to the Mulligans. However, it still functioned on the same premise. The local paper in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania reported that “[t]he panorama is only fair but the specialties which enliven the entertainment were very good and the comedy ‘The Two Barneys, or Mulligan’s Double’ was jolly from the first to last...the funny situations arising from mistakes of the two Barneys kept the audience in a roar all through the evening and the encores were so frequent as to prolong the entertainment greatly.”³² In the mid-1880s, the Cohans also appeared in an almost identical sketch written by Jerry entitled *The Two Dans*. The script’s “idea was suggested by Shakespeare’s ‘Comedy of Errors,’ and the piece depicts two brothers, separated in childhood, and from whose resemblance ludicrous complications and

humorous mistakes arise.”³³ The persistence of this plot suggests it had particular audience appeal.

Until the Cohans joined the Keith and Albee circuit, they continued to appear with variations of Harrigan’s Tourists and Irish variety shows without panoramas like Tom Barry’s Irish Comedy Company.³⁴ During this time, the Cohans’ children Josie and George began to join them onstage. Although some sources claim George first performed in a Daniel Boone production, several state that George’s first appeared on stage during the hibernicon performance of *The Two Dans*.³⁵ Regardless of whether this is true, much of George M. Cohan’s introduction to the world of popular performance occurred through the hibernicon. Robert Grau, theatre impresario and manager, remembers that “George M. Cohan was a violin prodigy at the age of five, and his nimble feet first availed him a few years later in a Hibernicon entertainment which his father, Jerry Cohan, toured with in the early 1880s.”³⁶ If more documentation existed, it would be interesting to consider how these early hibernicon experiences influenced George’s later career.

Negotiating Class: Jerry Cohan’s Repertoire Book

Until the Cohans’ big break, life on the road defined their careers. Nellie Cohan commented that she “didn’t feel like a real wife, buzzing about over the country. That is no way to live.”³⁷ George reflected that “it was neither the Big City nor the Windy city that first gave us the big hand and the inspiration that led up to it. It was the small towns of America, from New England to the Pacific Coast. We spent most of our early professional days solely in their

company. On the ‘road’.”³⁸ George described his family’s rehearsal process in the early days when they traveled with their Irish comedy companies:

In those barnstorming days we had no scripts, not even cues. You had to be a ‘natural’ to get across. My [father] would assemble the company for first rehearsal, step out before us, clear his throat, and become very Irish. ‘And what could you do for your country, sir?’ he would ask one of the newcomers. ‘An Irish comedian? So you think that, do you? Now, here’s the idea of the show, I’ll have you know,’ he would continue. And it was just a free-for-all. Give and take. A battle of wits. The lines were changed frequently, retaining only those that got a laugh or brought tears to the eyes of the audience.³⁹

The improvisation that characterized Cohan performances makes it is impossible to reconstruct the Cohans’ roles in the hibernicon completely. However, Jerry Cohan recorded his sketches from the 1880s in a repertoire book, which provides a partial view of their productions.

Alongside other Irish and non-Irish monologues, songs, sketches, and a melodrama, the book contains hibernicon sketches. As theatre historian Laurence Senelick notes, “It would be misleading to overemphasize the originality of Cohan’s work.”⁴⁰ Yet, it is exactly Cohan’s reflection of the day’s conventions and genres that make his sketches an important window into how the hibernicon potentially functioned in performance and why it succeeded for decades.

The monologues, sketches, and songs in the repertoire book reveal Cohan’s approach to the stage Irish characters that he frequently performed. As a result of the hibernicon’s variety nature, it is possible that some of these other Irish-centric entries appeared in a hibernicon performance. Cohan’s writing incorporates standard stage Irish conventions, but often in a celebratory context. Even when his pieces mock the Irish, they frequently champion them as superior to other ethnic or immigrant groups. The song “I Want to be an Irish Man” epitomizes this balance between ethnic celebration and stage Irishness. The song features a Dutch comic character, who dreams about becoming an Irish man. Before the song starts, he explains the song’s basic premise: “I like the Irish. There is something so socialable about them. I wish I

was Irish instead of German....There was a young Irish doctor transfused [sic] some of his blood into me when I was sick. What was the result? When I got well, I raised side-whiskers, wore a plug hat – got drunk. Licked the doctor was put in jail and had lots of fun. Even since then I wish I was an Irish man.” The emphasis on ethnic characteristics passed on through blood indicates an inherent camaraderie among any Irish immigrant and Irish-American at the same time that it roots the stereotype in biological characteristics that will not change no matter how long the Irish live in America. The expressed desire of the German to become Irish also places the Irish in an enviable position and degrades German culture. Throughout the song, the German aspires to acquire common stage Irish characteristics including a habit of drinking and fighting and wearing shamrocks and side-whiskers. He also celebrates the Irish by praising the Gallant 69th, the famed Irish regiment in the American Civil War. The title “I Want to be an Irish Man” also suggests ethnic pride.⁴¹

Other sketches in the book reflect conventional late nineteenth century comic characters, like the Irish spinster and the Irish maid. The jokes in these characters’ monologue and song rely on mocking stereotypical Irishness, but the Irish are not necessarily the jokes’ main targets. Reflecting the variety stereotype of the Irish working class Bridget, the Irish spinster is not portrayed as bright. She reports that her first love “[p]aid for [their picnic] all himself and borrowed the money from me.” Yet, her position as a subject of ridicule is defined more by her marital status than her ethnicity. Her employer “wonders how I stand my lonely life” and she then goes on to recount a series of mishaps with lovers. The Irish maid’s song describes her pretensions to be like her boss. Before the song starts, she states, “Altho I’m but a servant girl/I’m a lady too as well/With a high toned Yankee family in a browne stone house I dwell/The neighbors girls all envy me and imitate my style – the Butcher and the baker think I’m mistress

all the while.” The comedy results from the perceived distance between the Irish servant girl and a well-mannered and respectable Yankee woman, but it also portrays the goal of Irish girl’s betterment as possible.⁴² Cohan’s more positive stage Irish characters mirrored the trend across theatrical genres that moved away from the early nineteenth century’s harsh simian depictions. The increase in Southern and Eastern European immigrants and middle-class Irish made the Irish a more acceptable immigrant group for some native Americans. The more positive stage Irish characterizations also defined the Irish stereotypes in the hibernicon sketches.

In his analysis of variety gags books, Senelick claims that Cohan’s repertoire book represents the effort to clean up variety. As a result of the decades between the Famine immigration and Cohan’s performances in the 1880s, Senelick concludes that “[t]he Cohans appealed to an audience that was ready to lose itself, to forsake politics that dealt with issues and social betterment for the nebulous promises of ‘free silver’ and ‘full dinner pail’...the Cohans stood for a less abrasive diversion; the comedy they provided was soothing and condoling...it was also more remote from the lives of its patrons.”⁴³ Yet, the Irish audience of variety performances possibly included not only members of the Famine generation, but also more recent Irish immigrants. Although Senelick’s assertion might apply to the California gold mining drama among other Cohan writings, I argue that the hibernicon sketches remained potentially political and immediately relevant to the concerns and dreams of some Irish and Irish-American audience members.

Unlike the homogeneous community implied by hibernicon companies’ advertisements to “the Irish,” in reality, the “wearers of the green” lived in diverse communities with multifaceted and sometimes starkly opposed identities. It would be inaccurate to reduce the Irish and Irish-American communities to one segment of immigrants or one type of political view. The

consistent influx of new Irish immigrants helped maintain an ethnic community with increasingly strong ethnic institutions. In the post-Famine decades, the character of the immigration shifted from the poor, family migration of the Famine to a migration dominated by single Irish in their twenties. Unlike most other immigrant groups of the period, immigrants of both genders left Ireland in almost equal numbers. The Irish emigrated from all over Ireland and brought various regional experiences across the Atlantic. These new immigrants helped keep Irish political and social issues present in American life. In her study of the Asian-American diaspora, scholar Lisa Lowe discusses how “the ways in which [diaspora] is imagined, practiced, and continued – is worked out as much ‘horizontally’ among communities as it is transmitted ‘vertically’ in unchanging forms from one generation to the next.”⁴⁴

Although Irish diasporic experiences ultimately are rooted in the centuries-long British colonization of Ireland, Irish emigrants’ reasons for “displacement” or “recollected moment[s] when...they were wrenched from their mother(father)land” differed, even for members of the same generation, as Lowe’s horizontal perspective suggests.⁴⁵ Since the Great Famine of 1845 hit Western Ireland the hardest, most emigrants after 1845 were Catholic and from rural areas. The images of starvation and death seared themselves into the memories of those who survived and were passed on to their descendents. For most post-Famine immigrants, the reasons for “displacement” and the moment of “wrenching” resulted from social and economic ramifications of the Great Famine. Before the Famine, most families in Western Ireland practiced “partible” inheritance, in which families split up their land and money amongst all their children. This system fostered population growth, but often families did not have enough land to support themselves. The Famine exacerbated these already trying economic and social conditions. However, after 1845, the widespread adoption of “impartible inheritance” or

primogeniture allowed only the eldest son to inherit and generally provided only enough extra money for a single dowry. As a result, the younger children of Irish families seldom had the land or money to marry. In a society still dominated by agricultural production, these non-inheriting children faced either a celibate life with their parents or the church or emigration to cities or countries with greater economic opportunities. Between 1856 and 1921, some family immigration occurred, but, overall, young men and women in their teens and early twenties comprised the majority of Irish immigrants. As a result of improvements in trans-Atlantic travel, these immigrants no longer faced the “coffin ships,” but typically traveled in faster, government regulated steam ships.⁴⁶

The class differences among Irish and Irish-American audience members also contributed to their diversity.⁴⁷ By the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century, a growing number of Irish-Americans began to move into the middle class, defying the prevalent nineteenth century image of Irish-Americans as lazy and impoverished. Despite the impression of the Irish community’s “surface unity,” this class shift reflected “a growing diversity and stratification” and an expansion of what constituted “Irishness” in the public imagination.⁴⁸ The term “lace curtain Irish” referred to America’s middle class Irish population and “denot[ed] a certain level of financial achievement [as well as]...connot[ed] a self-conscious, anxious attempt to create and maintain a certain level and mode of gentility.”⁴⁹ The increase of the lace-curtain Irish created internal struggles in the Irish-American community, with “the desire to join the ‘ins’ conflict[ing] with the desire to lead the ‘outs.’ The wish to climb socially ran counter to the impulse to champion the rebellious, restless poor.”⁵⁰ However, at the same time, constant emigration caused the lower class Irish communities in American urban centers to grow. Upon arrival, these young immigrants tended to be more religious as a result of Ireland’s “devotional

revolution” and better educated. They also received financial help and advice from family and friends who already emigrated, which eased the traumatic transition.⁵¹

Across this spectrum of the Irish diasporic experience, many Irish immigrants and their descendants faced the question presented by R. Radhakrishnan: “how could *someone* be both *one* and something *other*?”⁵² Radhakrishnan’s question problematizes the generalization that the Irish became American and lost their ethnic identity in the early twentieth century. Historian William H.A. Williams perhaps better expresses the Irish’s situation when he asks, “How could the Irish love America *and* Ireland?”⁵³ In spite of the increasing rate of “assimilation” and class mobility, Irish-Americans, even those who had never seen Ireland, “were called upon to feel the hurt of Ireland’s wrongs.”⁵⁴ This creates what Avtar Brah refers to as the homing desire. She writes that “The concept of diaspora places the discourse of ‘home’ and ‘dispersion’ in creative tension, inscribing a homing desire while simultaneously critiquing discourses of fixed origins.”⁵⁵ As historian Kerby Miller has discussed, this homesickness and nostalgia was both a “consequence and a contributing cause of the difficulties experienced abroad.”⁵⁶

Echos of this homesickness appeared on stage in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Joseph Nunes’s *Fast Folks: Or, The Earl Days of California* (1861), an Irishman named Barney interrupts his box moving to express his dreams of returning home to the audience. He states, “wages...make a poor man soon grow rich! Another year, an’ I’ll go home to Ireland, an’ buy a grand estate! I’ll have petaties [sic] big as flour barrels, an’ pigs like grizzlies! An’ won’t I make ‘em stare, to see me drive about!”⁵⁷ Fifty years later, Peg from *Peg O’My Heart* (1912) paints Irish emigration in less optimistic and grandiose terms. After she is told that “money is the standard today,” Peg argues that “it’s easier to suffer the want of food than the want of love. ‘And that’s what the Irish are doing all over the world. They’re driven from their

own country. They're made wanders on the face of the earth, and nothin' they ever earn'll make up to them for the separation from their homes and from their loved ones'."⁵⁸ In the view of Peg and her family, emigrants remain marked by their longing for Ireland.

Some Irish immigrants' and Irish-Americans' concepts of home made the hibernicon a temporary antidote to diasporic longing. Anglo-Irishman Sir Horace Plunkett claimed that the Irish notion of home "transcended the nuclear family to embrace an entire 'social order' – the human and physical landscapes with which rural dwellers, especially Irish-speakers, had such intimate organize relationships."⁵⁹ Expressing nostalgia for Irish landscape and forgetting the hardships that caused them to leave, many immigrants expressed their diasporic longing in terms of a desire to return to the land itself. One emigrant wrote about how he "can picture everything so vividly as I write, the hills and the fields, the bogs and the turf combined with a charming simplicity and hospitality which is not to be equaled any place in the worlds. I miss it very much and pray to God to hasten the day when I may go back once more."⁶⁰ Although songs, lectures, and sketches also filled the hibernicon, for those who longed to reconnect with the Irish land, the ads and reviews made clear that the panorama of the Irish landscape played a starring role.

In terms of its marketing, the hibernicon played to the notion of a diverse Irish and Irish-American population in their audiences. During its run, the hibernicon often held separate nights for different areas of Ireland. One ad described the "change of scenery" on Monday, Wednesday, [and] Friday [to] Dublin, Wicklow, the South and Killarney and "Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday [to] Dublin, Wicklow, The North and West."⁶¹ Breaking up the show in this manner clearly benefited the companies. They potentially attracted new audiences nightly based on the novelty of their panorama. Companies also might have made this choice to target different segments of the Irish and Irish-American population. Perhaps the hibernicon had a

stronger appeal when it focused on the area where Irish immigrants or the Irish-Americans' ancestors lived. After displaying the separate geographies, most companies held a final performance showcasing the whole country. Unsurprisingly, they encouraged previous audience members, Irish and non-Irish alike, to attend for the complete tourist experience.⁶²

Cohan's sketches provide an additional way to analyze how the hibernicon appealed to different constituencies within Irish and Irish-American communities. The series of hibernicon sketches, which Cohan may or may not have performed together, comprise six scenes. Scene One starts with the Tourist speaking to the audience and announcing that he needs a guide and driver. He talks about speaking to "a man by the name of O'Brallagan who hires out jaunting cars to tourists and asked if he could recommend one." O'Brallagan recommends his own son Barney, who then joins the Tourist on stage. Comic business and one-liners between the Tourist and Barney ensue over issues of his employment, including exchanges over whether Barney drinks and how much he should be paid. At the beginning of Scene Two, Barney asks the Tourist's permission to say goodbye to his love Nora before they leave to see Ireland's sights. When he goes to Nora's home, he faces the opposition of Nora's mother, who wants Nora to marry a rich man instead of Barney. Barney convinces the mother to give her consent by complimenting her, but after a series of comic mishaps, the mother once again refuses to let Barney marry her daughter. The sequence ends with Barney and Nora declaring that they will find a way to marry.⁶³

After embarking on their journey around Ireland, in Scene Three, the Tourist explains to the audience that "Barney our car driver fell in with a country sargeant who got him tipsy and induced him to enlist as a soldier. Nora who by the way has been engaged as waiting maid to the ladies is nearly heart broken." The stage moment concludes with a soldier song. Nora pleads

with Barney to stay with her in Scene Four. She talks about her new job and how she might be able to convince her new boss to hire Barney as a driver. Barney tries to get out of his job with the Tourist. After a series of misunderstandings, the audience learns that Nora actually is working for the Tourist's sister, so Nora and Barney can be together after all. With the entrance of Hans, the German tourist who wants Nora to marry him, the scene ends with the introduction of a new obstacle for Barry and Nora. During Scene Five, Nora finds out that Barney also is courting her cousin Rosa. They both break up with him. Disgraced, Barney pleads with the Tourist to help him go to America. However, the Tourist comes up with a plot that helps Barney mend his relationship with Nora. The piece ends with Nora's mother consenting to her marriage with Barney. Another Barney and Nora sketch appears later in the repertoire book. In this brief sketch, Nora and Barney say good-bye to each other while declaring their love.⁶⁴

Viewed through the competing and conflicting ideologies of American nineteenth-century culture, the sketches potentially were read in a myriad of ways that supported various perspectives on Irish and Irish-American life. As Michel de Certeau notes, "The social and technical functioning of contemporary culture hierarchizes these two activities. To write is to produce the text; to read is to receive it from someone else without putting one's own mark on it, without remaking it."⁶⁵ Yet, de Certeau claims that instead reading functions differently. He writes that "readers are travelers; they move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write."⁶⁶ Scholar such as Robert Chartier and Erin A. Smith, have applied this notion to the idea of the popular. Chartier resituates popular as "a kind of relation, a way of using cultural products or norms that are shared, more or less, by society at large, but understood, defined, and used in styles that vary."⁶⁷ In her study of pulp magazines, Smith explains that by situating "popular" in these terms, "cultural consumption

becomes an active production of meaning that is useful given one's situation, goals, and personal history. In the best such texts they find 'equipment for living' – structures, characters, scenes, and an idiom through which to make sense of their own experience."⁶⁸ How were the hibernicon performances possibly "appropriated differently"?⁶⁹ It is impossible to read the audiences' minds to know exactly why they attended hibernicon performances. However, through two different readings of the same text, I will illustrate why these performances may have appealed to a wide swath of the Irish and Irish-American community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Take One: Immigrants, Irishness, and the American Dream

In spite of native prejudices and everyday hardships, some Irish emigrants and Irish Americans still viewed America as a land of opportunity. America is "where labor is prized and rewarded, and where every man is the equal of his fellows," one well-off Irish-American wrote.⁷⁰ In the 1870s, one emigrant predicted that "America is a going to lift up the poor man and put him on a level with the so called gentleman."⁷¹ Even if emigrants felt trapped in their new social position in America, many still believed that America presented better opportunities for their children than Ireland. Irish visitors to America remarked on the transformation of the working class Irish in America, with one Irish priest commenting that they gained a "manly independence" compared to the "cringing respect with which those of the lower rungs of the social ladder regard those above them" in Ireland.⁷²

As these examples illustrate, for some Irish emigrants and Irish Americans, the American Dream and altered perspectives on work and masculinity characterized their outlook on life in America. Cohan's sketches reveal how audience members may have read the hibernicon as an argument for these middle class notions of individuality, masculinity, and the American Dream. Ultimately, the sketches assured its Irish and Irish-American audience that they made the correct decision to leave. In spite of the ability to travel and finally go home, each performance ends with the visitors and the Irish and Irish-American audience members returning to New York. They do not stay to enjoy their homeland or to help with the fight against the British. The performance clearly advocates for the strong connections between the Irish diaspora and the homeland, but the future of the Irish Diaspora does not exist at home.

Irish immigrants' and Irish-Americans' expectations of a better life in America not only resulted from reports by relatives and advertisements for steamships, but also from the hope for a better life that middle class ideology promoted. Even though hardship in America highlighted the difficulty of self-improvement, some working class men clung to ideas of possible advancement. This hope was rooted in middle class ideas of masculinity, which characterized the "test of true manhood" as "economic success as a boss and breadwinner in the highly competitive capitalist marketplace."⁷³ An Irishman in Dion Boucicault's *O'Dowd* (1880) sums up the ideal transformation of Irishman after their arrival in America: "[The Irishmen are] changed on their arrival on that shore into thrifty, hard-working, invaluable citizens, the life-blood of American labour, a source of American wealth and prosperity! (*cheers*)."⁷⁴ Working class reading material, like Horatio Alger dime novels, and popular songs reinforced this notion. Songs focusing on politics particularly emphasized the Irish's ability to move into the middle class. The song "My Uncle Dan McCann" describes how Dan McCann's nephew arrives in

America to find his uncle, who “left the county Galway in the year of ’51.” When he finally finds him, he sings about how McCann has bettered himself in America: “I found me Uncle Dan McCann/A very prosperous Yankee man/He holds a seat in Congress/And he’s leader of his clan.” Edward Harrigan’s “Muldoon the Solid Man” also talks about the rise of an immigrant through politics. The character Muldoon states that he is “a man of great influence and educated to a high degree/I came when small from Donegal/And me cousin Jimmy came along with me/On the city road I was situated/In a lodging house with me brother Dan/‘Til by perseverance I elevated/And I went to the front like a solid man.”⁷⁵ Other songs at the turn of the century praise the rise of the Irish throughout various occupations in American society. In the song “The Kellys,” the narrator is also looking for his uncle, Martin Kelly, but he cannot track him down because everywhere he turns, there is another Kelly. He explains that “The Kellys run the statehouse, The Kellys run the banks, The police and the fire department sure the Kellys fill the ranks. Dan Kelly runs the railroads, John Kelly runs the seas, Kate Kelly runs the suffragettes and she looks right good to me.”⁷⁶ In this song at least, women also rise to positions of influence and respect in America.

Looking at the advertisements in hibernicon songsters also illustrates how middle class ideologies of self-improvement infiltrated working class culture. Part of a long tradition of street literature revolving around lyrics-only publications like broadsides and chapbooks, songsters were small books with secular lyrics and minimal to no musical notation. In the case of the hibernicon songsters among others, the songsters often indicated the tune for the lyrics and operated under the assumption that their audience would know how to sing them. Songsters peaked in publication in the 1860s due to advances in printing technology and the mail service, which created an explosion in production and sales. Yet, songsters remained a popular format

for distributing lyrics well into the early twentieth century. Printed on low quality paper, most songsters cost about ten cents and catered mainly to working class audiences.⁷⁷

By the mid-nineteenth century, songsters commonly included advertisements in the front or back, which typically promoted the publisher's other publications for sale. At least by the turn of the century, the amount of advertising text often indicated the intended audience. Publishers targeted shorter ads at middle class professionals, who they felt were too busy to read a long ad. They crafted longer ads for people with less education, who they assumed had more time on their hands and therefore would find them more educational and entertaining.⁷⁸ It is estimated that ninety-five percent of Irish immigrants were literate in late nineteenth century, so the fair amount of text included in most hibernicon songster advertisements would not be an obstacle, even if they were assumed to be less educated.⁷⁹ Advertisements not only encouraged songster readers to purchase other items, but they “also signif[ied] a certain vision of the good life; they validate[d] a way of being in the world...They sanction[ed] or subvert[ed] existing structures of economic and political power.”⁸⁰ As a result, Smith writes that advertising “offer[ed] a rough indication of the readers’ concerns. Although advertisers were seeking to shape readers into consumers, they nonetheless had to appeal to deeply felt needs and desires in order to manipulate their audience.”⁸¹

Taking a look at the hibernicon songster advertisements reveals that most ads reinforced the middle class idea of masculinity and the American dream by encouraging self-improvement through the acquisition of skills, including elocution, letter writing, and arithmetic. *Webster’s Practical Letter Writer* and *Webster’s Reciter or Elocution Made Easy* promised readers to help them improve their communication skills.⁸² *Sweet’s Ready Reckoner* claimed that “to persons but slightly acquainted with Arithmetic, this book will be invaluable....has an immense amount

of new, very valuable, practical information of the greatest use to every mechanic, farmer and general businessman.”⁸³ Certain guides taught specific skills sets, like *DeWitt’s Complete American Farrier and Horse Doctor* and *The Apprentice, Or First Book for Mechanics, Machinists, and Engineers*.⁸⁴ Publishers also sold the idea that there existed a proper way to keep your house or court your future spouse.⁸⁵ Whether implicitly or explicitly, the publishers tried to sell their goods on the premise that improving one’s life was as simple as owning the right instructional guide.

The advertisements imply that “the process of pursuing the middle-class income necessary to become a mainstream consumer involved a particular kind of consumption.”⁸⁶ The advertisements constructed an audience member who participated in this consumer culture without giving up their working class diversions. By explicitly tying the theatrical experience to purchases outside of the playhouse, the advertisements connected amusement to consumption. Advertisements for joke books and ten-cent novels appear in each songster. One ad for novels included one-sentence summaries, which promised adventure in exciting locales with each new purchase. They also sold guides to acting, singing, magic, and taxidermy.⁸⁷ None of the advertisements explicitly promised stardom. Yet, publishers included these acting, singing, and magic guide advertisements alongside songs, prefaces, and brief notes from hibernicon performers. It would not be a huge leap for an adoring audience member to see the guides as a first step in their ascent to stardom. With the right guide, anyone can learn to be a star. The idea that variety and vaudeville performance inspired similar aspirations is not a new idea. Theatre historian John Frick even goes as far as stating that “[c]onventional consensus on this issue is exceedingly clear.” In Albert McLean’s *American Vaudeville as Ritual* as well as many subsequent studies, scholars argue that “the American vaudeville show, through its

foregrounding of images of success, improvement and social mobility, appealed to and objectified the underlying aspirations of its clientele.” These images “served to reinforce working class ambitions and support visions of an economically open society.”⁸⁸

Through a perspective that valued these middle class values, it is possible to see how some Irish and Irish-American audience members may have interpreted Cohan’s script as an argument for emigration to America and an illustration of the American Dream. In Cohan’s script, the tourists are simply referred to as Americans and it is unclear if they have Irish ancestry. Since the audience travels “with” the Tourist to Ireland, the hibernicon encourages the audience to identify with the tourist as its agent on stage. The first character to speak in Cohan’s script is the Tourist, who frames how the audience views the journey and the other characters. Before Barney even appears on stage, the Tourist describes him as “a good looking gossoon with a witty tongue a wicked eye full of mirth and good humor.” Throughout the show, the Tourist’s repeated conversation with the audience also reinforces the close relationship between the audience and the Tourist. He provides pertinent plot information to the audience when he informs it about Barney’s decision to join the army and Nora’s new job as a maid. When he picks up on the misunderstanding that Nora and Barney think that they work for different employers, he indicates his knowledge in an aside to the audience.⁸⁹

In several ways, the Tourist represents the middle class success that many audience members dreamed of achieving. Based on the deference given to the Tourist by Barney and Nora, the ease with which he purchases their services, and the use of the title “your honor” and “gentleman” by the locals, it is clear that he is financially stable and a respected member of society. He has enough money to afford an Atlantic journey and to hire a guide for his visit. With so much of Irish-American popular culture filled with songs about American financial

success and a triumphant return to Ireland, it is not much of a stretch for some audience members to see the Tourist as the embodiment of those dreams.⁹⁰

The Tourist's American success also is highlighted by the stark contrast between the Tourist and Barney and Nora. Jerry Cohan marks the tourists as clearly superior to Ireland's inhabitants in terms of intelligence and demeanor. In one scene, Barney and Nora want to work for the same American tourist, so that they can remain together. Barney attempts to quit his job as a tour guide and Nora tries to convince her employer to hire Barney. Little do Barney and Nora know that they already work for the same tourist. However, the Tourist realizes the mix-up and decides to have fun at their expense. Only when Nora becomes upset does the Tourist reveal the joke. With no consciousness of the pain he has caused, the Tourist justifies his prank by explaining that "the joke [has] done my sister good. She has not laugh so heartily in many days." The Tourist not only has superior knowledge to the Irish workers, but he also belittles their concerns for his own amusement.⁹¹

In the final scene, the Tourist is once again involved in the problems of Barney and Nora. Nora breaks up with Barney who is having an affair with her cousin Rosa. Once Barney realizes he has lost both women, he asks, "will someone please drop a house on top of me" and then comes to an alternate solution to his unhappiness: he will "go to America." After asking the Tourist to take him to America as a servant, the Tourist explains that he will "help you out of your scrape. As its hardly fair for two young ladies to treat you so harshly." The Tourist then comes up with a plan to reunite Nora and Barney. Disguising Barney as an old uncle, the Tourist and Barney tell Rosa and Nora that Barney has left the country. Nora becomes distraught over Barney's emigration and declares her love for him. Barney throws off his disguise and the couple is immediately married. By helping Barney reunite with Nora and stay in Ireland, the

Tourist acts as a wise advisor who corrects a supposedly unfair decision. The Irish need his intervention in order to have their happy ending.⁹²

For all the tourists' appreciation of Ireland, the sketches clearly show that the Tourist cannot remain there because he obviously does not belong. Even if the Tourist is an Irish immigrant or has Irish ancestry, he no longer retains a close relationship to native Irish people as illustrated by his stark difference from and superiority to the Irish depicted in the sketches. If Irish immigrants and Irish-Americans no longer belong in Ireland, where do they belong? For the thousands of Irish immigrants and descendants in the late nineteenth century, imagining a return home to Ireland simply may have made it more bearable to stay away.

Take Two: Irish-American Working Class Masculinity and the Toils of Every Day Life in Urban America

Views on American life were by no means homogenous among the Irish and Irish-American working class. Ideas of working class masculinity and ethnic community clashed with middle class and Protestant notions of self-improvement and individual responsibility. The narratives of the American Dream in novels and songs conflicted with everyday reality and made many Irish and Irish-Americans wonder whether social mobility was truly possible in their lifetimes. Based on these perspectives, the hibernicon and Cohan's sketches take on additional meaning and appeal for Irish and Irish-American audience members. In particular, the figure of the "returned Yank" potentially altered the ability for certain audience members to identify with the Tourist. The use of comic caricature marks the importance of the working class Irish and Irish-American community through their absence.

In his pivotal study of Irish emigration and life in America, historian Kerby Miller remarks that few Post-Famine emigrant letters encouraged relatives to immigrate to America for economic opportunity. He notes that “most letters written during the period conveyed cautionary or negative information about the United States and the newcomers’ likely prospects.”⁹³ According to one emigrant, “life in America was very trying on a person’s nerves...there was always the fear that one might lose his position and become destitute, and destitution in America made life unbearable.”⁹⁴ Emigrant Timothy Cashman reflected that “after forty years laboring in New England factories...There never was good times for the ordinary *honest* worker.”⁹⁵ Others lamented the similarities between Ireland and America for the working class Irish: “[I]t was ‘the same [in America] as in Ireland,...every year something new comes up to make the rich man richer and the poor man poorer.’”⁹⁶ These experiences led to some, like Irish immigrant Frank Roney, to conclude that the “exalted idea of man’s equality in the American republic was rather mythical.”⁹⁷

These concerns and conclusions do not appear surprising considering that in 1880, about half of Irish-American men still worked in unskilled jobs. In spite of increasing numbers of middle class Irish-Americans, at the turn of the century, significant numbers of Irish and Irish-Americans remained in the working class, especially women. With unemployment and alcoholism continuing to plague daily life, “descriptions of lower-working-class Irish-American neighborhoods in the 1890s-1920s were often strikingly reminiscent of the destitution and demoralization observed at mid-century.”⁹⁸ Learning about the harsh realities of life in America was a startling blow to some emigrants. In 1883, one emigrant told the New York immigration authorities that she left Ireland because “she was like many other fools in that country who were led to believe they would pick up money in the streets in America.”⁹⁹

American popular entertainment reflected the continued struggle of the Irish and Irish-American working class, even though it was typically framed in comic terms. In the popular mid-nineteenth century song “No Irish Need Apply,” a recently arrived Irish emigrant comments on how ideas of social mobility and equality in America motivated his choice to leave Ireland. He states, “Sure, I’ve heard that in America it always is the plan/That an Irishman is just as good as any other man.”¹⁰⁰ Yet, once in America, he is faced with unexpected obstacles to his advancement. When the Irishman talks to a potential employer, “No! says he, you are a Paddy, and no Irish need apply!”¹⁰¹ From 1879-1884, Edward Harrigan, Tony Hart, and David Braham’s popular Mulligan Guard series of musical plays also illustrated the ultimate failure of the American Dream for Irish emigrants. The series’s central character Dan Mulligan is an Irish emigrant who has lived in America for some years by the time the audience first meets him in *The Mulligan Guard Ball* (1879). Throughout the course of the series, the audience sees their hero rise into the middle class after he opens his own saloon and then he becomes a city alderman. Yet, in *Cordelia’s Aspirations*, the second to last play in the series, Cordelia forces her husband Dan to move out of their working class neighborhood into a mansion in the upper class neighborhood, Murray Hill. The set plan describes how the new house will have a “piano, fancy chairs, fancy table with writing desk, patent rocking chair...[and] bay window, arch with curtains.”¹⁰² This contrasts to the “common rocking chair,” “common pitcher,” and “bag of rags” in their home in Mulligan Alley. By the end of the play, they have lost everything and are forced to move back to Mulligan Alley on the Lower East Side.¹⁰³

In both of these instances, the situation of thousands of Irish and Irish-Americans is simplified. The causes for emigrants’ failure to change their social status are clearly identified and the comedy softens the blow of the otherwise traumatic events. Nativism is the clear cause

of the Irish narrator's problems in "No Irish Need Apply." In the predictable style of the stage Irish stereotype, the Irish narrator brawls with the potential employer who then "swore he'd never write again no Irish need apply."¹⁰⁴ The problem is solved through individual action and toughness. *Cordelia's Aspirations* mocks Dan Mulligan's wife Cordelia's pretensions to be upper class. Cordelia's complete and comically incompetent takeover of the family finances leads to their bankruptcy. The script implies that the uprooting of traditional gender roles contributed to the family's problems.

Dan and Cordelia aspired to move up the social ladder for decades and as a result, their fall is tragic. Yet, in a way, the script suggests that the Mulligans are returning to where they truly belong – their Irish working-class neighborhood. This ending discourages the notion that social mobility is a reasonable aspiration. Dan Mulligan is not as upset as Cordelia about the turn of events because he values male social bonds and Irish community more than social mobility. Before the family's move, he points to his family history and working class past when he sings, "My Dad's Dinner Pail." He proudly proclaims it "a relic of his honest labor."¹⁰⁵ Dan also makes a show of how unnatural it will be to live so far from his friends. Dan's continued dedication to his old neighborhood is proudly commented on by his friends. After his move, Dan's friend comments, "[Dan] is a self made man. He lives on Madison Avenue and he's not too proud to spend his time with ould [sic] friends down town."¹⁰⁶ In spite of his wife's efforts, Dan never fits into the upper class. He spills his wine and does not have the proper manners during a dance at their new house. These moments imply that money cannot truly change an Irishman. Dan sums up one of the series's morals in the following play, the series's conclusion *Dan's Tribulations*. Dan has quickly reestablished himself in his old community. Dan explains that "[M]y money is gone – paying for the foolish things my wife bought...I don't sit down and

cry - I opened this little grocery store.”¹⁰⁷ Telling his wife to give up her continued aspirations to rise about their class, Dan informs her that he would rather have “contentment wid a plate of porridge than to be down-hearted at a feast.”¹⁰⁸

Dan Mulligan’s values reflected notions of working class masculinity and community loyalty. As Powers notes, “[f]or them, to be manly was to display an unflinching sense of personal and group honor. This was observable in a group member’s capacity for courage, physical prowess, and loyalty to his fellows.”¹⁰⁹ Leisure became one opportunity for working class men to establish their place in this culture. The importance of saloons reflects how this working class masculine culture helped define working class neighborhoods between about 1870 and 1920. It also provides an example of how working class men appropriated popular entertainment for their own purposes. When a man became a regular at the local saloon, it was expected that he would uphold a particular code of conduct that reflected loyalty and group solidarity, such as treating others to drinks and helping the other regulars through tough personal times by offering loans and support. Wagering and telling stories also were used to reinforce group bonds.¹¹⁰

Singing in saloons provided a rare emotional safety value for working class men because it was one place where sentimentality seems to have been accepted.¹¹¹ Reflecting back on saloon culture, Travis Hoke describes singing in saloons:

About ten o’clock – nine on Saturdays and especially on lodge nights, there were deep, complicated and soul-stirring harmonies through which permeated occasional accessory works recognizable as silvery moon, you wouldn’t dare insult me sir, she may have seen better days, dear old girl, blinding tears are falling, etc. and etc. Extensive rehearsal was expended on these arias...Once perfected, it would have been sheer waste not to repeat them, and when the whole song had been properly rendered, false starts and all, it was only fair to insist on self-requested encores...they met with profound appreciation from simpler and sadder souls.¹¹²

Even though the types of songs reflected how the commercial song industry infiltrated working class neighborhoods and helped introduce them to the emergent consumer culture, singing in saloons also illustrates how this culture was used to serve the working class men's own cultural purposes. Many of the songs which were taken from theatres and saloons were one way for these commercial songs to reach various neighborhood and ethnic communities. George Ade who wrote an early twentieth century study of saloon culture, records the popularity of mother songs in particular as well as songs like "Wearin' of the Green," "The Harp that Once through Tara's Halls," "Where the River Shannon Flows," "You'll never find a coward where the Shamrock Grows," and "My Wild Irish Rose."¹¹³ Ade viewed the singing in saloons as a sign of weakness among "[t]he sons of toil and the mercantile slaves who flocked to the bars every evening...and wallowed in the most abject sentimentality."¹¹⁴ It is true that most of these popular Irish songs were filled with romanticized and sentimental stereotypes that scholars have repeatedly denigrated for their unrealistic and sometimes prejudiced views of Irish culture. Yet, clearly their relation to realism did not prevent them from serving a purpose within the culture. In the context of the saloon, they became a social ritual for reinforcing a sense of community.¹¹⁵

In certain instances, this culture was reflected back to saloon goers on the stage. Harrigan was particular adept at tapping into this culture, with songs like "I Never Drink Behind the Bar," which is effectively a drinking song about not drinking. From the musical play, *McSorley's Inflation*, the song celebrates the sober bar tender, who serves his customers, but refuses to drink himself.¹¹⁶ Hoke records this as a legitimate representation of saloon culture when he records how the bartender "was frequently a total abstainer. 'Never touch it myself,' he would state quite frankly when he bought a drink or was offered one."¹¹⁷ Even if the performances on stage did not reflect back common characters or community rituals, it is clear

that members of the working class already were used to viewing popular entertainment in ways that supported their own ideologies and experiences. When entering the theatre to view Jerry Cohan's sketches, these values did not disappear and it is likely they influenced how popular entertainment was received and experienced.

As already discussed, the structure of the hibernicon encourages identification with the Tourist and the Cohan sketches reinforce this connection through their structure. For some, he may have represented the embodiment of their dreams to return to Ireland, wealthy and successful. However, if interpreted through the stereotype of the returned Yank, the potential to break the connection between the Tourist and the audience creates a new perspective on the sketches' ideology.

Although the desire to return to Ireland greatly impacted songs' and plays' imagery and the rhetoric of Irish-American politicians and nationalists, in reality, few Irish returned to Ireland. Unlike other immigrants groups, like Italians who had a high rate of return, it is estimated that perhaps only ten percent of post-Famine Irish emigrants returned.¹¹⁸ Immigrants who returned to Ireland did so for a variety of reasons, including illness, marriage, and a wish to see loved ones again before death.¹¹⁹ Interviews carried out by the Irish Folklore Commission reflect disappointment with life in America as another reason for some immigrants' return. One man remembered how an emigrant "traveled from Ireland directly to a friend's home in a Pennsylvania coal mining district. Taken aback by the grime and crudeness of the mining camp, in what had been touted as a land with gold in the streets the visitor could only exclaim, 'And you mean to tell me this is America'. Dejected, he changed his plans and went back to Ireland."¹²⁰ Others were disturbed by the way Irish workers were treated on the job. One Irish woman remarked that employers "Just get [killed workers] away out of the road and go on with

the work. A living man was alright but a dead one was no good to anybody.”¹²¹ When nostalgia influenced emigrants to return, the reality often did not meet their expectations. One returned emigrant commented that “There is the warmth and welcome from all. But there is something the heart seeks but does not get, because nothing can bring back the old acquaintances either of scene or personal reminiscences. A change over the face of nature. So that the returned emigrant is as hazy as those who receive him.”¹²²

As it became easier and cheaper for Irish-Americans to travel across the Atlantic, the group of returning Irish increasingly included Irish and Irish-American visitors who did not intend to resettle in Ireland. These travelers became known as the “returned Yanks.” Arnold Schrier, who collected anecdotal evidence about returned Yanks, describes the general type that became associated them:

He returned largely because of a sincere desire to see his family just once more, and also to glory in the admiration he was certain to receive in honor of the obvious evidence of his success in America: his grand clothes, his liberal supply of money, and just as important, the very fact that he was able to afford a return visit. He was duly accorded the admiration he sought, and with his vanity gratified and his funds exhausted, he once more took leave of Ireland, probably never to return again to the land of his birth.¹²³

Irish anecdotes reflect this image of the wealthy, vain returned Irish visitor. For some, the difference between the Irish and visitor was instantly apparent based on visual appearance.

An Irish farmer commented that “People would make a great wonder of a Yankee having two or three suits, for the ordinary man at home would have one good suit for going to Mass in and it would have to do him for years and years.”¹²⁴ A cook remembered the stir caused by a returned Yank who visited her family. Supposedly the local women tried to figure out which Mass she would be attended so that they would not miss seeing her outfit.¹²⁵ They also commented on how America changed the characters of the former immigrant or Irish-American. Irish family

and friends saw the visitors as more confident, hard-working, opinionated, and clean. According to an Irish teacher, “their shyness and gaucheries had left them.”¹²⁶ The Irish also assumed that the returned Yanks were rich and some visitors’ bragging and looseness with money reinforced these expectations.¹²⁷ Although many Irish admired the visitors and their arrivals often warranted celebration, they also became targets for mocking and ridicule. The Catholic Church and pro-British authorities and residents also feared the ideas they might bring with them from America.¹²⁸

Many returned Yanks commented disfavorably on what they found in Ireland. After thirty-three years in America, Timothy Cashman returned in 1925 and described his disappointment at seeing his hometown again. There was “mud and dirt all over everything” and he believed that “Irish poverty and emigration seemed as great in 1925 as when he had left his home in 1892.”¹²⁹ Many Irish-Americans were similarly disenchanted with their visits. Charles P. Daly, the son of Irish emigrants and a prominent judge in New York, ranted about his unhappy experience in his June 8, 1874 diary entry:

I never travelled [sic] through a country that I was more willing to leave...the Irish in America were physically and intellectually far superior to the people we met with in Ireland...I have seen a much greater number of fine [illegible] Irish people men and women of the humble and working classes in the [illegible] states than we saw in the whole of our journey through Ireland...the Irish appeared to us a dissatisfied people who were disposed to attribute their dissatisfaction to any cause but themselves. There are many causes for its historical [problems], but I apprehend the people themselves have much to do with it.¹³⁰

Daly’s low opinion of the Irish no doubt influenced their “unfavorable” opinions of America and Americans, which they apparently expressed quite openly to Daly.¹³¹

Daly’s visit highlights the sometimes-hostile response visitors received. As historian Marion Casey notes, “his or her visit was often unsettling because it highlighted how time had

stood still in Ireland.”¹³² Reactions to visitors ranged from admiration to contempt. Although much of the evidence for Irish perceptions of returned Yanks is anecdotal, the impressions of returned Yanks as wealthy, well-dressed, vain visitors moved from anecdotes and memory into literature, jokes, and the theatre. In 1908, the Gaelic writer Seamus O Dubhghaill described visiting Irish Americans in terms that could easily describe the stage stereotype:

There’s another group, people who think a great deal of themselves, but whom I don’t have much respect for – the Puncain – the Yankee. They come over here to us after spending a couple of years over there, they speak through their noses, and you would think with their hustle that they owned all of America and that the sun rose out of America’s arse.¹³³

In Irish drama, Returned Yank characters are arrogant, prosperous, and bombastic. They illustrate all the reasons why the Irish should not emigrate and reduce Irish Americans’ usefulness to their large bank accounts.¹³⁴ According to scholar Philip O’Leary, who writes about returned Yank representations in the early twentieth century, “these comic treatments were rooted in a real concern about the influence American, and particularly Irish-American, visitors to Ireland could have on Gaeltacht people.”¹³⁵ Even though some representations of the returned Yank appeared elsewhere on the America stage, in the late nineteenth century, he or she most frequently appeared in the hibernicon.¹³⁶

As a result of the associations with the returned Yank circulating in American culture, Irish audience members potentially read the Tourist as a comic character they would not want to be when they returned to Ireland. From his first appearance on stage, the Tourist embodies the wealthy and pompous characteristics of the returned Yank. His first action on stage is to spend his money by hiring a car driver/tour guide and an Irish maid for his sister. When Barney needs a costume to fool Nora, it is convenient for the plot that the Tourist has a costume that he claims he was going to ask Barney to return. Logic is not a necessity in many comic sketches of the late

nineteenth century, but, at the same time, the lack of logic reinforces his looseness with money. The Tourist does not need a reason to spend his money. He can spend it for any reason without consequence. The know-it-all attitude of the Tourist when he helps Barney with his women problems reflects the snobbishness of the returned Yank. To audience members who recognized this type, they may have scorned and mocked the Tourist's behavior instead of viewing it as an aspirational representation. Reflecting his position as an outsider, the Tourist expresses his urgency to return to America when he states that he "intend[s] [on] returning to America as soon as I can." The show does not depict a romanticized view of a reunion between the visitor, landscape, and the Irish people. The Tourist is not the central comic character, but he plays the straight man to Barney's comic Irishman. His role in the sketches' comedy may have alienated the audience from identifying with him at the same time it entertained them.¹³⁷

If the returning Yank does not provide an aspirational portrait, neither does Barney. Barney has the potential to be an attractive character to the audience for his central, starring role. Even though Barney shows up only when the Tourist arrives in Ireland, the sketches depict Barney as the main character. Jerry Cohan plays Barney and he draws attention to his starring role through a joke. When the Tourist helps Barney dress up like an old man to fool Nora, the Tourist states, "Now you look like an old man and can get the character about as well as Jerry Cohan the Irish comedian. Did you ever see Jerry Cohan?" Barney replies, "Oh yes he's a relation of mine." When the Tourist questions his relation, Barney explains that Cohan is "My mothers brothers sisters son." Yet, in spite of Barney's central role and Cohan's star appeal, he still is a rather typical stage Irishman with his blunders and blarney. In the margin of the text, Cohan scribbles an exchange between the Tourist and Barney. The comments position Barney outside of capitalism and therefore implicate him in the stereotype of Ireland as a backwards

culture. “What salary [sic] will you require?,” asks the Tourist. “Cabbage,” Barney replies. The exchange also illustrates Barney’s lower intelligence. Barney falls “in with a country sargeant who got him tipsy and induced him to enlist as a soldier,” which does not show the decision to be based in any political leanings but rather Barney’s foolishness when drunk. Although Nora is mainly presented as a romantic stereotype, she still exhibits muted qualities of the Irish Bridget. For example, the sketches imply that she is not bright enough to realize that Barney stands before her in a costume. The lack of change in Ireland that startled many returned immigrants was also reflected in such performances. The use of stage stereotypes and a general narrative that remained consistent for decades contributes to the perception of Ireland as frozen in time. This quality further stresses the difference between Irish audience members and the people they knew to know in Ireland.¹³⁸

With the Tourist, Barney, and Nora representing comic characters who can elicit potential scorn as well as laughter, the audience members might not feel compelled to identify with any of the characters on stage. The values of “personal and group honor, courage, physical prowess, and loyalty to his fellows” are completely absent from the stage.¹³⁹ In much scholarship on variety performance, emphasis is often laid on the importance of seeing different ethnic groups represented onstage as a sign of their increasing acceptance into America. For some, any Irish representation was not necessarily a representation of them. I suggest that the absence of particular groups and their values does not necessarily invalidate them, but actually highlights their validity by not being a subject of mockery. By illustrating to the Irish and Irish-Americans in the audience what they may not want to be through caricature, it reinforced the values that they viewed as central to their every day lives.

The ability for the hibernicon to speak to multiple constituencies suggests one reason why it continued to appeal to Irish and Irish-American audiences, even with its consistent narrative and repetitive conventions. The malleability of its variety sketches gave performers the opportunity to improvise within set limits and provided an easy-to-follow, but continuously novel, comic plot for the audience. Cohan's more family-oriented comedy also potentially contributed to his long variety and hibernicon career. When the Cohans first worked for Keith, they might not have enjoyed the new schedule that continuous performance imposed on performers, but they already understood the cleaner comedy conventions that Keith and Albee helped transform into a successful business model. In this way, even though the Cohans left the hibernicon behind as audiences' investment waned and they adapted their act to new trends in popular entertainment, the hibernicon arguably was key training that contributed to their later success. When Jerry Cohan died in 1917, Sam Harris, George Cohan's former producing partner, commented on why he believed the Cohans became national stars:

The aristocracy of vaudeville consists of the Jerry Cohans, the Helen Cohans and the old timers like them. They are the ones who wrote every line they spoke or sang, invented their dances, composed their own music, arranged their acts, wrote their own sketches and staged and managed and acted them. And Jerry Cohan and his wife always stood highest in the aristocracy, because, in a day when the very word 'variety' usually implied dance hall improprieties, Jerry Cohan and his wife steadily held to a form of entertainment that was like their own lives – sweet and wholesome and decent.¹⁴⁰

In this training, the hibernicon comprised one fleeting, but consistently central part. The long-term ramifications of this experience included not only helping the Cohans become national stars, but also exposing George, one of the early twentieth century's most influential musical showmen, to one of America's earliest forms of musical comedy.

Notes

¹ George C. Tyler, *Whatever Goes Up: The Hazardous Fortunes of a Natural Born Gambler* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1934), 25.

² Charles Ludwig Wagner, *Seeing Stars* (New York: Putnam: 1940), 19.

³ “John Holloran, 82, Still Spry as Comic Magician,” *Niagara Falls Gazette*, 17 July 1948, 5.

⁴ See John McCabe, *George M. Cohan: The Man Who Owned Broadway* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1980); Ward Morehouse, *George M. Cohan: Prince of American Theatre* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1972).

⁵ Verne Hardin Porter, “The Story of George M. Cohan,” *Green Book Magazine* 12 (December 1914): 964. Porter interviews Jerry and Nellie as background on his larger George M. Cohan piece. Nellie Cohan’s full first name was Helen. She typically is referred to as Nellie in advertisements and interviews.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 964-5; Frank Dumont, “The Younger Generation in Minstrelsy and Reminiscences of the Past,” *New York Clipper*, 27 March 1915, in *Burnt Cork and Tambourines: A Source Book for Negro Minstrelsy*, ed. William L. Slout (Borgo Press, 2007), 229, 234.

⁷ “Jerry Cohan, George’s Pa, Began as a Minstrel,” *Trenton Evening Times*, 18 April 1909, 23.

⁸ Porter, 964-5; Dumont, 229, 234.

⁹ “Variety Shows: The War Their Opportunity,” *New York Times*, 9 April 1876 10.

¹⁰ Gillian M. Rodger, *Champagne Charlie, Pretty Jemima: Variety Theatre in the Nineteenth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 49; Constance Valis Hill, *Tap Dancing: A Cultural History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 29; “Time Table of the Great Aiken Combination,” (New York: Cameron and Co., 1876), American Broadsides and Ephemera, Series 1, (23943).

¹¹ Porter, 965.

¹² “Hibernicon,” *Daily Cleveland Herald*, 8 September 1869; *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 13 October 1869, 1; *Cleveland Daily Herald*, 7 September 1869; The issue of dates is a problem with documenting the Cohans’ careers. For the 1870s and 1880s, dates and information about their tour routes listed in obituaries, interviews, and scholarly studies frequently conflict with the dates of performances found in the newspaper record or other interviews. Scholars often conflate hibernicon companies with minstrel shows and confine his years in hibernicons to the

1870s. They actually spanned his whole career until his family struck it big with BF Keith's vaudeville in early 1890s. For examples of this conflation, see William H.A. Williams, "George M. Cohan," *Ireland and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History, Volume 2*, ed. James P. Byrne, Philip Coleman, and Jason King (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2008), 192; Hill, 29-30.

¹³ It is likely that is this also a puff. "The Hibernicon," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 7 September 1869, 3. See also *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 4-8 September 1869; "The Hibernicon," *Chicago Tribune*, 21 September 1869, 4; *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, 22 December 1869, 8; "The Hibernicon," *Atlanta Constitution*, 15 February 1870, 4.

¹⁴ Cohan, quoted in Porter, 966. There is also record of Jerry Cohan touring and playing both the tourist and lecturer in a hibernicon company called the Hiberniana in 1873. *Bangor (Maine) Daily Whig and Courier*, 21 October 1873.

¹⁵ "My First Lines," *Theatre Magazine* 21, no. 171 (May 1915): 258; Porter 966. Robert Grau remembered that "The Cohans originally had one of those Hibernicons which were prevalent a quarter of a century ago." Robert Grau, *The Business Man in the Amusement World* (New York: Broadway Publishing Company, 1910), 66-7.

¹⁶ Porter, 966.

¹⁷ "Time Table of the Great Aiken Combination," (New York: Cameron and Co., 1876), American Broadside and Ephemera, Series 1, (23943). There is also evidence of Jerry Cohan performing Irish comic specialties as part of a variety show in the following: "Music and the Drama," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 15 August 1871; "Amusements," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 5 February 1874; *Lowell Daily Citizen*, 10 December 1879.

¹⁸ *New York Clipper*, 3 May 1879, 47. For other instances of the Cohans performing the Molly Maguires, see *Buffalo Morning Express*, 12 December 1877, 1; *Syracuse (New York) Daily Standard*, 4 January 1878; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 17 April 1883; *Lowell Daily Courier*, 25 June 1885, 4; There is a tendency to separate this sketch outside of its performance context and to use it to define his career. See Shirley Staples, *Male-Female Comedy Teams in American Vaudeville, 1865-1932* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1984), 64-5. However, the newspaper record supports a long and diverse career routed primarily in Irish comedic performance in which *The Molly Maguires* comprised only one piece. The hibernicon and Jerry Cohan's sketches *The Two Barneys* and *The Two Dans* (potentially the same sketch with minor changes) similarly dominated his early career before the Keith and Albee circuit. For more on the Molly Maguires, see Kevin Kenny, *Making Sense of the Molly Maguires* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). The Molly Maguires continued to capture the American imagination with films such as *The Molly Maguires* (1970) starring Sean Connery.

¹⁹ George Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage, Volume 11* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 542-3. At one point it seems that they may have toured with a play length version of the sketch.

²⁰ *Jackson (Michigan) Citizen Patriot*, 29 May 1876, 4.

²¹ "Cohan's Irish Minstrels," *Bangor (Maine) Daily Whig and Courier*, 20 June 1883.

²² *New York Clipper*, 7 June 1884, 190.

²³ *New York Clipper*, 30 August 1884, 374; *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 13 January 1885, 6; *New York Dramatic Mirror*, 25 April 1885, 5; *Lowell Daily Courier*, 12 June 1885; *New York Dramatic Mirror*, 20 June 1885, 5.

²⁴ George M. Cohan, *Twenty Years on Broadway and What it Took to Get There* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1925), 14; *New York Clipper*, 10 August 1887.

²⁵ *New York Clipper*, 17 October 1874, 231.

²⁶ For discussion of Healy and mentions of Healy's Minstrels, see Brooks McNamara, *Step Right Up* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995), 74; Mary Calhoun, *Medicine Show: Conning People and Making Them Like It* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 29.

²⁷ Dr. N.T. Oliver, "Med Show," *Saturday Evening Post*, 14 September 1929, 12. Jeremy Agnew claims that Healy sold his King of Pain liniment with Healy's Minstrels, but I have found no evidence. Jeremy Agnew, *Entertainment in the Old West: Theater, Music, Circuses, Medicine Shows* (Jefferson: McFarland and Company, 2011), 166. These scholars claim the performance was a blackface minstrel company, which does not seem to have been the case. David Lindsay, "The Patent Files" *Dispatches from the Frontier of Invention* (New York: Lyons Press, 1999), 189-191; Laura Browder, *Slippery Characters: Ethnic Impersonators and American Identities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 70.

²⁸ *Capital*, 11 June 1881, 3. For early references to Healy's company see *Vicksburg (Mississippi) Daily Commercial*, 12 March 1878. The company also lost their sketch artist earlier that year in Indiana: "Ed Murray, the Irish sketch artist, with Healy's Hibernian Minstrels, fell into the river this morning from the steamer and was drowned before assistance could reach him. The body has not been recovered. He leaves a wife, a member of the company." *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 31 January 1878, 8.

²⁹ Bryan O'Lynn performed with the company for this performance, which took place in Atlanta. *Capital*, quoted from the *Atlanta Constitution*, 14 June 1881.

³⁰ Brooks McNamara, "Popular Entertainment," *The Cambridge History of American Theatre, 1870-1945, Volume II*, eds. Don B. Wilmet and Christopher Bigsby (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 385.

³¹ "Harrigan's Double Hibernian Company," *Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) Patriot*, 25 October 1886, 4. See also *Niagara Falls Gazette*, 3 March 1886, 4; *Oswego (New York) Daily Times Express*, 31 March 1886; *New York Clipper*, 6 November 1886, 534; "The Irish Tourists," *Kalamazoo Gazette*, 21 December 1886, 4; *Batavia (New York) Daily News*, 17 January 1887; *Jefferson County (New York) Journal*, 1 February 1887, 8; *New York Dramatic Mirror*, 12 February 1887, 8; *New York Dramatic Mirror*, 19 March 1887, 5. They were not the only company to try and profit from Harrigan's success. Harrigan and his lawyers also went after a similar company touring in the west. E.J. Kahn, *The Merry Partners: The Age and Stage of Harrigan and Hart* (New York: Random House, 1955), 179.

³² "Harrigan's Double Hibernian Company," *Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) Patriot*, 25 October 1886, 4.

³³ *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 13 January 1885, 6.

³⁴ *New York Clipper*, 24 August 1889, 391; *New York Clipper*, 12 November 1887, 566.

³⁵ Michael Bennett Leavitt, *Fifty Years in Theatrical Management* (New York: Broadway Publishing Company, 1912), 296; John McCabe, *George M. Cohan: The Man Who Owned Broadway* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1980), 6; Ward Morehouse, *George M. Cohan: Prince of American Theatre* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1972), 31.

³⁶ Robert Grau, *The Business Man in the Amusement World* (New York: Broadway Publishing Company, 1910), 66-7.

³⁷ Nellie Cohan, quoted in Porter, 967.

³⁸ George Cohan, "I Like Small-Town Audiences," *Rotarian* (September 1939), 10. Scholars like Staples claim the Cohans were not known out of New England, but the newspaper record shows that they returned to the Midwest and upstate New York for decades. They also spent time touring in the South. I have yet to find evidence of a West Coast tour before they joined Keith's circuit.

³⁹ George Cohan, "I Like Small-Town Audiences," 12.

⁴⁰ Laurence Senelick, "Variety into Vaudeville, The Process Observed in Two Manuscript Gag books," *Theatre Survey* 19, no. 1 (May 1978): 10.

⁴¹ MS Thr 226 J.J. Cohan, Cohan Family Repertoire-Book, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University.

⁴² Ibid. Cohan uses issues of gender as a comic punch line in other songs as well. In one entitled, “Womans Rights Man Must Respect” Cohan advocates for respecting women, while at the same time poking fun at the goals of womens’ rights advocates. Maids serve as another target in the song. He writes: “Let strong minded females sigh for the rights that laws deny/They want to vote and ‘speech make’ by the hour/They would join torch light processions, practice the professions/They’d be doctors, lawyers, judges and have power/Yet we never hear of maids who are anxious to learn trades.”

⁴³ Senelick, 14.

⁴⁴ Lisa Lowe, “Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Making Asian-American Differences,” in *Theorizing Diaspora*, eds. Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 136.

⁴⁵ Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 448.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 406.

⁴⁷ As Lowe notes, “historical and material differences” impact how identity is constituted as well as how it changes. Lowe, 136.

⁴⁸ William Shannon, *The American Irish* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), 142.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 142.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 145. According to Shannon, “The options for individual Irishmen were numerous: conventional success or frustrated insurgency, individual assimilation or the chauvinism of the Irish community, bleached-out respectability or labor radicalism, adherence to the political machine or acceptance of good government (‘goo goo’) values.” Some families may be particularly defensive about their middle class status especially if “the family’s money had been made in some faintly dubious manner in politics, liquor selling, or contracting. Other Irish did not look down upon these occupations, but the lace-curtain Irish were aware that many of their Protestant neighbors did.” Shannon, 143-5.

⁵¹ William H. A. Williams, *‘Twas Only an Irishman’s Dream: The Image of Ireland and the Irish in American Popular Song Lyrics, 1800-1920* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 177-8.

⁵² R. Radhakrishnan, “Ethnicity in the Age of Diaspora,” in *Theorizing Diaspora*, 120.

⁵³ Williams, 116.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 193.

⁵⁶ Miller, 514.

⁵⁷ Joseph Nunes, *Fast Folks: Or, The Earl Days of California* (Philadelphia: Barnard and Jones, 1861), 26.

⁵⁸ J. Hartley Manners, *Peg O' My Heart* (New York: Samuel French, 1918), 61-2.

⁵⁹ Miller, 515.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Miller, 515.

⁶¹ *New York Herald*, 12 April 1863, 7; *New York Herald*, 20 April 1863, 7; *New York Herald*, 22 April 1863, 12; *New York Herald*, 23 April 1863, 12; *New York Herald*, 25 April 1863, 7; For other instances, see "The Hibernicon," *Atlanta Constitution*, 18 February 1870, 3; *Boston Herald*, 10 February 1863, 3.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ MS Thr 226 J.J. Cohan, Cohan Family Repertoire-Book, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 169.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 174.

⁶⁷ Robert Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 89.

⁶⁸ Erin A. Smith, *Hard-Boiled: Working Class Readers and Pulp Magazines* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), 8.

⁶⁹ Chartier, 89.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Miller, 507.

⁷¹ Quoted in Miller, 507.

⁷² Quoted in Miller, 508.

⁷³ Madelon Powers, *Faces Along the Bar: Lore and Order in the Workingman's Saloon, 1870-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 30.

⁷⁴ Dion Boucicault, *The O'Dowd* (New York: Samuel French, 1909), 32-33.

⁷⁵ Edward Harrigan, "Muldoon the Solid Man," Music Collection, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, 1-2.

⁷⁶ For "Uncle Dan McCann" and "The Kellys," see Mick Moloney, *Far the Shamrock Shore* (New York: Crown Publishing, 2002), 24-5, 34-5.

⁷⁷ Kristen M. Schultz, "Seccessia's Song Books: The History of Confederate Songsters." (Ph.D., University of Toronto, 2002), 18-9, 21, 51-53. See also Norm Cohen, "Report on a Proposed Bibliography of American Pocket Songsters of the Nineteenth Century," *The Sonneck Society for American Music Bulletin* xxii, no. 3 (Fall 1997): 65-70; Paul Charosh, "Studying Nineteenth Century Popular Song," *American Music* 15, no. 4 (Winter 1997): 459-492.

⁷⁸ Smith, 65.

⁷⁹ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, "Diaspora Comparisons and Irish-American Uniqueness," in *New Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora*, ed. Charles Fanning (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University, 2000), 22

⁸⁰ Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 1.

⁸¹ Smith, 9.

⁸² *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1872), Borowitz Collection, Department of Special Collections and Archives, Kent State University Libraries and Media Services, 61; *John M. Burke's Dublin Carman Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1871), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 63; *W.F. Lawlor's Original Barney the Guide Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1871), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 61-2. Robert M. DeWitt published most of the hibernicon songsters in the 1870s. Overall, the ads in the songsters seem to reflect the range of his shop. According to one obituary, "He also published a large line of plays, and successful manuals of various kinds, and his full reports of noted trials have had immense sales." "Robert M. DeWitt," *The American Bookseller* 3, no. 11 (June 1877): 327.

⁸³ *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster*, 63; *John M. Burke's Dublin Carman Songster*, 62; *W.F. Lawlor's Original Barney the Guide Songster*, 63.

⁸⁴ *John M. Burke's Dublin Carman Songster*, 64; *W.F. Lawlor's Original Barney the Guide Songster*, 64; *Miles Morris Irish Gems* (New York: AJ Fisher, n.d.), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 69.

⁸⁵ *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster*, 62, *Miles Morris Irish Gems*, 61, 64-5, 67-8.

⁸⁶ Smith discusses this phenomenon in the 1930s, but the songster advertisements illustrate how its beginnings appear in the 1870s with cheap mass publications like songsters. Smith, 58.

⁸⁷ *J.L. MacEvoy's New Hibernicon Songster* (New York: DeWitt, 1881), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 61-4; *Miles Morris Irish Gems*, 63, 66; *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster*, 64. One even tried to sell a history of minstrelsy

⁸⁸ John W. Frick, "Monday The Herald; Tuesday the Victoria: (Re)Packaging, and (Re)Presenting the Celebrated the Notorious on the Popular Stage," *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film* 30, no. 1 (June 2003): 31. See also Albert F. McLean, *American Vaudeville as Ritual*. (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965).

⁸⁹ MS Thr 226 J.J. Cohan, Cohan Family Repertoire-Book, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University.

⁹⁰ Ibid. One Irish emigrant criticized the behavior of men like Barney to "'bow and scrape...Yes your Honor No your Honor' before landlords and employers back home." Miller, 507-8.

⁹¹ MS Thr 226 J.J. Cohan, Cohan Family Repertoire-Book, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Miller, 502.

⁹⁴ Quoted in Miller, 502

⁹⁵ Quoted in Miller, 502.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Miller, 502.

⁹⁷ Frank Roney, *Irish Rebel and California Labor Leader: An Autobiography* (Berkeley, 1931), 179-81.

⁹⁸ Miller, 506.

⁹⁹ Quoted in Miller, 518.

¹⁰⁰ John Poole, "No Irish Need Apply," Broadside (New York: H. De Marsan, n.d.), from the Library of Congress, *America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Streets* <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?ammem/amss:@field%28DOCID+@lit%28as109730%29%29> (accessed January 10, 2012), 1. This particular broadside was printed at least in the 1860s because an added verse refers to event during the Civil War.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Edward Harrigan, *Cordelia's Aspirations*, 1883, play manuscript, Edward Harrigan Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, New York, front matter.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Poole, 1.

¹⁰⁵ Harrigan, *Cordelia's Aspirations*, 113.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 106.

¹⁰⁷ Harrigan, *Dan's Tribulations*, 1884, play manuscript, Edward Harrigan Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, New York, 10.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 31.

¹⁰⁹ Powers, 29-30. See also Roy Rosenweig, *Eight Hours or What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹¹⁰ Powers, 30.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 205. For more analysis of songs in saloons, see Powers, 180-206.

¹¹² Travis Hoke, "Corner Saloon," *American Mercury* 22, no 87 (March 1931): 321.

¹¹³ George Ade, *The Old Time Saloon* (New York: R. Long & R.R. Smith, 1931), 119-120.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 125.

¹¹⁵ Powers, 205, 181.

¹¹⁶ Harrigan, "I Never Drink Behind the Bar," in *Edward Harrigan and David Braham: Collected Songs II. 1873-1882*, ed. Jon W. Finson (Madison: A-R Editions, Inc., 1997).

¹¹⁷ Hoke, 315.

¹¹⁸ Mark Wyman, *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 10.

¹¹⁹ Arnold Schrier, *Ireland and American Emigration, 1850-1900* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958), 131-2.

¹²⁰ Wyman, 74.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹²² Quoted in Schrier, 132. The emigrants who resettled in Ireland earned a reputation for their work ethic, which they supposedly learned in America. As Wyman discusses, "Ireland abounded with tales of their returnees' work habits: rising in the morning before anyone else, throwing themselves into their jobs with a vengeance, and in the process sometimes managing to look a bit silly to their neighbors. 'I'm telling you they were hard workers,' an Irishman recalled; 'they would have a day's work done before the men of their townland get out of bed.'" Wyman, 142.

¹²³ Schrier, 132-133.

¹²⁴ Quoted in Schrier, 133.

¹²⁵ Schrier, 133.

¹²⁶ Quoted in Schrier, 134-5.

¹²⁷ Schrier, 135-7.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 140; Wyman, 162. For more on the returned Yank, see also Margaret Lynch-Brennan *The Irish Bridget: Irish Immigrant Women in Domestic Service in America, 1840-1930* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009), 57-9; Hasia Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 50-1. For a comic story about Edward Harrigan and David Braham trip to Ireland in 1895, see Richard Moody, *Ned Harrigan: From Corlear's Hook to Herald Square* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1980), 201.

¹²⁹ Timothy Cashman, quoted in Marion Casey, "Ireland, New York, and the Irish Image in American Popular Culture, 1890-1960" (PhD, diss., New York University, 1998), 253.

¹³⁰ Charles P. Daly. Diary of Trip to Ireland, June 8, 1874, Manuscript and Archives Room, New York Public Library.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Casey, 254-5.

¹³³ Seamus O Dubhghaill quoted in Philip O'Leary, "Yank Outsiders: Irish Americans in Gaelic Fiction and Drama of the Irish Free State, 1922-1939," in *New Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora*, ed. Charles Fanning (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University, 2000), 253

¹³⁴ Ibid., 253-4.

¹³⁵ O'Leary, 259. For representations of the returned Yank in American and Irish-American literature in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see John Talbot Smith, *The Art of Disappearing* (New York: William H. Young and Company, 1902); George A. Birmingham, "In Honor of General Regan," *Harper's Monthly Magazine* 118 (March 1909): 618-25. Charles Fanning analyzes these representations in Irish-American literature. See Charles Fanning, *The Irish Voice in America: 250 Years of Irish-American Fiction*, Second Edition (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 189-97.

¹³⁶ There are varied representations of the returned Yank on the American stage. The returned Yank was occasionally presented in relation to the Irish nationalist movement, which validated British fears of negative American influence. For example, in the *Idiot of Killarney or the Fenian's Oath* (1867), an afterpiece performed by Tony Pastor's company at Charles White's Minstrel Hall, in Ireland, the Americans help rescue Kate, the play's heroine. They are not comic characters, but are presented as noble men who will help save the Irish from British oppression. In the *Mulligan Guard Nominee*, we see a comic version of this character, even though we only hear of her experiences after she returns to America. A secondary comic character in Harrigan's Mulligan Guard Series, Bridget Lochmueller returns to Ireland to visit family. As the wife of the local German butcher, she has a stable enough income and life that enables her to afford the trip. *Idiot of Killarney or the Fenian's Oath*, actors sides, Tony Pastor Collection, Harry Ransom Center; Harrigan, *Mulligan Guard Nominee*, 1880, typescript, Edward Harrigan Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, New York.

¹³⁷ MS Thr 226 J.J. Cohan, Cohan Family Repertoire-Book, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Powers, 29-30.

¹⁴⁰ “Jerry Cohan, loved stage veteran dies,” *New York Sun*, 17 August 1917.

CHAPTER 3

BLARNEYING THE PUBLIC?: THE HIBERNICON AND THE CULTURE OF
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

During an 1870s performance of McGill and Strong's *Mirror of Ireland*, the hibernicon company gave a hand-colored souvenir print of the Cove of Cork to its lady patrons (Fig. 6). Typically nineteenth-century theatre companies printed souvenirs to mark a big opening, celebrate a landmark number of performances, or honor a key performer, but the occasion for *The Cove of Cork* print remains unclear. McGill and Strong's *Mirror of Ireland* toured before the technology existed to make mass printing more affordable, so it is reasonable to assume the company commissioned the print for a rare occasion. The print depicts an idyllic scene of Cove Harbor, with rolling green hills, a whitewashed stone cottage, sailing ships, and observers perched on its looming cliffs.¹ One *Dublin Penny Journal* writer encouraged his readers to enjoy a view of this harbor, located in Cove, Cork, Ireland, stating: "Nothing can be conceived more enchanting than to proceed either by land or water from Cork to Cove, more especially when there is a king's fleet in the harbour. It is worth taking a journey from Dublin to Cork to see it."² The audience may not have been able to afford the journey to Ireland, but the print promised that they still would witness beautiful green views and scenes of local Irish life that evening.

Amongst the archival material of the hibernicon, the print exists as a unique piece of visual evidence. Without the original hibernicon panorama canvases, programs, songsters, and newspapers form the main body of evidence for how the hibernicon companies represented



Fig. 6 *The Cove of Cork*, lithograph, souvenir from McGill and Strong's *Mirror of Ireland*

Ireland in performance. However, these forms of evidence limit considerations of the audience's visual experience. As a result, McGill and Strong's souvenir print of Cove Harbor allows for not only an analysis of the hibernicon's use of imagery, but also how images condoned by these companies circulated in the surrounding popular culture of nineteenth century America.

Tracing the provenance of the print illustrates how some hibernicon companies explicitly drew on the increasing popularity of Irish travel books. Originally engraved by William Henry Bartlett (1809-1854), a popular British artist in the 1830s, *The Cove of Cork* appeared as a black and white engraving in Coyne, Willis, and Bartlett's *Scenery and Antiques of Ireland* (1842) and Mr. and Mrs. Hall's *Ireland, Its Scenery and Character* (1841-3).³ For the next seventy years, new travel books such as *Picturesque Ireland: Historical and Descriptive* (1890) and various reprints of the antebellum guides kept the image of Cove Harbor in circulation.⁴ McGill and Strong's also used Bartlett's sketches as a template for its panorama. The company boasts about Bartlett's worldwide "reputation as an artist" for his "graceful and truthful" sketches made "on the spot."⁵ Perhaps McGill and Strong's audience recognized the moving panorama's connection with the popular images in Irish travel books. Regardless, the connections between the imaginative culture of travel surrounding the performance and its visual imagery is undeniable. By looking closely at how this theatrical souvenir intersects with the iconography and consumption of travel books, we can begin to see the importance of this connection to the hibernicon's popularity and ideology.

Aside from following a theatrical custom to provide audience souvenirs for special performances, McGill and Strong's print also participated in the commodity consumption surrounding the nineteenth century's culture of international travel. The ladies in McGill and Strong's audiences could bring home and enjoy *The Cove of Cork* in the comfort of their homes

in a similar manner to the travel books or the picture postcards that became popular later in the century. Not unlike songsters for the working class, sheet music for the middle class, or cigarette cards for actors' biggest fans, the print became an additional way for the memory of the performance to linger long after its conclusion. As a result, *The Cove of Cork* print becomes an index of McGill and Strong's moving panorama as well as of Ireland. The popularity of such images helped fuel other commercial aspects of travel culture. The culture helped perpetuate itself, with the panorama and its souvenir potentially stirring up a desire to see travel culture in other forms, such as future performances, lectures, and fair exhibitions. In turn, these displays of travel culture contributed to audience members' desire to journey abroad and an increasing demand for travel accounts and other representations of travel culture.⁶

However, even though McGill and Strong adapted Bartlett's *The Cove of Cork*, the hibernicon's performance context and post-Civil War historical, social, and political context shifts the signification of the image. The souvenir print supports a romanticized and picturesque characterization of Ireland, a depiction that hibernicon lyrics and sketches also reinforce.⁷ In spite of the famines and political strife affecting the country throughout the century, the cottage looks quaint, the landscape ideal, and the only figures in the picture look well-dressed and fed. Like many moving panoramas at the time, the show presents the performance as a vicarious journey of the audience with the actors to Ireland (presumably in the present). Yet, *The Cove of Cork* suggests that the company asks the audience to journey not only across space, but also across time. The image is explicitly marked as a time before the explosion of steam transport. Cove Harbor, Cork became one of the major Irish ports of departure for Irish emigrants and so one could safely assume the presence of steam ships, a sight which would not be foreign to emigrants or anyone living in a port city. However, these ships are absent from the engraving

while sailing ships glide through the water. By retaining the name Cove for the harbour, the image, even if unintentionally, rewrites the colonial history of the port by erasing the contemporary British imprint on the town. After Queen Victoria visited Cove in 1849, the city was renamed Queenstown, a name it retained until 1922 when it reverted to its Irish name Cobh (Cove). The 1890 publication of Bartlett's engraving makes the name change. Many others, including this hibernicon print, do not.

These time disjunctions are not wholly surprising, especially since the performances often ask the audience to witness medieval Chieftain battles or moments of saintly miracles. What is significant about these references is that the print is altered from the Bartlett original. Why were some aspects worthy of alteration and not others? Or rather, why would this print be more appealing for a hibernicon production than the original Bartlett engraving?⁸ The altered representation of the people is perhaps the most important change in the souvenir image. The clothing of the conversing men and women appears to be modernized. The women's dresses are less full and the man now wears a stovepipe hat and contemporary suit.⁹ The print also erases a sailing ship that looks like it is docked or about to dock in the lower left hand corner of the harbor. The erasure of the ship allows the people to be the focal point of the left corner. But why modernize the people and not the boats or city name? Maintaining the indications of a previous time, but inserting updated people, allows the audience to imagine themselves (or their future, wealthier selves) as part of the geography. The alterations and remnants of an earlier time support one premise of the performance – through a trip to Ireland, contemporary viewers can travel to an earlier, more peaceful, and simple time away from the stresses of every day life in America. Although in some ways these changes are minor, if someone was familiar with the Bartlett print or later compared the print to Bartlett sketches in a travel book, the person may

have wondered why the company claimed to use “on the spot” sketches, only to alter them. Most audience members may never have noticed the changes, but the potential for raising questions about the constructed nature of popular Irish imagery helps us understand the significance of the hibernicon within the culture of international travel and American popular entertainment.

This chapter argues that part of the hibernicon’s popularity can be attributed to its role in the surrounding imaginative culture of travel. Adapting Irish travel literature’s narrative conventions, the hibernicon tapped into a growing market while promoting ethnic affiliation in Irish-American working class communities. Hibernicon companies reinvented and reframed key elements of travel books through their performances, which allowed for multi-layered readings of the “real” Ireland and stage Irish convention. Regardless of the companies’ promises to provide a realistic and authentic experience, this reinvention, I argue, helped indicate to the audience that the hibernicon productions may have hidden as much of the “real” Ireland as they revealed.

The Hibernicon and the Imaginative Culture of Travel

Before specifically addressing the relationship between travel books and the hibernicon, it is necessary to explore how the hibernicon represented a culture of international travel that surrounded Americans and Irish Americans alike in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The “culture of international travel” refers to “a culture permeated with reports and images of foreign travel, a culture rife with ersatz travel experiences.”¹⁰ Advertisements for

steamships, published passenger lists, letters and postcards from travelers, and newspaper articles and books all contributed to Americans' expanding vision of the world around them. As scholar Kristin L. Hoganson notes, the culture of travel was "a culture in which the sum was greater than the constituent parts...[It] resulted in a sense of living in a time and place marked by mobility and touristic encounters."¹¹ Even for those who could not afford a journey abroad, the culture of international travel became a discourse and economy in which they could participate without ever leaving home.¹²

The culture of international travel developed in direct relation to the rapid expansion of the nation's railroads and the concurrent development of faster, more efficient steamships. These developments eased cross-continental treks and contributed to the rise of transatlantic tourism, which only came to a halt with the outbreak of World War I. Steamship companies competed to build the fastest ship on the Atlantic and their efforts cut the journey from fifteen days in 1870 to six days in 1890. By the 1910s, travelers could reach Europe in four and a half days. To accommodate middle class passengers who could not afford first class tickets and were hesitant about steerage, companies decreased prices and introduced second-class cabins. The conditions of second class often did not differ greatly from steerage, but second-class tickets allowed middle class passengers to detach themselves from the ethnic, racial, and moral assumptions associated with the lower classes. Some middle and upper class passengers even turned the Atlantic journey into another "stop" on their tour. Occasionally, travelers chose to buy steerage tickets in order to observe its passengers. As one guide notes, steerage was "well-worth visiting during the voyage by those interested in social science."¹³ The combination of affordability and decreased travel time spurred thousands of Americans to venture to Europe.

Fifty thousand Americans vacationed in Europe in 1880 and the numbers grew to a hundred twenty-five thousand in 1900 and two hundred and fifty thousand in 1913.¹⁴

Ireland's role in this burgeoning tourist business was defined by emerging middle class perceptions of vacationing and health. Ireland's rural and seemingly empty landscape appealed to those who wanted to escape from cities and the urban masses.¹⁵ Knowledge of Ireland also spread through the publication of books on geography, history, and folklore, which increased its visibility and appeal as a vacation spot. Thomas Kelly, a New York publisher, explained that "Irishmen are always deeply interested in the story of the wrongs which their land has suffered from foreign oppression and outrage, as well as in the glorious record which Ireland's annals present of novel heroes, statesmen, poets, and philanthropists, for century upon century."¹⁶

Picturesque Ireland and *The History of Ireland from the Earliest Period to the Present Time*, published by Kelly, illustrated Ireland's popularity and went through three editions by 1885. Books on Ireland continued to be a growing trend in publishing well into the twentieth century and they served as a catalyst for many American visitors to Ireland.¹⁷

Writers targeted American popular audiences with their Irish travel books and publishers, such as Kelly, believed that Irish of all classes would buy informative books on Ireland with beautiful engravings.¹⁸ However, in the late nineteenth century, vacations, especially ones involving trips across the Atlantic, remained outside of the realm of possibility for the Irish and Irish-American working class. In *Century*, middle class reformer Philip G. Hubert Jr. highlights the challenges facing members of the working class who might want to vacation in the 1890s. Advocating for working class vacations to improve the lives and minds of the poor, Hubert describes an idealistic scenario:

The system under which such people rent their small tenements makes it possible for them to give up their few rooms at a week's notice. They can store their goods at small

expense, and save enough on the rent to pay for their food during the weeks they are away. The rents paid by even the most miserable of these workers average \$10 a month for two or three rooms...The man who can get out of town must have at least a few dollars in his pocket, and every one who has worked among our city poor knows that the majority of these people live from hand to mouth; they are chained by the hardest of poverty to the great city. Fortunately, the average sober mechanic needs but a very few dollars to make such an experiment possible.¹⁹

After trying to convince his readers that factories would not mind letting their workers go on ten weeks of unpaid leave, Hubert concedes that “so few poor people have even the small number of dollars necessary for” a vacation.²⁰ Hubert hopes that his suggested plans will help the working class vacation on a Long Island beach, which is only a few miles away from the city. The difficulties facing the working class for only this short trip highlights the great difficulty and impossibility of a return trip to Ireland for most working class Irish and Irish-Americans. Yet, even though they could not participate in the emerging tourism business, an imaginative culture of travel emerged that fulfilled similar desires. The hibernicon existed as one part of this burgeoning cultural movement.

Many Americans who did not travel abroad still bought and read travel books. The popular press also participated in spreading excitement about international travel. The *Herald* sent reporter James J. O’Kelly to Cuba. The *New York World* funded Nellie Bly’s attempt to replicate the journey in *Around the World in Eighty Days*.²¹ Some travelers, like poet Bayard Taylor, profited from their journeys by joining the lecture circuit upon their return to America in the antebellum period. After the Civil War, some lecturers expanded their involvement in the travel business by selling imaginary study tours.²² Department stores, restaurants, and hotels also offered customers foreign visual delights and goods.²³

Americans did not have to collect the postcards or visit a local business to understand the connection between travel culture and consumerism. The theatre presented Americans of all

classes with the opportunity to participate in both. The imaginary culture of travel found a flexible medium for its ideas and values in America's popular entertainment. Circular panoramas first emerged in Europe in the late eighteenth century. Through a rotunda performance space, these panoramas literally enveloped audiences in new worlds, including Europe and the Middle East. Ever the enterprising businessman, P.T. Barnum profited from travel culture through the exhibition of his foreign curiosities at his American museum. Compared to the circular panoramas, the early nineteenth century moving panoramas' and dioramas' ease of assembly and exhibition allowed more popular audiences to experience foreign landscapes and spectacles. Moving panoramas' second period of popularity coincided with the intensification of the culture of international travel in the late nineteenth century. Many stage melodramas also profited from exhibiting exotic locales and grand scenery. For example, although he was a popular dramatist before, Dion Boucicault reached new heights of popularity with his melodramas set in the romantic, pastoral landscape of Ireland. Engravings of Killarney apparently inspired him to set his *Colleen Bawn* in the town. World Fairs allowed audience to wander through villages from other countries and cultures.²⁴

Within this performance culture, MacEvoy's Hibernicon and its imitators existed as the main moving panorama entertainments depicting a journey to Ireland. As illustrated by *The Cove of Cork* print, the connection between travel books and the hibernicon went beyond loose association within the imaginative culture of travel. In *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), Mark Twain based a satirical story on a former Mississippi panorama lecturer who was writing a tour guide for the St. Louis and St. Paul Packet Company.²⁵ This suggests that nineteenth century readers were familiar enough with the potential connection between moving panoramas and travel books to get the joke. In the case of the hibernicon, its translation of travel books' visual

and narrative elements exposed a wide range of classes to travel books' conventions through its performances. The repeated return of hibernicon companies to cities and towns made their travel narratives more accessible for working class audience members who could not afford a travel book.

In the process of adaptation, the hibernicon ran the danger of replicating the ideology of travel books, which was formed primarily by British travelers until the late nineteenth century. By the time hibernicon companies started touring in the 1860s, the travel books developed a standard narrative and visual vocabulary along with reader expectations. Although many travelers went to Ireland to gain a better understanding of Irish life and political strife, their travels often centered on experiencing difference. In discussions of landscape, culture, or people, writers' attention to difference frequently framed the colonial relationship between Ireland and Britain as a pre-modern/modern cultural conflict. This dichotomy reinforced British superiority and laid the blame for Irish troubles on their "primitive" lifestyle. The representation of the Irish landscape provided a dual motive for the British to travel to Ireland. The romantic, picturesque, and idealized depictions appealed to tourists who wanted to escape the increasingly industrialized Britain. The recurrent descriptions of the Irish landscape as empty also seemed to justify the British colonial presence. When British writers did depict the Irish people, writers used the Irish's status as undesirable "others" to justify the oppression of "backwards" Catholics and the Protestant faith's adoption.²⁶

Throughout the nineteenth century, travel books' representation of Ireland transformed while retaining many of these basic characteristics. For example, for a brief time after the Great Famine, narratives became more optimistic about Ireland's future. Some British writers believed that Ireland's devastation would allow its remaining people to finally build a modern culture.

Others emphasized how the British labor force and economy could benefit from the Irish exodus and hoped that the trauma would quell political unrest.²⁷ After the Civil War, increasing numbers of Irish tour guides and narratives for an American as opposed to a British audience and the appropriation of the images by the Irish Tourist Board led to a more positive spin on the older British preoccupations. In these narratives, the Irish peasant transformed from a drunk and violent barbarian into a new stereotype that emphasized the Irish's hospitality, sensitivity, and compassion.²⁸ In some respects, this shift paralleled the transformation of the stage Irishman in America from Early American crude caricatures to the more positive stereotypes of Dion Boucicault and Edward Harrigan.

Yet, the Irish writers who started to produce travel books often replicated many of the British and American writers' motifs and imagery. They knew that they could profit from the stereotypical associations with their country. Travelers would visit an idyllic escape with quaint, kind people. Expressing the reality of Irish lives, including cycle of famines, political unrest and violence, and widespread poverty, would not attract visitors. As a result, for the Irish who wanted the country to profit from the expanding tourist business, their success rested on perpetuating centuries-old stereotypes.²⁹

Replicating travel books' visual imagery became one direct way some hibernicon companies reproduced the travel culture's and books' ideologies. Aside from McGill and Strong's use of Bartlett's engraving for their ladies souvenir, the company claimed that it took its panorama from the sketches of William McGrath, more commonly known as Magrath, the "famous Irish artist" from Ireland.³⁰ Magrath lived in America for several decades and painted well-known images of rural life in Ireland, including *Irish Peasantry Returning from the Fair* (1869), *Rustic Courtship* (1876), and *On the Old Sod* (1878). His paintings were turned into

engravings and published in works such as Samuel Lover's ballad *Low Back'd Car*. His works were characteristically romantic, but known for paying unusually sympathetic attention to rural life. Upon his death in 1918, his obituary writer explained his approach to the Irish character: "His feelings with regard to the portrayal [*sic*] of Irish characters were very pronounced, having always contended that the peasant should not be represented as the 'stage Irishman' and sacrificed many commissions on account of this laudable prejudice; consequently his figures possess a refinement and dignity not apparent in more popular pictures by less sincere artists."³¹ By taking their panorama images from Magrath, it appears that McGill and Strong may have focused on the Irish people in their paintings as much as the landscape. Even though Magrath tried to avoid stage Irish images, he still sentimentalized Irish character. By using these types of images in dialogue with stage Irish characters like Barney the Guide, McGill and Strong's reflected the range of Irish stereotypes found in travel books.

Even if companies did not copy travel book engravings for their panoramas, the paintings were likely inspired by similar romantic and idyllic imagery. The pictorial aesthetic came to dominate the stage from the nineteenth century until about World War I. As an aspect of romanticism that shaped nineteenth century poetry and music as well as literature and theatre, this aesthetic influenced artists to convey the "visual realization of poetic beauty" for travel books and stage productions.³² For representations of Ireland, these "realizations" often involved rolling landscapes, quaint peasant folk, and thatched cottages.³³ As a result of this common pictorial aesthetic, unrelated Irish travel book engravings and hibernicon panoramas evoked each other in their audiences' mind, even if the connection was stylistic, instead of direct.

In addition to the visual aspects, the hibernicon also mimicked the dual narrators from Irish travel books. The first narrator is the writer. Most travel books include a preface or

introduction that explains the author's purpose for writing. The reasons for writing vary, but the introductory materials emphasize how the writers' value resides in their ability to showcase the "real" Ireland. S.G. Bayne's *On an Irish Jaunting-Car Through Donegal and Connemara* makes this point explicitly in the photo caption opposite its title page. Below the image of an Irish man, Bayne notes "The Real Thing."³⁴ Similar to the hibernicon, visual evidence played a key role in displaying the "real" Ireland to viewers. Guides' titles highlighted the sketches or photos taken on the journey, including *Penciling by the Way* and *Ireland Illustrated with Pen and Pencil*.³⁵

Authors used several tactics to gain the reader's trust in their depictions of Ireland. One method was to promise their readers that books could act as on-site handbooks. Henry Morford's *Appleton's Short Trip Guide to Europe, 1868* includes detailed cost and transportation for a trip to Ireland as well as advice on what to do and not to do during the steamship journey.³⁶ For example, Morford aims "to make [his guide] an instructive (and sometimes amusing) pocket-companion, its size especially fitting it for that purpose – to aid the hurried, put the raw and nervous at ease, save money to travelers of limited means, and at least lay a profitable foundation of knowledge for those who may intend to travel more at length, more at leisure, and pursue more elaborate works of the same character."³⁷ Other works in this vein include publisher John Murray's *Handbook for Travelers in Ireland*. To aid the traveler, Murray also publishes "travelling maps" along with the guide.³⁸ The charts, advice, and maps may assist an actual tourist to Ireland, but the promise of practical utility also lent an aura of legitimacy for the readers who travelled vicariously through the narratives.

Travel books' main tactic for earning their readers' trust rested on the construction of the narrator. In his introduction or preface, the author typically establishes his position as an outsider to Irish culture. For example, Plummer Jones describes how he "entered the country a

total stranger, interested in the island chiefly on account of what I had heard and read of its people, its old ruins, its stories and legends, and the reputed beauty of its landscapes.”³⁹ He then explains that he is an American who has no ties to his ancestors’ homelands and “least of all have I any personal interest in Ireland’s troubles with England.”⁴⁰ Some writers, such as journalist James Macaulay, are less direct in situating themselves as outsiders. In his preface, Macaulay explains “we are always hearing about the improved state of Ireland.”⁴¹ Through his use of language, Macaulay indicates his position as an outsider, like his readers, who has come to check out the rumors of Ireland’s progress. By denying any connection to the country, Jones, Macaulay, and other authors construct themselves as more objective and, by implication, accurate, observers than someone born in Ireland. This position of the author also encourages a sense of identification with the reader. He is our eyes because we, the readers, cannot be there in person.

The construction of the narrator as objective outsider also involves a description of the authors’ methods of observation. Authors detail how they obtained their information about Ireland and what type of narrative their readers can expect. Their justifications often reference how long the author spent in Ireland, where he visited, and what he looked for during his travels. Hall writes that the “authors labored with zeal and industry to obtain such topographical and statistical information as might be useful to those who visit Ireland, or who desired the means of judging correctly as to its capabilities and condition.”⁴² In *Romantic Ireland*, the Manfields explain that their book is “the record of a pilgrimage” and “some impressions of, a few of those ever present charms of the green isle which have so permeated its history, its romance, and its literature.”⁴³ The basis for Oliver Optic’s journey to Ireland was an academic exercise. He discusses how the “Shamrock and Thistle...contains the history of the Academy Ship, and the

students who sailed in her on the coasts of Ireland and Scotland, with their excursions into the interior.”⁴⁴

Finally, the narrators attempt to downplay any subjectivity by comparing their observations to others. Curtis and the Mansfields openly admit to supplementing their observations with other print sources to strengthen their endeavor “to narrate truthfully.”⁴⁵ Similarly the Mansfields explain that their “book attempts merely the task of compiling fact and fancy, drawn from many sources, in connection with current comment – based upon actual observation.”⁴⁶ After outlining how his narrative will detail his observations on Ireland’s religious problems, particularly in relation to “popery,” Macaulay defends the objectivity of his observations. He writes, “[i]n confirmation of my statements, I have quoted the opinions of men like Sydney Smith and Charles Dickens, of Sismondi and De Tocqueville, as being free from suspicion of religious bigotry or prejudice”⁴⁷ Several guides even include a bibliography of sources.

By setting up the guides as a narrative about the observation of difference, the authors also hint at how the story of Ireland will be told. The tour books are narratives that search for “authentic” Irish culture and are based in a feeling of discovery and adventure. In spite of the authors’ reliance on observation and fact, they promise to go one step beyond to relate the “more important details” that one gains through the travel experience. Travel literature invariably included “incidents, descriptions, legends, traditions, and personal sketches.” As Hall stated in his preface, this combination of elements served the demands of the audience. He hoped that the more personal sketches and legends “might serve to excite interest in those who are deterred from the perusal of mere facts, if communicated in a less popular form.”⁴⁸ The readers only see what the author chooses to tell us and if we are going to trust his selection of sites and stories, we

need to trust his motives and his approach. The authors' performed openness starts to build this trust.

Although not sold as a how-to guide, the hibernicon similarly marketed itself on its supposedly realistic view of Ireland. Convincing audience members of the hibernicon's realism started with its advertisements and songsters. The lecturer reinforced this idea in performance. MacEvoy's Original Hibernicon claimed that "This is the genuine 'Hibernicon' introducing Irish scenery and Irish character in its true light."⁴⁹ The Mirror of Ireland explained that its panorama "faithfully represented" Ireland.⁵⁰ Similar to the tour guides, the panorama's realism partially rested on its visuals and their advertised accuracy. Newspaper ads, articles, and songsters established the visuals' legitimacy by tracing the images provenance to either a travel book or actual trip to Ireland and explaining the skill of the hired artists. In the same way the tour guides used their prefaces and introductions, the songsters typically presented this information in a short preface before the lyrics. MacEvoy noted how "The sketches, engravings, and photographs, were imported from London, and Dublin, expressly for the work, and executed on canvas at a vast outlay, by the celebrated French Scenic Artists, M.M. Dufloeg and Foncheve, of the Grand Opera House Paris."⁵¹ Howarth's Grand Hibernica emphasized the great cost of the panorama paintings claiming that they "engaged, at an incredible expense, one of the finest landscape artists in Europe, and at the cost of nearly a fortune, sent him to Ireland to paint from nature the beauties and pathetically touching sweetness of the Emerald Isle."⁵² This marketing approach echoes travel books like Mansfield's that claim "[t]here is much contributory and allied matter to be found in the wealth of illustration 'done by the artist on the spot,' which, like the letter-press, professes truthfulness and attractiveness in its presentation."⁵³ Like the Irish travel books, many of the illustrations were not done by actual Irishmen, but by outsiders recreating the images.

Hibernicon companies claimed they hired artists from as far as France and as close as Morgan and Balling in New York and the Pearson Brothers in Boston.⁵⁴

The travel books and hibernicon also reflected the common tourist routes in Ireland. As scholar James Buzard discusses, the idea of the “beaten track” was “one dominant and recurrent image in the annals of the modern tour.”⁵⁵ Following the expected path to Ireland’s sites helped travelers have “recognizably ‘authentic’ experiences, not original ones.”⁵⁶ Travel books and the hibernicon similarly traveled to famous natural wonders, like the Lakes of Killarney and Giant’s Causeway, as well as old landmarks like Blarney Castle and St. Patrick’s Cathedral. Even if an audience member had never travelled to Ireland, certain sites would be expected as a result of information circulated through the culture of international travel. Many hibernicon companies took a sympathetically Catholic and nationalist view of these sites, which differed from most travel books, but the sites visited were not drastically altered. The deviations in the journey stops from a port, such as Queenstown, through the rural and urban Ireland are rare in the hibernicon. One of the few instances occurs in MacEvoy’s Hibernicon where a version of their panorama has the travelers entering the country through Dublin, which would not have been a common route for ships at the time.⁵⁷ Perhaps this change attempts to rewrite part of its audience members’ emigration experience to distinguish its journey or perhaps it simply reflects the lack of concern with completely accurate detail.

The hibernicon also involves an authority figure, the lecturer, who shapes the narrative. Similar to the travel books, the lecturer exists as only one of two narrators for the journey. The audience, which does not necessarily have in-depth knowledge of Ireland, travels “with” the hibernicon company from New York to Ireland. The lecturer plays the partial role of “cultural broker” between the audience and Ireland. Through his anecdotes and descriptions of the sites,

the lecturer's reaction hints to the audience how they should feel toward the sites and characters onstage. Unlike the travel narratives, the ability for the audience to witness the characters, situations, and panorama sites on their own problematizes the lecturer's ability to shape how the sites and characters are viewed or to fully "structure" the audience's attention. The trappings of authority, knowledge, and rational observation are not as easily assumed without the justifications in an intro, preface, or book length story. As a result the hibernicon's lecturer must use both the performative as well as his words to gain the trust of the audience.

A typical figure in nineteenth century panoramas, the lecturer often provides the narrative for the panorama as it scrolls across the stage.⁵⁸ It was expected that the lecturer would provide accurate descriptive information about the sites as they scrolled past. In addition to information, it also was assumed that the lecturer would relate amusing anecdotes and stories. One contemporary observer described the lecturer as a "showman." He details how "as the canvas rolls by, unfolding to our view Alps, and oceans, cathedrals and battles, coronations, conflagrations, volcanic eruptions and so forth, we hear, in the pauses of a cracked piano, the voice of the Showman, as of one crying in the wilderness, who tells us all about the localities represented, with a great deal of pleasant information to be obtained in no other manner, because it is improvised for the occasion."⁵⁹ At least in terms of content, this description does not sound all that much different than the role played by the travel book writer. Gavin and Ryan's *Emerald Isle* prints the lecture in their songster alongside an outline of the panorama images. The narrative situates the audiences' location in the geography, describes the location's beauty, and provides historical information and stories about sites and key historical figures. The lecturer often reinforces the picturesque aesthetic of the images. For example, for the "Beautiful Lakes of Killarney," the lecturer describes how "[b]y Killarney's lakes and fells Emerald Isles and

winding bays, Mountain paths and woodland dells, memory ever fondly strays, Bounteous nature loves all lands, beauty wanders everywhere.”⁶⁰ In some instances, the lecturer simply reminds the audience of the site’s picturesqueness such as when it describes the Rock of Cashel: “This picturesque spot is greatly admired by tourists who freely admit that for its peculiar features, it is unexcelled.”⁶¹ This romanticism is tempered by factual and anecdotal information, such as the depth of cliffs and the stories of saints and chieftains.⁶² Although the content remained somewhat similar to travel books, the lecturer’s showmanship could encourage an audience to trust the lecturer through physical cues that the travel book writer could not access. For the hibernicon, part of this showmanship involved playing a particular character that both reflected audience expectations for a panorama lecturer as well as fulfilled stereotypical expectations of an Irishman.

Similar to the travel narrative’s attempts to illustrate the author’s ability to properly interpret the sites, the hibernicon named their lecturers “professor” in order to instill a feeling of superior knowledge. Broadsides, songsters, programs, and newspapers announced the appearances of Professors MacEvoy, Professor Geary (both from MacEvoy’s Hibernicon), Professor Greenbaum (Dan Nash’s Hibernicon Comedy and Speciality Company), and Professor Wm. Wells (Morrissey’s Grand Hibernicon).⁶³ It was assumed that “professors” also had a set of oratory skills that would make the performance enjoyable to listen to as an audience member. For example, the *San Francisco Dramatic Daily Chronicle* praised J.H. Warwick’s “powers of elocution [that] the citizens of San Francisco, and in fact of the entire State, are acquainted [with].”⁶⁴ The title of “professor” was a common device used by many panoramas in the period, especially since one of the selling points of panoramas was not only their spectacle, but their educational value. Reviewers commented on the educational value of the hibernicon lectures. A

spectator at a MacEvoy show in Illinois explained how “The views were the most interesting features of the show, and the lecturer aided in making each view an instructive lesson.”⁶⁵ J.L. MacEvoy’s *New Hibernicon Songster* reprinted a comment from a Wisconsin paper that explained how MacEvoy described the scenery in a “pleasant and intelligible manner.”⁶⁶ Throughout MacEvoy’s *Hibernicon*, Charles MacEvoy “deliver[ed] an able and thorough descriptive address recounting the tales and traditions of the classic localities, and giving to the ear as well as to the eye a better knowledge and appreciation of Ireland’s former greatness and her present and ineffaceable charms.”⁶⁷

Yet, unlike the narrator of the travel books, who gained an authoritative voice based on his outsider, objective status, the lecturer’s authority was grounded, in part, in his perceived Irishness and closeness to Irishmen’s struggles. Aside from many lecturers having an Irish sounding surname, some also performed an Irish accent. In the MacEvoy’s case, the audience perceived them as Irish emigrants. “The MacEvoy’s are from Erin,” one review claimed, “and bring with them to this country a really beautiful series of panoramic paintings representing the chief natural and architectural features of their native land.”⁶⁸ During this performance, MacEvoy bolstered his performance’s connection to reality by referring to his life in Dublin, which “add[ed] a unique charm to the professor’s extremely national remarks.”⁶⁹ Although this connection to Ireland could be only a performed connection for some lecturers, the naturalization papers of Charles MacEvoy suggest that the MacEvoy’s truly were Irish emigrants.⁷⁰

For other hibernicon lecturers, whether the Irishness simply was performed or because of an Irish background is unclear, but either way, it served to remind audience members that the lecturer would have knowledge of Ireland. A *New York Tribune* review of an 1868 production of MacEvoy’s *Hibernicon* at Pike’s illustrates how performing Irishness lent both an authoritative

and entertainment value to the production. The reviewer writes, “Song attends it all the way - so does speech. The orator of last evening wrestled powerfully with his subject...He was an Irishman, and he was talking about Ireland. He spoke with lively disrespect of her oppressors; said that justice had not been done to her; and intimated a hope for better days; whereupon a loud-voiced Irishman in the pit vociferated ‘Amen’.”⁷¹ Referring to Ireland’s oppression was typical of hibernicon performances and in this case, reinforced his association with the Irish Catholic stereotypes of the nineteenth century. According to another newspaper article, the lecturer’s Irishness added to the production’s entertainment value commenting, “Apart from the unsurpassed scenery, there is a certain abandon of Irish anecdote and humor in the lecturer which is really irresistible.”⁷² Although this last article sounds like a puff, at the very least, it illustrates how the companies viewed the lecturer’s presumed connection to Ireland as a selling point for its audiences.

Aside from the narrator/lecturer connection, the hibernicon also adapted the secondary narrator from the travel books, the local Irish guide. The use of a local Irish guide helped confirm the authenticity of the sites for the travelers.⁷³ The Irish jaunting car driver supposedly gives tourists access to the “back area,” the “true” story behind the Ireland staged for outsiders or the “front area.”⁷⁴ “No personal account of a visit to Ireland by an American or Irish American lacks a passage” with the local guide.⁷⁵ The jaunting car driver was typically hired by the tourists to take them throughout the country to see the sights. On the way, the driver provides details about the passing landscape and landmarks along with plenty of amusing anecdotes. The jaunting car driver, typically Barney the Guide or Dublin Dan, offers the same service for the tourist character and the audience in the hibernicon. For the local guide, showing the sites

involves not only describing the scenery and telling stories about the country's history, but also revealing local life.

The use of a stage Irish figure for the hibernicon's Irish guide reflected the development of the travel books' local guide. Until the Great Famine, the local guide was often shown as a dehumanized, uncivilized individual. In Post-Famine Ireland, the guide came to reflect more prominent stage Irish characteristics.⁷⁶ This shift in representation was sometimes explained through the evolution of the Irish people. Macaulay's travel book makes this point by explaining how the Irish are no longer all drunk and lazy. He claims that portraits of the Irish in travel books are out of date and that he has seen instances of progress. For example, he believes that "The Irish fairs are also fast losing their barbarous character, and reverting to the original purpose of buying and selling. There was never a fair that did not end with a savage faction-fight, or if there were no faction-feud at the time, with a general fight and skirmish."⁷⁷ The Halls speak happily of how the Irish jaunting car driver and guide "rarely took his seat without being half-intoxicated; now-a-days an occurrence of the kind is very rare."⁷⁸ This drunken, barbarous Irishman was replaced with a figure that would not be out of place on the nineteenth century stage.

At his worst, the stage Irishman speaks bulls and blarney with a thick brogue. He has red hair and a "face...of simian bestiality, with an expression of diabolical archness written all over it."⁷⁹ In the second half of the nineteenth century, the stage Irish characters in the works of playwrights like John Brougham, Dion Boucicault, and Edward Harrigan also "suggested the more positive qualities of Irishness: generosity, a sense of community, loyalty, and courage, and a simple pride in being Irish."⁸⁰ Written for American popular audiences, Martin MacDonagh's *Irish Life and Character* highlights this attitude shift in travel books.⁸¹ MacDonagh describes

how tourists expect to meet “an uncouth-looking barbarian, arrayed in rags...a face with broad, distorted lineaments, relieved only by a latent expression of mingled foolishness and fun...and in his hand a bit stick or shillelagh.”⁸² Instead, MacDonagh claims “the average Irish face...is, by common consent, well formed, cheerful animated...They are one of the most laughter-loving, the wittiest, and the most jovial of people.”⁸³ Travel books writers often remark on the generosity and humor of the Irish as if they are unique and comprise part of the tourist experience. William Elroy Curtis explained that “no people are more genial or charming or courteous in their reception of a stranger, or more cordial in their hospitality.”⁸⁴ The Halls discussed their car man as if part of his job was to entertain them as well as drive them safely to destination. They tell their readers that it is possible to find a driver who “can entertain you with amusing anecdotes along a dull road; describe interesting objects upon a road that supplies them, and communicate information upon all points of importance, without endangering the bones of the passenger.”⁸⁵

Yet, the local Irish guide retains the negative characteristics of the type, including his talkativeness, tendency to exaggerate, and inclination to trick and scheme. “He has a hundred ways of willing himself into your confidence,” the Halls warn.⁸⁶ Oliver Optic describes how his car man swindled him by severely overcharging him for his services.⁸⁷ In the travel guides, the author is possibly projecting the stereotype onto his local Irish guides or the locals also may be performing the tourists’ expectations in order to profit from the tourists’ misconceptions. Either way, the travel books imply that the travelers should enjoy the entertainment and information provided by the guide, but should remain on guard.

Barney the Guide, or the imitation hibernicon companies’ equivalent character, evokes similar ideas of the Irish people’s uniqueness and provides the audience with access to local culture. The dual side of the stage Irish character is also emphasized. In the preface to his

company's songster, Charles MacEvoy brags that his show contains "life-like sketches of the grave and humorous sides of [Ireland's] character of her extraordinary people."⁸⁸ Between the 1860s and 1880s, MacEvoy family companies' songsters highlight Barney's role as guide more than any existing songster, except for McGill and Strong's. However, McGill and Strong copied many of their local guide songs from MacEvoy and simply erased Barney's name.

Charles MacEvoy wrote most of these songs, including "Rollicking Irish Barney," "Barney Be Aisy," "Barney the Jarvey," and "Barney the Driver Lad." Each song establishes one facet of the travel books' secondary narrator. "Rollicking Irish Barney" plays to the audience's expectations for a stage Irish character. When Barney sings, "I'm the rollicking Irish Barney, I delight to dance and sing, I'm full of divil and blarney, And all of that sort of thing," he illustrates both the entertaining and slightly untrustworthy characteristics of the type.⁸⁹ "Barney Be Aisy" uses a conversation with Barney's love Nora as an excuse for him to explain his role as a secondary narrator to the audience. He beckons her to "come stand by me here" so that he can "sing you fine songs, 'bout the poker and tongs, And the beautiful Lakes Killarney." Aside from explaining the sites, Barney echoes how he will continue the same type of narrative as the lecturer by telling her "about, my own darling Isle, The nate [*sic*] Emerald gem of the Ocean, About the kings and the bogs, the priests and the frogs."⁹⁰ "Barney the Jarvey," and "Barney the Driver Lad" familiarize the audience with the method of transportation travelers in Ireland need to take to reach some of Ireland's sites and what Barney promises to provide for the travelers who pay him.⁹¹ In McGill and Strong's version of this song type, "Dublin Carman," ending dialogue is provided that suggest the company emphasized the stage Irish character's connection to drinking in performance. Their carman promises that "if you're not a tetotaller you not be dry, for I have a well in my car."⁹² Although the line is clearly intended to be comic,

it illustrates the potential danger to the travelers if their driver is also partaking of the car's "well."

Unlike the travelers in the books, Barney and his antics pose no danger to the audience members. The hibernicon effectively contains the threat felt by authors in their writings through the conventions associated with variety entertainment and Barney's involvement in narratives partially unrelated to the traveler. For example, within the context of the performance and the conventions of stage Irish performance, the audience can expect a drunk Irish car driver to trigger a series of comic exploits, not inconvenience or tragedy for the tourists. Although the guide interacts with the traveler and the audience, much of his story revolves around romantic and comic narratives with his girlfriend and her mother. Hibernicon songs allow Barney to woo, fight, and wed Nora throughout the course of the show. By reflecting both the realistic figure from travelers' actual journeys and stage conventions, Barney fits perfectly in the moving panorama world that attempts to construct reality as well as an illusion that surpasses reality. However, viewed in its entirety, the reinvention of the travel book conventions by the hibernicon companies holds the potential to shatter this delicate balance.

"Blarneying the Public"

In a rant against Dion Boucicault's representation of Ireland, George Bernard Shaw accuses Boucicault of "blarneying" the audience. He complains:

To an Irishman who has any sort of social conscience, the conception of Ireland as a romantic picture in which the background is formed by the Lakes of Killarney by moonlight, and a round tower or so, whilst every male figure is a 'brother of a bhoy,' and every female one a colleen in a crimson Connemara cloak, is as exasperating as the conception of Italy as a huge garden and art museum, inhabited by picturesque artists models, is to a sensible Italian.⁹³

Shaw could have applied this charge to many of Boucicault's nineteenth century theatrical colleagues. Even though the hibernicon drew on similar imagery in performance, I suggest that the ways it reinvented the primary narrator of the travel books allowed it to highlight the illusion of the supposed reality it constructed.

The potential for the hibernicon to hint at the questionable nature of the images it sold rests on the common associations propagated by the Irish travel guides throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In spite of the local guide's Irishness providing an inside view for the tourist, the writers often question whether they are seeing "a front area that is staged like a back area."⁹⁴ The driver or guide "adopted whatever role was expected of him, so that instead of actually seeing what was, the tourist very often saw something which he himself had created."⁹⁵ The biased nature of the guide's statements was questioned as early as 1826 with an article entitled "Irish Writers on Ireland" arguing that the "socioeconomic and religious divisions in Irish society prevented any Irish writer from providing an impartial picture of Ireland."⁹⁶ Many tourists brought this perception with them on their journey to Ireland and travel books reflect their pride at seeing beyond the subjective descriptions of their local guide.⁹⁷ The hibernicon problematizes the ability of the audience to see beyond the subjectiveness by erasing the objective narrator and replacing him with a stage Irish lecturer. The lecturer establishes his authority in a variety of ways, in part through his Irishness. Yet, in reception, this Irishness also causes the audience to question the truthfulness of the representations or prevented the audience's complete absorption in the illusions.

Scholars of nineteenth century popular entertainment and culture have long argued about the moving panorama's relationship to reality. For some, the moving panoramas attempted to

replicate reality and provide to its customers a view of what most could not afford.⁹⁸ Bernard Comment argues for a different relationship. Comment suggests that panoramic illusion “*replaces* reality, does away with the need for practical experience, and soon deprives observers of personal experiences that help them see and acquire knowledge.”⁹⁹ In this formulation, illusion, even its non-realistic elements, become accepted as a better representative of lived experience. The value of the lived experience is degraded, instead of the standard. The “collective imagination” formed by this acceptance of illusion, Comment argues, made it an ideal form for conveying propaganda or reinforcing dominant ideologies.¹⁰⁰

Part of the panorama’s construction of reality also relies on the replication of prevailing modes of perception. During her trip to Ireland in 1885, Evangeline Bense described what and how she viewed the Irish coast from the deck of the steamship *Cephalonia*. She recorded in her diary how “the sturdy rig bore us into the harbor...The water with its brilliant green seemed as if it were the looking-glass of all Ireland’s wonderous ‘Flora’...the yellows and dull reds of the changing foliage, and the ivy...formed an ideal picture never to be forgotten.” She watched the “moving panorama until we reached Queenstown, picturesque with its high vine covered walls and streets rising tier above tier.”¹⁰¹ Bense’s use of the term “moving panorama” to describe her viewing experience was not unique to the period. Scholar Wolfgang Schivelbusch argues that such observations reflect a shift in perception resulting from the incorporation of quicker motion into visual perception. Schivelbusch writes:

[T]he train’s speed separates the traveler from the space that he had previous been a part of...as the traveler steps out of that space, it becomes a stage setting, or a series of pictures or scenes created by the continuously changing perspective...the traveler sees the objects, landscapes, etc, through the apparatus which moves him through the world. That machine and motion become integrated into his visual perception.¹⁰²

As a result, he concludes that “motion of vision...becomes a prerequisite for the ‘normality’ of panoramic vision.”¹⁰³ By replicating the motion of vision, another consequence of the culture of international travel, moving panoramas such as the hibernicon create their illusions by forcing their audiences to use these newer methods of perceiving visually developing outside of the theatre. As a result, moving panoramas are a potentially effective media for ideology, propaganda, and advertising not only because of how the objects, such the scenery, sketches, etc, reflect the realistic appearance of real locations, but for replicating a particular method of vision that was becoming more commonly viewed as natural.¹⁰⁴

The hibernicon’s comic stage Irish lecturer undercuts the “collective imagination” formed by the acceptance of moving panorama’s illusion of reality. He evokes the trickster associations with the stage Irishman and reminds the audience of his lack of objective perspective, which highlights the subjective and potential unreality of the productions’ vision of Ireland. Using the stage Irishman as the primary authority through which the audience views the Irish landscape and its people leads to questions of what he is leaving out and whether he is putting on a “front” for the visiting traveler and the panorama audience. Reviewers commented negatively on the disjunction between the stage Irish lecturer and panorama from the first Irish panoramas performances in America. An otherwise content critic complained that “The only objectionable parts of the exhibition are the humourous remarks of the lecturer, which are in bad taste and entirely out of place.”¹⁰⁵ A Brooklyn writer described the lecturer’s remarks as “very much like those of a crazyman.”¹⁰⁶ Comments about the MacEvoy lecturers were more favorable, but still conveyed the distrust of their Irishness:

MacEvoy *pere* explains those paintings in an intensely Hibernian lecture, much of which is intelligible only to recent [...] from ‘County Tip’ or other portions of the downtrodden isle.... [The] reminiscences of ‘me residence in Dublin’ add a unique charm to the

professor's extremely national remarks...The MacEvoy combination, notwithstanding its diffuse verbosity, possesses so many entertaining features.¹⁰⁷

Even while admitting that the lecturer's reflection on his personal experiences in Dublin added "charm" to the performance, the *New York Evening Post* writer calls out MacEvoy as not only verbose and biased, but almost unintelligible to non-Irish audience members. Although the comment implies that this lack of understanding results from the lecturer's intimacy with the country, at the same time, it distances the non-Irish viewer by emphasizing the reality that they cannot see or hear through the performance.

Only a few years later in 1868, a *New York Tribune* reviewer uses a comparison to a verse by Lord Byron to discredit MacEvoy's lecture. He complained:

It is dreadful to have the gift of gab, but it is inexpressibly dreadful to be compelled to endure its exercise. Now that it is past, however, we forgive him...Perhaps this original strain of eloquence (to the particularity of which none but 'hoarse Fitzgerald' could possibly do justice) would have been enjoyable, but for an intrusive suspicion that two-thirds of the vast and enthusiastic audience had dined on beef-steak and onions. Oratory is strong, but the onions of this free and favored clime are stronger yet.¹⁰⁸

Similar to the *Post* writer, the *Tribune* reviewer is put off by the talkative nature of the lecturer, which was likely part of his stage Irish performance. The "hoarse Fitzgerald" reference refers to the verse, "Still must I hear? --- shall hoarse Fitzgerald bawl/His creaking couplets in a tavern hall."¹⁰⁹ Fitzgerald, the bad poet, subjected others to his painful poetry performances, just like the lecturer subjected the reviewer. In this case, the reviewer's stereotypical view of the Irish in the audience, indicated by his mention of "beef-steak and onions," pulled him further out of the performance's illusion to distance him from complete absorption in the panorama's illusion.

The use of the stage Irishman to highlight the constructedness of Ireland's imagery was a strategy reflected elsewhere in American popular culture. In response to the culture of

international travel popularizing the travel narrative through books, panoramas, and travelogues, Thomas Edison's short film *European Rest Cure* (1904) parodied the travel genre. It does this in part by highlighting the staged aspects of the site visits in panoramas and travelogues. Similar to the hibernicon, *European Rest Cure* begins in New York. We view the tourists boarding the steamship and then the camera reveals a panoramic view of the New York skyline as the ship pulls out of the harbor. During the Atlantic voyage, the boat is caught in a storm and we watch as it bobs on the increasingly violent waves. Until this point, most of the footage is comprised of real shots of New York and the ocean. Upon reaching Europe, the tourists make their first stop of their European tour and their only stop in Ireland at Blarney Castle. The story shifts quite visibly to a studio with a castle set and rolling hills in the background. As the tourists approach the location of the Blarney Stone, two stage Irishmen emerge from behind the castle tower. Between the two, they wear the typical hat, clay pipe, whiskers, and outfits of stage Irishmen. They also move with exaggerate motions that distinguish them from the more realistic movements of the tourists. The men try to convince the tourists to lean over the ledge to kiss the Blarney stone, but the first few refuse. Finally, a man allows the Irishmen to lower him off the side of the tower. They lower him further and further until they drop him. They then turn to the next tourist who attempts to escape, but the Irishmen try to force him over the edge as well as the camera cuts to the next site.¹¹⁰

The tourists arrive to view the "real" Ireland, but the set and Irishmen illustrate the constructedness of the image. The juxtaposition of the real shots of New York, the steamship, and the ocean with the studio set of Blarney Castle highlights the difference between the real and the staged. The tourist trusts the Irishmen to hold him while he kisses the stone, but true to their untrustworthy nature, they fail him. This event merely reinforces the low expectations of the

Irishmen. When the Irishmen drop the tourist, we can tell that he does not drop from a castle tower and instead hits a relatively close floor before he crumples out of site. The Irishmen wear stage costume while the tourists wear “real” clothes. In the context of the rest of the film, the mishap is the first of many that happen to the tourists on their journey through Europe. The disasters that greet the tourists at each new site punctures the romantic view of a trip abroad sold by the burgeoning travel culture. Through this parody, the audience laughs at the false images sold by American travel companies, panoramas, travel books, and travelogues. It reveals another way the stage Irishman was used to undercut stereotypical images of the Irish at the same time it reinforced them.

The potential to disrupt and parody the romanticized images of a trip to Ireland existed only because of the cultural context of international travel and the common associations with the stage Irishman. The hibernicon raises the question of how the stage Irishman was used in other aspects of travel culture, American popular culture, or Irish-American public life to destabilize the stereotypical associations held about Irish Americans. Since all classes could access travel books, even if the working class had less purchasing power, the tropes and devices in the hibernicon would have been familiar enough that their audiences may have noticed how they reinvented the standard conventions. The entertainment’s adept use of travel literature conventions allowed for a layered, subversive read that highlights its narrative’s constructedness. This opens a space for Irish audience members to acknowledge how the hibernicon’s illusions mask the current events and struggles of Ireland. The flexibility of the hibernicon’s imagery contributed to its incorporation into Irish-American ethnic institutions and political movements, such as the Catholic Church and Irish-American nationalism, which will be discussed in the following two chapters.

Notes

¹ *Cove of Cork: Presented to the Lady Patrons of McGill & Strong's Mirror of Ireland*, Lithograph Print, (New York: Currier and Ives, n.d.), from Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/91722894/> (accessed January 5, 2011). Historically, the British navy used the naturally protected harbor as a base for training and housing prison ships.

² *Dublin Penny Journal*, 18 August 1832. This comment was published around the time the artist, William H. Bartlett, made his sketch of Cove, which McGill and Strong replicated almost exactly for their ladies souvenir. Kristin L. Hoganson discusses when printing became more affordable for the masses. Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 171.

³ Samuel Carter Hall and Anna Maria Hall, *Ireland: Its Scenery, Character, etc. In Three Volumes* (London: How and Parsons, 1841-3); Publishers reprinted the Halls' book numerous times throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, including in 1846, 1866, and 1911; J. Stirling, N.P. Willis, W.H. Bartlett, *The Scenery and Antiquities of Ireland* (London : George Virtue, 1841-2); This guide was reprinted in 1875 and 1900.

⁴ Markenfield Addey and William H. Bartlett, *Picturesque Ireland: Historical and Descriptive*, Vol. 1 (New York: Worthington Co, 1890), 78-9; Hussein I. El-Mudarrist and Olivier Salmon, *Romantic Travel through Bartlett's Engravings from Europe to the Middle East* (Aleppo (Syria): Ray Publishing and Science, 2007), 17-8.

⁵ *San Francisco Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, 30 January 1866, 1.

⁶ Hoganson, 165-6; Harvey A. Levenstein, *Seductive Journey: American Tourists in France from Jefferson to the Jazz Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 126.

⁷ The plays of Dion Boucicault are only one example of how romanticized Ireland was represented in the theatre. For more on how romanticism affected nineteenth century American theatre see Michael R. Booth, "Irish Landscape in Victorian Theatre," in *Place, Personality, and the Irish Writer*, ed. Andrew Carpenter (New York: Harper and Row, 1977); Richard Moody, *America Takes the Stage: Romanticism for American Drama and Theatre, 1750-1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955).

⁸ To date, I have not found another exact print of the McGill and Strong souvenir elsewhere. However, it would be incorrect to assume that the company intentionally altered the image. At the same time, the company chose to use this image over the more popularly accessible original Bartlett sketch. In addition to the changes mentioned, the print also erases the

two flags, one that flies above the cottage and another that appears on the island. It is not possible to make out the flag.

⁹ The man on the far right is no longer bent over and another man, who is on the other side of the child in the Bartlett engraving, is erased. The bush is extended to cover his figure and the print's use of color helps hide him. If the viewer reads the people as Irish, the alteration provides a more respectful view of the Irish. Keeping their clothes outdated would merely reinforce the common assumption that inhabitants of Western island were pre-modern.

¹⁰ Hogganson, 165.

¹¹ Ibid., 165-6.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ *America Abroad*, quoted in Levenstein, 130.

¹⁴ The increasing efficiency of steamships also allowed companies to decrease prices. Stephen Fox, *Transatlantic: Samuel Cunard, Isambard Brunel, and the Great Atlantic Steamship* (New York: Perennial, 2004), 263-277, 351-360; Hogganson, 171. Levenstein, 128-129; Foster Rhea Dulles, *Americans Abroad: Two Centuries of European Travel* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1964), 27.

¹⁵ Fox, 263-277, 351-360.

¹⁶ Thomas Kelly, quoted in Marion R. Casey, "Ireland, New York and the Irish Image in American Popular Culture, 1890-1960," (Ph.D diss., New York University, 1998), 229.

¹⁷ Casey, 227-230; For more on the development of vacationing and leisure, see Orvar Lofgren, *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) and Cindy S. Aron, *Working at Play: A History of Vacations in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

¹⁸ For more on the popular nature of travel narratives, see Ahmd M. Metwalli, "Americans Abroad: The Popular Art of Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century," in *America: Exploration and Travel*, ed. Stephen Kagle (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1979), 68-82.

¹⁹ Philip G. Hubert Jr., "Camping Out for the Poor," *Century* 44, no. 4 (August 1892): 633-4.

²⁰ Ibid., 634. Aron discusses the circumstances that contributed to the working class's delayed participation in vacationing and middle class reformers attempts to introduce vacationing into working class culture. Aron, 183-205.

²¹ James J. O'Kelly, *The Mambi-Land, or Adventures of a Herald Correspondent in Cuba* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co, 1874). Hoganson, 155-208.

²² For an example of Bayard Taylor's work, see Bayard Taylor, *Eldorado, or Adventures in the Path of Empire* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1859). In his letters, Taylor describes the way people clamored to see him. He occasionally dismisses their worship of him for "having gotten over so much ground." Taylor reports that the "little country towns all give me fifty dollars a lecture, and cram their halls and churches. People come ten, fifteen, and twenty miles over the prairie in their wagons to see and hear me....The people are infatuated, and I can't understand why." Bayard Taylor to R.H. Stoddard, Buffalo, 5 March 1854, and Bayard Taylor to mother, Milwaukee, WI, 16 March 1854, in *Life and Letters of Bayard Taylor*, Vol I, eds. Marie Hansen-Taylor and Horace E. Scudder, Second Edition (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1885), 271-3.

²³ Hoganson, 179.

²⁴ Richard Moody, *America Takes the Stage: Romanticism in American Drama and Theatre, 1750-1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955), 234-8; Sadiya Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011), 102; A.H. Saxon, *P.T. Barnum: The Legend and the Man* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 93; Booth, 168, 172. Booth credits Boucicault with establishing closer links between landscape, individualized character, and dramatic action. Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988).

²⁵ Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1917), 478-482. For more on Twain and how his humor and writings mirrored moving panorama techniques, see Curtis Dahl, "Mark Twain and the Moving Panoramas," *American Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (Spring 1961): 20-32.

²⁶ Anon., *Handbook for Travellers in Ireland* (London: John Murray, 1866); William Makepiece Thackeray, *The Irish Sketchbook* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co, 1887); Sir John Forbes, *Memorandums Made in Ireland in the Autumn of 1852*, 2 vols (London: Smith, Elder, and Co, 1853); Sir Francis B. Head, *A Fortnight in Ireland* (London: John Murray, 1852); John Harvey Ashworth, *The Saxon in Ireland, or The Rambles of an Englishman in Search of a Settlement in the West of Ireland* (London: John Murray, 1851); Rev. Caesar Otway, *A Tour in Connaught* (Dublin: William Curry, 1839); See also Barbara O'Connor, "Myths and Mirrors: Tourist Images and National Identity," in *Tourism in Ireland: A Critical Analysis*, ed. Barbara O'Connor and Michael Cronin (Cork: Cork University Press, 1993), 69-71; Michael Cronin, "Fellow Travellers: Contemporary Travel Writing and Ireland," in *Tourism in Ireland: A Critical Analysis*, ed. Barbara O'Connor and Michael Cronin (Cork: Cork University Press, 1993), 54-6; Elizabeth Meloy, "Touring Connemara: Learning to Read a Landscape of Ruins, 1850-1860,"

New Hibernia Review 13, no. 3 (Autumn 2009): 45; William H.A. Williams, *Tourism, Landscape, and the Irish Character* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 30-1, 37, 41, 51-3, 127-8, 163.

²⁷ Ashworth, 43; See also Harriet Martineau, *Letters from Ireland* (London: John Capman, 1852); Meloy, 45; Glenn Hooper, "The Isles/Ireland: The Wilder Shore," in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 183.

²⁸ Casey, 236-8.

²⁹ Eric G. E. Zuelow, *Making Ireland Irish: Tourism and National Identity since the Irish Civil War* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009), xv-xxxiv.

³⁰ *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 13 May 1871, 3. McGill and Strong's panorama is not the only instance in which a company used its connection to travel books to advertise a hibernicon production. "[T]he very best sign and ornamental painter in San Francisco" painted a local San Francisco company's moving panorama in the mid-1860s. It was "a most faithful reproduction of the views of Ireland published many years ago in the 'Landscape Annual' by Virtue and Co." "Theatrical Intelligence," *San Francisco Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, 30 December 1865.

³¹ *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 2nd series, vol. 24, (1918): 45-47; *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, (December 1889), 25. See also "William Magrath," in *The Twentieth Century Biographical Dictionary of Notable Americans*, volume 7, eds. Rossiter Johnson and John Howard Brown (Boston: Biographical Society, 1904). For an example of his work, see "Fifty Years of American Art: 1828-1878," *Harper's Magazine* 59 (October 1879): 686; *American Bookseller* 26, no. 19, 15 November 1889, 563; Claudia Kinmonth, *Irish Rural Interiors in Art* (New Haven: Yale University, 2006), 42, 68, 119-120. Outraged by the Phoenix Park assassinations (1882), Magrath apparently refused to paint any more Irish landscapes, but he changed his mind about ten years later. *Outlook* 50, no. 2, 29 December 1894.

³² Booth, 159-171.

³³ Moody, 234-8.

³⁴ S.G. Bayne, *On an Irish Jaunting-Car Through Donegal and Connemara* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1902), frontispiece.

³⁵ William Stevenson, *Sights and Scenes in Europe; Or, Pencilings by the Way in England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Switzerland, Germany, and Belgium* (Flint, MI: M.S. Elmore and Co., 1882); Richard Lovett, *Ireland Illustrated with Pen and Pencil* (New York: Hurst and Company, 1891).

³⁶ Henry Morford, *Appleton's Short-Trip Guide to Europe, 1868* (New York: D. Appleton and Co, 1868), 5-46.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, vi.

³⁸ *Handbook for Travellers in Ireland* (London: John Murray, 1866).

³⁹ Plummer F. Jones, *Shamrock-Land: A Ramble Through Ireland* (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1908), xi.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, xiii.

⁴¹ James Macaulay, *Ireland in 1872* (London: Henry S. King and Co, 1873), v. Macaulay was only one of many journalists who traveled to and wrote about Ireland. See Hooper, 115.

⁴² Hall, Original Preface, 2-3.

⁴³ M.F. and B. McM. Mansfield, *Romantic Ireland* (Boston: L.C. Page and Company, 1905), 2.

⁴⁴ Oliver Optic, *Shamrock and Thistle, or Young America in Ireland and Scotland: A Story of Travel and Adventure* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1868), 5.

⁴⁵ Curtis, 2.

⁴⁶ Mansfield, 9.

⁴⁷ Macaulay, viii.

⁴⁸ Hall, Original Preface, 2-3.

⁴⁹ "A Tour of Ireland," *Syracuse (New York) Daily Courier*, 22 January 1864.

⁵⁰ "The Mirror of Ireland," *Hartford Daily Courant*, 1 September 1871, 2.

⁵¹ Charles MacEvoy, "Preface," in *W.F. Lawlor's Original Barney the Guide Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1871) Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 2; Charles MacEvoy, "Preface," in *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1872), Borowitz Collection, Department of Special Collections and Archives, Kent State University Libraries and Media Services, 3.

⁵² *Howorth's Grand Hibernica Songster* (Trenton: Wm. S. Sharp, 1885?), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 1.

⁵³ Mansfield, 9.

⁵⁴ Charles MacEvoy, "Preface," in *W.F. Lawlor's Original Barney the Guide Songster*, 2; Charles MacEvoy, "Preface," in *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster*, 3; *New York Clipper*, 20 May 1875, 67; *J.L. MacEvoy's New Hibernicon Songster* (New York: DeWitt, 1881), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 3.

⁵⁵ James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 4.

⁵⁶ Susan Kroeg, "Cockney Tourists, Irish Guides, and the Invention of the Emerald Isle," *Eire-Ireland* 44, no. 3 and 4 (Fall/Winter 2009): 213.

⁵⁷ *MacEvoy's New Hibernicon*, broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle), American Broadside and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8).

⁵⁸ For more on lecturers and moving panoramas see Llewellyn Hedgbeth, "Extant American Panoramas: Moving Entertainments of the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1977), 11. For more on the comic style of panorama lecturers, see Curtis Dahl, "Artemus Ward: Comic Panoramist," *New England Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (December 1959): 476-485.

⁵⁹ "Editor's Table," *Southern Literary Messenger* 29, no. 2 (August 1859): 151.

⁶⁰ *Rody the Rover Songster and Emerald Isle Lecture Book*. (New York: De Witt Publishers, 1873), 53-4, Mick Moloney Irish-American Music and Popular Culture Collection, Part IV, Box 48, Folder 29, Archives of Irish America, Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁶² *MacEvoy's New Hibernicon*, broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle), American Broadside and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8).

⁶³ "The Hibernicon," *Chicago Tribune*, 6 October 1869, 3; *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 1 March 1884, 4; *Daily Picayune*, 14 November 1887, 4. There are several exceptions to this trend of labeling the lecturers professor. Frank MacEvoy typically did not sell himself or his lecturers consistently as "professor." *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10 September 1870, 4; *Syracuse Daily Courier*, 21 September 1872, 1.

⁶⁴ "Theatrical Intelligence," *San Francisco Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, 30 December 1865, 3.

⁶⁵ *Decatur (Illinois) Review*, 17 October 1882, 3.

⁶⁶ *Madison (Wisconsin) Democrat*, quoted in J.L. MacEvoy's *New Hibernicon Songster*, 4. The quotes in the songster may be puffs published in WI and then reprinted in the songster. At the very least, they illustrate how the hibernicon proprietors wanted the entertainment to be perceived. For other instances of comments on the instructiveness of the lecturers' presentations, see "Amusements," *San Francisco Daily Dramatic Chronicle*, 10 January 1866, 3; *Sonora (California) Union Democrat*, 5 May 1866, quoted in "JH Warwick," *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West: a biographical dictionary, 1840-1865*, eds. Peter E. Palmquist and Thomas R. Kailbourn (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 578.

⁶⁷ "MacEvoy's Hibernicon," *Hartford Daily Courant*, 11 September 1871, 2.

⁶⁸ *New York Evening Post*, 25 March 1863.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Charles MacEvoy, Naturalization Papers, New York Superior Court, Bundle 254, Record 7, National Archives at New York City.

⁷¹ "The Hibernicon at Pike's," *New York Tribune*, 23 September 1868, 2.

⁷² *Atlanta Constitution*, 23 April 1867.

⁷³ In her article "Cockney Tourists, Irish Guides, and the Invention of the Emerald Isle," Kroeg adapts Erik Cohen's theoretical analysis of twentieth century tourism literature to late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Irish tourism literature. She explains how Cohen "divides the guide's functions into two spheres – leadership and mediation. In both spheres guides are responsible for shaping the tourists' experiences; the guide must 'find and sometimes...choose the way,' 'make sure that it is properly followed,' 'structure his party's attention,' act as a culture broker' between tourist and site, and impart information about those sights that is 'rarely purely neutral'." She also argues for the application of So-Min Cheong and Marc Miller's "Foucauldian analysis of the power dynamic in tourism, [which] confirm[s] the guide's role as a 'broker' who constructs the tourist's knowledge and controls what the tourist sees." Jonathan Culler writes that "print and human guides...function as 'markers' confirming the authenticity of a sight for the tourist." Kroeg notes that in eighteenth century Irish travel books there was a "deliberate conflation of the functions of the guidebook and the more personal, human guide was a feature of much nineteenth-century tourist rhetoric designed to reassure the uncertain traveler." Kroeg, 206, 211-4.

⁷⁴ Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berlin: Schocken Books, 1976), 101

⁷⁵ Casey, 262.

⁷⁶ For more on this transformation, see Williams, *Tourism, Landscape, and the Irish Character: British Travel Writers in Pre-Famine Ireland*, 69.

⁷⁷ Macaulay, 4-5, 7-8, 11.

⁷⁸ Mr. and Mrs. S.C. Hall, *Hand-books for Ireland* (London: Virtue, Hall, and Virtue, 1853), 87.

⁷⁹ Maurice Bourgeois qtd. in Maureen Murphy, "Irish-American Theatre," *Ethnic Theatre in the United States*, ed. Maxine Schwartz Seller (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983), 222.

⁸⁰ William H. A. Williams, *'Twas Only an Irishman's Dream: The Image of Ireland and the Irish in American Popular Song Lyrics, 1800-1920* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 158.

⁸¹ Marion Casey discusses MacDonagh and how he attempted to refute negative depictions while simultaneously reinforcing a new stereotype. Casey, 236-8.

⁸² Michael MacDonagh, *Irish Life and Character*, 2nd ed. (New York: Thomas Whittaker, 1899), 61.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 62, 70.

⁸⁴ William Eleroy Curtis, *One Irish Summer* (New York: Duffield and Company, 1909), 1; See also Lovett, 15.

⁸⁵ Hall, *Hand-books*, 87-88; Optic, 95, 215, 308.

⁸⁶ Hall, *Hand-books*, 87-88.

⁸⁷ Optic, 42-3. For passages on the talkative guide or car driver, see Optic, 42 and Halls, 87-8. For an example of the travel book writer's assumption of the Irish's propensity for exaggeration, see Anon., *Picturesque Scenery in Ireland* (New York: R. Worthington, 1881), 17-8.

⁸⁸ MacEvoy, *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster*, 3; J.L. MacEvoy's *New Hibernicon Songster*, 3.

⁸⁹ "Rollicking Irish Barney," *Barney and Nora Songster*, 48; McGill and Strong's called this song "Rollicking Jarvey," but it was the same except for the exclusion of Barney's name. *John M. Burke's Dublin Carman Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1871), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 10.

⁹⁰ "Barney Be Aisy," *Barney and Nora Songster*, 34.

⁹¹ "Barney the Jarvey," *Barney and Nora Songster*, 55. "Barney, the Driver Lad," *Barney and Nora Songste*, 54.

⁹² *John M. Burke's Dublin Carman Songster*, 3.

⁹³ George Bernard Shaw, quoted in Booth, 171.

⁹⁴ MacCannell, 101

⁹⁵ Horgan quoted in Casey, 262.

⁹⁶ Kroeg, 212.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 212, 220.

⁹⁸ Stephan Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*, translated by Deborah Lucas Schneider (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 49.

⁹⁹ Bernard Comment, *The Panorama*, translated by Anne-Marie Glasheen (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 19.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 19. Said talks about the connection between travel books, their illusion, and reality. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 93-4

¹⁰¹ Evangeline Isabelle Bense, Diary 1, October 17, 1885- August 15, 1886, Manuscript and Archives, New York Public Library, 1.

¹⁰² Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization and Perception of Time and Space* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 98

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 98

¹⁰⁴ For more on perception and panoramas, see Angela L. Miller, "The Panorama, the Cinema and the Emergence of the Spectacular," *Wide Angle* 18, no. 2 (April 1996): 34-69.

¹⁰⁵ *New York Evening Post*, 23 January 1851.

¹⁰⁶ *Brooklyn Eagle*, 11 May 1852, 3; *Brooklyn Eagle*, 12 May 1852, 3.

¹⁰⁷ *New York Evening Post*, 25 March 1863.

¹⁰⁸ "The Hibernicon at Pike's," *New York Tribune*, 23 September 1868, 2.

¹⁰⁹ Baron George Noël Gordon Byron, *The Complete Works of Lord Byron* (Paris: A. and W. Galignani, 1837), 49. A footnote to the 1837 edition explains that this verse refers to how “Mr. Fitzgerald, facetiously termed, by Cobbett, the ‘Small Beer Poet,’ inflicts his annual tribute of verse on the Literary Fund: not content with writing, he spouts in person, after the company have imbibed a reasonable quantity a bad poet.”

¹¹⁰ *European Rest Cure*, from the Library of Congress, *Inventing Entertainment: The Motion Pictures and Sound Recordings of the Edison Companies*, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mbrsmi/edmp.2384> (accessed January 5, 2011). For analysis of the spoof in the context of Edison’s film work, see Charles Musser, *Before the Nickelodeon: Edwin S. Porter and the Edison Manufacturing Company* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 285.

CHAPTER 4

WATCHED ALONGSIDE THE CLERGY: THE HIBERNICON AND
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Around the turn of the twentieth century, the American Catholic Church launched an assault against the moral and social shifts that it believed threatened American life. Church leadership investigated modernist priests and condemned philosophies and fashions that challenged traditional notions of sexual propriety. Believing change only occurred through religious means, cardinals scolded progressive social reformers.¹ Catholic leaders held out hope that wealthy Catholics would gain positions of civic power and help save the nation from moral degradation. However, the Catholic Church did not wait idly for this day of change. Eager to experiment with its growing power, the church attempted to transform society through various organizations and institutions, including the theatre.²

Prompted by Eliza O'Brien Lummis, the daughter of an elite New York Catholic family, the Catholic Church approved the founding of the Catholic Theatre Movement (CTM) in 1912. At its heart, the CTM wanted to remove all immoral material from the stage. Yet, Lummis also had dreams of creating “a national Catholic theatre.”³ Lummis wanted to encourage productions that would “restore the lines of moral demarcation, and emphasize true principle” over the “sensuality” of commercial Broadway plays. She also hoped that “the laity of all denominations” would support her cause to “protest against the dramatic standards of our day.”⁴ In addition to producing shows, Lummis also wanted the CTM to draw attention to moral

productions. She rejected the idea of a black list because she feared giving immoral productions free advertising.⁵

In spite of agreeing with Lummis's conservative Catholic philosophy, Cardinal John Murphy Farley and the church leadership soon shifted the movement's purpose away from involvement in theatre production. Pushing Lummis out of the CTM's leadership, the executive committee limited the CTM to regulatory actions. Cardinal Farley's comments at the CTM's inaugural celebration in December 1912 highlight how the Catholic leadership's goals differed from Lummis's. Farley framed the formation of the CTM as the first move in a "war against infamy."⁶ Expressing his hope that a censoring committee would "work in every parish in every city of the United States," he saw the influence of these committees leading to a government-run national regulatory committee.⁷ The first *Bulletin* released by the CTM dismissed the idea of a Catholic Theatre as an unrealistic dream: "Whatever sympathy there may be for generous dreams and aspirations, the purpose of The Catholic Theatre Movement cannot, at this time, be diverted even to such laudable enterprises as the creation of a Catholic drama...The present, urgent work of the Movement, all important and vital, is the development of a united Catholic sentiment against vicious plays."⁸ Beginning with this first February 1914 issue, the CTM published a White List of acceptable plays. At the same time, it told readers not to view the list "as an inducement for people to go to the theatre."⁹ The CTM also cancelled plans to produce *The Dear Saint Elizabeth*, which Lummis wrote for the new Catholic theatre's first production. After Lummis died in 1915, the CTM shifted further toward condemning specific productions. As historian Frances Panchok notes in her study of Catholic Theatre, "The CTM's criteria were strict and narrow enough to insure that over fifteen years very few plays were considered good, wholesome, and pure drama."¹⁰

While Lummis fought for the creation of a national Catholic Theatre, Father John Talbot Smith continued his decades-long struggle to weaken the church's staunch position on entertainment. Since the 1880s, Smith had published theatre articles in various Catholic and Irish-American publications. He wrote the first theatre reviews in an American Catholic publication after he became editor of the *Catholic Review* in 1889.¹¹ Through his writings, Smith advocated for Catholics to attend the theatre for amusement as well as their moral well-being. The leaders of the New York Archdiocese frowned upon Smith's public discussion of his positive theatre experiences, especially since American bishops banned priests' theatre attendance in 1866. In a 1909 letter, Farley explained again to Smith, "I would prefer that you would not write for the public any more commendations of the stage."¹² He feared that Smith's writings had "influenced many of the younger clergy and led them to patronize the theatres."¹³

In spite of the Cardinal's disapproval of Smith's liberal views, in 1914, he approved the formation of Smith's Catholic Actors Guild (CAG), which served the spiritual needs of Catholic actors. At a meeting with the CAG, Cardinal Farley clarified what the foundation of this new guild meant in the context of the theatre's relationship to the church. He told the actors that he did not "want you stage folk to develop the idea that the Catholic Church now formally approves things on the stage. The Church deals with you as individuals, and as Roman Catholics."¹⁴ As the responses to the CTM and CAG illustrate, Catholic leadership maintained its critical and hostile stance toward theatre in America, regardless of Lummis and Smith's attempts to bring the two closer together.

Before 1920, the Catholic Actors Guild and Catholic Theatre Movement comprised "the total organizational response of the New York Archdiocese towards the theatre."¹⁵ As a result, when telling the history of Catholic theatre in America, historians often begin with the founding

of these two groups and why they arose out of contemporary Catholic moral and theological concerns. They are important events because they indicate a shift, however slight, in how the American Catholic Church leadership interacted with the theatre. Yet, focusing on these two organizations emphasizes the consent of Catholic leadership and the attempt to create a national movement as necessary conditions for Catholic theatre's creation. Many late nineteenth and early twentieth century Catholics did not view these two conditions as pre-requisites for forming a relationship with the theatre. In spite of church leaders' hopes, they failed to establish strict boundaries between popular entertainment and the church. As Smith discusses in several articles and his book, *The Parish Theatre*, theatre in Catholic parishes, both professional and amateur, thrived for decades before the CTM and CAG. In part, he attributes the increasing Catholic acceptance of theatre at the end of the nineteenth century to the hibernicon.

As opposed to the beginning of Catholic Theatre, the Catholic Theatre Movement and Catholic Actors Guild attempted to centralize and regulate the dispersed, diverse, and local interactions between the theatre community and Catholic parishes, which had developed over the preceding decades. This chapter demonstrates how popular entertainment functioned within the Catholic Church. The hibernicon played a role in convincing priests and the Catholic laity that the church and popular entertainment could establish a healthy and mutually beneficial relationship. This relationship is particularly important to explore since “[i]n the late nineteenth and early twentieth century United States, as in Ireland, Catholicism became the central institution of Irish life and the primary source and expression of Irish identity.”¹⁶ During this period, parishioners were “disproportionately” working class and “largely of foreign birth or parentage.”¹⁷ Its primarily working class composition makes the church a key site through which to examine how popular entertainment infiltrated Irish-American working class life. As a

result of the hibernicon and other pro-theatre efforts by priests, performers, and Catholic community members, popular entertainment became a sanctioned, integrated part of Catholic economic and social life. Regardless of the church's official ideology, popular entertainment comprised part of a practical plan to sustain Irish-American working class communities.

The Hibernicon and the Catholic Church

In the 1860s, hibernicon companies frequently visited John Talbot Smith's hometown in upstate New York. As a child, Smith "trembl[ed] with delight" as he "drank in the jokes of Pat and his colleen, laughed to the point of exhaustion, envied their nimble and exquisite dancing and marveled at the real moonlight on the pictured lakes of Killarney."¹⁸ Even though the church "taught [its parishioners] to hold the theatre in the same horror as sin itself," Smith watched the hibernicon alongside clergy in local theatres and parish buildings.¹⁹ Years later, Smith remembered how the hibernicon "was an exception" among the various popular entertainments of the late nineteenth century.²⁰ In an article for *Donahoe's Magazine*, Smith recalled how the hibernicon did "[a]cute work...[on] behalf of the stage. While the clergy denounced the theatre from the pulpit, at intervals, and the parents daily at home, and its visitation became a matter for woful [*sic*] and trembling confession, the sinful institution was actually getting inside the Church itself through the Hibernicon and the other charming panoramas of Ireland."²¹ The hibernicon illustrated to Smith the potential compatibility of the Catholic Church and the theatre. This experience helped shape Smith's life-long love of performance and his dedication to eliminating the church's prejudice against the theatre.

Yet, how did the hibernicon convince priests to go to the theatre and parishes to allow hibernicon performances? Smith's reflections indicate his awe and fascination with the jokes, songs, and spectacle, but decades later, why did he remember the hibernicon as a turning point for the Catholic Church and performance?

In order to win over anti-theatre Catholics, the hibernicon had to overcome church concerns about the theatrical representation of Catholics and the Irish. Church policy never officially banned the Catholic laity from attending the theatre, but it certainly did not encourage it. The occasional speech or scandal involving the church and theatre reinforced connections between anti-Catholicism, anti-Irishness, and performance as well as the problems concerning representation of church figures and ceremonies. Father Larkin from New York's Church of Holy Innocents spoke against a 1884 production of Dion Boucicault's *The Shaughraun* for its depiction of priests and wakes. In a speech that newspapers reprinted around the country, Larkin denounced *The Shaughraun* as "a disgrace to the Irish race. It pretends that the Irish priests are so depraved that they don't know the difference between whisky and the milk in their tea. In the wake he presents the Irish dancing."²² Outrage over such images is not surprising. The Catholic Church frequently defended its parishes and parishioners against Protestant attacks. The lasting remnants of popular entertainment, such as songsters, had the potential to keep anti-Catholic images and ideas circulating in the culture for years after the actual performance. Working class audience members often purchased songsters so that they could sing along with minstrel, variety, or vaudeville entertainments. As a result, songs like "Who Would be a Nun?" could reach the core of Catholic parishioners under the guise of entertainment. Comically sending up the restrictions placed on nuns, the lyrics of "Who Would be a Nun?" complain about how "They musn't speak without consent, too early musn't

rise...Should one omit to clean her boots, Or trifles slight as these, She'll have to clean and scrub the floor, all day upon her knees."²³ The song then uses its critique to undercut the ideology of the Catholic Church in its last verse, which states that Catholic "customs are so strange, They take you by surprise, This may be called religion, But I can't see where it lies."²⁴ Like Larkin's impression of *The Shaughraun* scenes, the song paints Catholicism as uncivilized and irreligious.

Catholics did not limit their theatrical opposition to anti-Catholic images. In 1908, Father Vaughan, a former actor, presented his play *A Woman of the West* at Chicago's Bush Temple Theatre. Vaughan begins one scene with "an interior of a Catholic church, showing the altar and an actor in the vestments of a priest performing the ceremonies of the mass."²⁵ A reporter recorded how "[a]s the curtain arose upon the novel scene a burst of applause came from the audience, but none came from a dozen Catholic priests and scores of church members scattered through the house."²⁶ After protest and discussion, church authorities eventually condoned Vaughan's scene, but the incident highlights the continuing contentiousness that attended the representation of church figures and ceremonies well into the twentieth century. Even Smith, the great Catholic champion of the theatre applauded attacks such as Larkin's. In his history of the Catholic Church in New York, Smith records how Larkin "attended the show to satisfy himself that its wake scene was as objectionable and as slanderous of Irish character as report made it; and the next day on the altar he gave it a severe and well-deserved criticism."²⁷

When the hibernicon marketed itself to Irish-American audiences, it had to overcome both the church's general hostility to performance and its fear of Catholic and Irish stage representations. Compared to some other forms of popular entertainment, the hibernicon started at an advantage because of common associations with moving panoramas.²⁸ As historian Mimi Colligan notes, moving panoramas emerged as "part of an answer to a perceived need for

‘acceptable’ popular entertainments.”²⁹ The potential educational value of moving panoramas’ lectures and images imparted an air of middle class respectability on the hibernicon that other popular entertainments lacked. When the hibernicon first started touring in the 1860s, many Catholics already accepted the idea of performance for educational purposes, albeit on an amateur level. In his diary, Father Richard Burtzell, who worked in downtown New York, records the frequency and variety of school performances in the 1860s. Catholic schools produced amateur productions especially in connection with their opening or closing school year ceremonies. Sometimes schools produced classic plays, like *Hamlet* at St. Ann’s in 1865, and in some instances the teachers and students composed plays themselves. On July 3, 1865, Burtzell records how the Sacred Heart Manhattanville girls’ school produced *La Bohemienne* in French and then presented an original piece entitled *The Sicilian Vespers*. Burtzell praised the productions and saw them as “testimony to the real progress of the pupils and the education of the teachers.”³⁰ In spite of moving panoramas’ potential educational value, “much of the ‘instructive’ amusement was not, as the newspapers had hoped, imposed from above; it was a continuation and development of longstanding popular forms such as cheap street peepshows.”³¹ Yet, by incorporating various types of popular entertainment into the show, the hibernicon and minstrel shows managed to skirt around local warnings when the variety format “was judged moral by the local theologians, as not being a play.”³²

With the premise of their performances framed in a somewhat acceptable manner, the hibernicon companies needed to structure their Irish and Catholic imagery in a way that would not inspire charges of malicious caricature. The companies not only succeeded in avoiding controversial images, but also demonstrated how their performances served the goals of the struggling mid-century church. The hibernicon avoided controversy by omitting physical

representation of priests and limiting the discussion of the church in songs and sketches. Most companies avoided referring to religion all together in their songs, except for Charles MacEvoy's Hibernicon. Depicting priests and the church as a common part of everyday life became the most popular form of representation in song. Priests appear at weddings, comfort widows, and lead Sunday religious services. On occasion, priests join local celebrations by "[b]at[ing] [*sic*] time with his shelalah."³³ Especially right after the Civil War when many Irish immigrants and Irish-Americans did not consider themselves strongly religious, the songs illustrate how the church plays a social everyday role in addition to its religious function. The tangential nature of the songs' references also reflects the position of the church for many Irish-American Catholics in post-Civil War America. It was an important institution but not necessarily the focal point of their lives.³⁴

Comic representations of priests and St. Patrick also appear rarely, but the songs typically avoid the worst stage Irish characteristics. In "The Birth of Saint Patrick," Father Mulcahy provides the solution to the song's comic debate over the birthdate of St. Patrick. The group then "all got blind drunk."³⁵ The priest is not directly implicated in the celebration, which is tied more to a joke about the typical St. Patrick's Day celebration than any actual religious person or practice. Except for "The Birth of Saint Patrick," most St. Patrick and St. Patrick's Day songs in the hibernicon romanticize him and place him within an Irish nationalist heritage (Fig. 7). J.H. Ryan's "St. Patrick's Day" is more about the Irish-American experience in America and the symbolism of the parade for the Irish-American community than religion. Ryan's marchers walk "down through the Bowery, our banners we display. Round by the City Hall, and up along Broadway, We don't care who's our foe, we'll make a gallant show, Glory of old Ireland on St.



Fig. 7 *The Scenery, Music, and Antiquities of Ireland* - This 1870 lithograph illustrates the central role of St. Patrick and Catholicism in the hibernicon's imagery. Although Charles MacEvoy tended to tour under this company name, the Library of Congress suggests the lithograph was produced by Frank MacEvoy's company.

Patrick's Say.”³⁶ He writes, “There's Emmet and Moore, and O'Connell sure, Were they here to-day, They would be proud of our glorious turn out, Upon St. Patrick's Day.”³⁷ These lines place his marchers on the side of Irish nationalist heroes. Similar themes commonly appeared throughout Irish-American popular entertainment and circulated through American culture by word of mouth and songsters.

Few songs directly defended the church and romanticized priests, but the companies with the closest relationships to the Catholic Church tended to publish them. Charles MacEvoy included “Father Tom O'Neil” in his *W.F. Lawlor's Original Barney the Guide Songster*. The song tells the story of how Father Tom O'Neil survived a challenge to his faith soon after his ordination. In Ireland, a young widow lives with her three sons. Her youngest son, Tom, tell his mother that “Your land is too small to support us all, and if you would agree, I am fully bent and well content a clergyman to be.”³⁸ O'Neil's experience would not be unusual to audience members familiar with the Irish economic situation. Since the end of partible inheritance after the Great Famine in the 1840s, the eldest son typically inherited the parents' land and the other children often emigrated to America or joined the church. The song not only depicts this reality, but also portrays O'Neil's choice to join the church as necessary and noble. O'Neil receives acclaim for his cleverness at college and when he returns to his home town after his ordination, “you never saw such welcome as was for the widow's son.”³⁹ During the celebration, he is tempted by a wealthy young woman who lives nearby. She asks him to resign his priesthood and marry her. She offers him her fortune and servants. Yet, O'Neil resists her and pledges “if you offer ten times more, I would not resign.”⁴⁰ As a result, the woman arranges a pregnancy and charges O'Neil with fathering her child. He is brought to court where he refuses to bow to the court's pressure to marry her. When the court sentences him to seven years in Australia, he

retorts, “Our Savior suffered more than that.”⁴¹ Then the true father of her baby rides in on a horse and explains the woman’s plot to force O’Neil into marriage. O’Neil is freed and he thanks God for his goodness. Through its series of events, the song emphasizes the good character of priests and the importance of truth and self-sacrifice. The ending implies that God will protect those who serve him. The song not only portrays the church in a good light and presents an idealized version of a priest, but it encourages the faithful to continue to serve the church. The portrayal of the woman as a temptress also fits nineteenth and early twentieth century Catholic representations of female sexuality. The songs’ images would be welcome messages and warnings in many nineteenth century Catholic churches.

The religious imagery included in hibernicon moving panoramas also promoted a Catholic nation. Although the situation would shift after the 1870s, in 1865, Burtzell complained that “half of our Irish population is Catholic merely because Catholicity was the religion of the land of their birth. This is owing to the neglect in which their instruction is left.”⁴² For parishes that were predominantly Irish, this made reinforcing the connection between Ireland and Catholicism important to sustain church membership. The hibernicon provided an entertaining way to highlight Ireland’s Catholic past and present. It does not denigrate Protestants in its championing of Catholicism, which prevents the exclusion of Irish Protestants who accept the idea of a Catholic tolerant nation (and served to decrease the chances of alienating Protestant audience members). The hibernicon characters visit a religious historical moment or landmark in each new region on the journey. The historical moments focused on events hundreds or thousands of years in the past that allowed hibernicon companies and churches to latch onto a common mythic history that united their Irish audience or parishioners. The focus on history also allowed them to avoid offending the ever-evolving factions of the contemporary Irish-

American nationalist movement. “Illuminated scenes in the life of St. Patrick” was an interlude between parts one and two of one hibernicon. In the same version, the audience follows a few scenes depicting “Caithleen, the Chieftain’s daughter, on her journey to Luggela to hear St. Kevin preach.”⁴³ Gavin and Ryan’s Emerald Isle relates the history of Holy Cross Abbey and the Seven Churches; or, the Cross of Clonmacnoise during the characters’ visit to County Tipperary.⁴⁴

Even though the visual components of the hibernicon erase any contemporary Irish violence, they depict the long history of conflict between the English and Irish as well as Catholics and Protestants. Yet, the events depicted are moments of pride for the Irish. Gavin and Ryan’s Emerald Isle depicts the Siege of Limerick during the war between King William of Orange and King James II. Outnumbered and outmaneuvered, the Irish in Limerick believe they lost the battle. Yet, after an explosion startled King William’s troops, “with a wild cheer the Irish rushed on the panic-stricken foe. The women, with dishelved hair streaming behind them, flew to the front, calling on the men to follow them. One last desperate charge, and the enemy were hurled back through the breach in confusion and dismay, and chased into their camp by the victorious Irish.”⁴⁵ The description ends by highlighting the eternal significance of the event and its participants. It explains that the “deeds on that eventful day will be remembered while the blue waters of the Shannon flows beneath the city walls, in defending which, they so nobly died.”⁴⁶ The event illustrates the importance of defending faith and country, which would have resonating with Catholic authorities and audiences.

When the panorama depicts views of the present, the audience sees images of magnificent *permanent* structures, such as St. Mary and St. Patrick Cathedrals, that mark the landscape as Catholic. These permanent markers tie Ireland’s past to its present and emphasize

the lasting presence of Catholicism not only for its current people, but also for the generations of unborn Irish. In a few instances, the panoramas depicted the Irish people interacting with these sites. One hibernicon lecturer described a “Blind Girl at the Holy Well”:

Many a weary mile have these poor pilgrims traversed, and now they have reached the longed for Holy Well. An aged man is leaning reverently on his staff, besides the stone cross, contemplating the well of holy water. On the one side a youthful mother is instilling into the mind of her child a lesson in connexion [*sic*] with her peculiar creed; while on the other a young girl, all simplicity and prettiness, is drinking water from her hallowed hand. In the distance are seen the ruins of an ancient abbey.⁴⁷

Aside from depicting a romanticized view of the Irish peasantry, these images indicate not only the resilience of Ireland’s poor, but also the poor’s need for help and sustenance through religion.

As the century progressed, these scenes appeared particularly attractive to Catholic champions of the theatre, especially in light of recent dramatic developments. In his writings and speeches, Smith spoke out against what he viewed as the decline in American drama as a result of European theatrical imports. Smith particularly scorned Hendrik Ibsen as a “modern pagan preacher of ancient immorality” whose plays present “arguments for free love, and the grossness that accompanies modern radicalism.”⁴⁸ Smith despised what he viewed as a condemnation of morality, an absence of God, the lack of optimism that he felt melodramas like David Belasco’s *Girl of the Golden West* conveyed to its audiences. Smith thought better of the symbolists because he claimed that while “Morality does not exist for either [the symbolists or the realists], [the symbolists] ignore it, but they do not decry it, like the radical socialists.”⁴⁹ Other Catholic proponents of the theatre agreed with Smith’s basic stance. One writer slammed the “fetid wave of filthy problem plays” for “[t]heir infamous sophistries, that laughed at the sanctity of marriage and sneered at the purity of woman.” To make matters worse, the plays “were received with piqued and gaping interest by silly and shameless people who aped to be in

the fashion.”⁵⁰ Catholic historians Berry and Panchok argue that Catholic disapproval for these types of plays resulted from how they redefined individual responsibility in the modern world. They claim that realism illustrated how problems could be solved without the intervention from God or reformation of the individual soul. This philosophy conflicted directly with conservative nineteenth century and early twentieth century Catholicism.⁵¹ The hibernicon’s emphasis on traditional themes of God and country provided an attractive alternative.

To combat new unacceptable ideas of performance, pro-theatre Catholics attempted to define their ideal theatre. Most of the characteristics described by Smith existed in the hibernicon, which helps explain its appeal to some Catholics. Smith felt that ideally, drama should deal with “local and historical Christian life.”⁵² Smith stated, “The audiences of this theatre want in the first place a good story, with room for tears, laughter and thrills; then they want the colloquial, picturesque costuming, and effective tableaux; and in particular they desire plain language. The humor and the pathos can be broad and homely, but the language and the action must be speedy.”⁵³ The hibernicon’s focus on historical Catholic events illustrated how this goal could be achieved for significant emotional impact through the variety of mediums available in hibernicon performance. MacEvoy’s *New Hibernicon* concluded its second part with a juxtaposition of emotional performers, images, and songs. At the ruins of St. Bridget’s Abbey, Barney says farewell to Nora in a “striking tableau” as he leaves to join the Connaught Rangers, an Irish regiment in the British Army. The scene then shifts to the interior of the Abbey and “the reception of a young novice.” The company sings “The Connaught Rangers,” which transitions into “Hark! The Convent Bells.”⁵⁴ Reflecting Smith’s desire to see local Irish Christian life, the sequence creates a parallel between sacrifice for country and sacrifice for God.

With the songs adding to the melodramatic spectacle, Barney and Nora help lighten the moment while the events add emotional depth to the comic characters.

Aside from the hibernicon's content and form, certain hibernicon companies made the argument for the inclusion of popular entertainment in church life by performing respectable Catholic citizenship. If parishioners were going to attend theatre anyway, it benefited the church to have them following performers who seemed to support key Catholic beliefs.

After a 1864 benefit performance for the Boys Orphan Asylum associated with St. John's Conferences of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a series of letters exchanged in the *Utica (New York) Daily Observer* illustrates the construction of Professor MacEvoy as a Catholic role model. A committee associated with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul issued a series of resolutions in honor of Professor MacEvoy, his company, and his service to the Irish Catholic community. The committee explained "we cannot permit the present occasion to pass without some expression of our admiration for the truly Christian charity of Prof. MacEvoy."⁵⁵ Subsequent resolutions commended MacEvoy "as a Christian gentleman and one who, not alone by his ardent devotion to the social and political elevation of his native land, but to the cause of charity deserves the favor and best wishes of every patriot and philanthropist."⁵⁶ Three months later, a Syracuse paper also described MacEvoy's charity and aligned him with the church in its fight against the immoral world. The Syracuse writer praised MacEvoy for proving "his innate charitable disposition and goodness of heart, which has characterized him in every place that he has visited, where an institution of this kind has been found established, and heroically struggling against the coldness of a sordid and selfish world."⁵⁷ The representation of MacEvoy as a model Christian served to establish an important connection in the days of struggle for the Catholic Church. Acting as a model Christian did not only involve behavior according to church morals, but also

concrete, charitable donations to your church's funds and social organizations. These associations were far from new, but attaching them to an exciting figure like a theatre performer encouraged fans to emulate his behavior and parishioners to support MacEvoy's charitable efforts. This helped not only the church's finances, but also the hibernicon companies.

MacEvoy upheld his Catholic image when he responded to the Utica committee's resolutions of praise in a letter of his own, which the *Daily Observer* published a few days later. MacEvoy plays the role of the modest Catholic, who only does his duty to serve the church, God, and his loyal fans. He starts his letter by "begging to assure you that I did not expect and do not require such manifestations of gratitude on your part for the little aid I have rendered to the cause of charity... I felt happy that an opportunity had been offered to show my humble gratitude to the Almighty for many blessing bestowed on me and my family, by assisting his 'little onese,' and also of making some return, however small, to the good citizens of Utica for their very liberal patronage given to the Hibernicon."⁵⁸ MacEvoy asserts his Catholic belief that his actions will be rewarded in the afterlife and constructs a romantic image of his mourning family, torn by his passing, but comforted by the resolutions as memories of his past good deed and future rewards. He describes how he will "preserve these resolutions [for] family, that they may one day console my children, when I will have gone from amongst them to appear before Him who showeth mercy to those who dry the tears of the widow and the orphan for His sake."⁵⁹ Closing with phrase "my dear fellow countrymen," he closes his letter by evoking camaraderie with the Utica community and the Catholic Church.⁶⁰ MacEvoy's letter helps solidify his image as a good Christian model, which both serves as a good advertisement for his shows and a useful propaganda piece for the Catholic Church. The form and in some cases the performers of the hibernicon made it a more attractive popular entertainment to include in parish life. The

hibernicon illustrated how the same images that caused scandal could be tweaked to support the mission of the church.

Economic Survival and the Parish Theatre: Popular Entertainment in Catholic Church Life

The hibernicon and popular entertainment managed to infiltrate Catholic life because the boundaries between the church and theatre were fluid. The case of Father Richard L. Burtzell in the 1860s helps illustrate the integral role of performance in the economic survival of the Catholic Church. The involvement of popular entertainment and performance in church life also highlights how personal preferences and local needs helped define the character of Catholic parishes.

In 1862, the New York archdiocese assigned the young Burtzell to assist the pastor at the Church of St. Ann's in Greenwich Village, where he served its poor and primarily Irish parishioners for several years. In 1865, Burtzell started keeping a diary in which he expressed his growing desire to start his own parish. Archbishop McCloskey rejected his requests to start a new parish in Gramercy. Yet, Burtzell persisted. He searched for a suitable location, negotiated with its owners, and developed an economic proposal before he approached the Archbishop again. His determination and planning finally paid off in late 1867 when the archdiocese approved his plan for the Church of the Epiphany on Twenty-Second and Second Avenue. Raising enough money to buy the land and pay for the new church remained the final obstacle to Burtzell's ambitions.⁶¹

A year after receiving approval for his church, Burtzell celebrated its first anniversary at the Cooper Institute. Burtzell spoke to his future parishioners about his fundraising activities for their church building. Several Catholic parishes donated about fourteen thousand two hundred dollars and individual donors raised about five thousand six hundred. Burtzell credits funds raised by “picnics, hibernicons and fairs” with bringing their grand total to forty-four thousand five hundred. Bringing in over twenty-four thousand dollars for the church, the picnics, hibernicons, and fairs raised about ten thousand more than any other contributor.⁶²

Although Burtzell’s diary has a gap between the end of 1867 and 1872, his entries from 1865-1867 indicate why establishing a relationship with the hibernicon benefited the church’s interests. For Burtzell, the hibernicon allowed him to tap into what he viewed as one of the church’s strongest funding bases. In his diary entry for February 6, 1866, Burtzell explains that “[t]he Irish are a grand exception for they still give their money with generosity to build churches to God’s honor.”⁶³ If Burtzell wanted to appeal to this group, the hibernicon seemed ideal. When MacEvoy’s Hibernicon gave a series of performances for Burtzell’s church in September 1868, a *New York Tribune* reviewer remarked that “[w]ith the Irish population [the hibernicon] is already very popular.”⁶⁴ On the first night, he described how “[t]here must have been three thousand persons in the house. Most of them were Irishmen.”⁶⁵ The reviewer admitted that “If each [performance] is as profitable as that of last evening, we fancy that the cost of the new church will soon be paid.”⁶⁶ For these particular benefits, audience members and parishioners were encouraged to attend Pike’s Music Hall, a new New York popular entertainment venue, to help improve their community. It is likely that they attended the performance alongside Catholic priests and leaders who supported Burtzell’s project. However, such encouragement and clerical attendance conflicted with Catholic policy.

Although the Vatican did not pass a Canon Law pertaining to theatre until the early twentieth century, American bishops began prohibiting theatre in 1866.⁶⁷ In the autumn of that year, the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore banned priests from attending plays, shows, and dances. It also asked parishes to “prudently turn the faithful away from theatres, and plays, especially those which are known to be evil and full of danger.”⁶⁸ Not wanting to violate Catholics’ “evangelical liberty,” the Council stated that churches should not completely forbid attending morally acceptable performances, but they also did not indicate that much of America’s theatrical entertainment was worthy of Catholic patronage.⁶⁹ In 1882, the Fourth Synod of the Diocese of New York repeated the ban on priests’ attendance at “public theatres, profane shows, horse races and other diversions of this kind even outside the boundaries of the diocese.” It emphasized the negative ramifications of the laity seeing priests at these events. “Indeed,” the Synod decreed, “it offends the very eyes and souls of secular people to catch sight of Clerics at theatres, to see Clerics associate with gamblers, since indeed even the most degraded men consider priests as raised above the things of the world in a higher place and others look at them as if looking in a mirror to take from them what they should imitate.”⁷⁰ By explaining that priests should model ideal behavior, which did not involve viewing theatre at all, the Synod indicated that attending “moral” plays also was not proper for parishioners.

Subsequent councils and synods repeated the essence of these decrees, but emphasized the seriousness of the prohibition. The Fourth Provincial Council of New York (1883) “most severely forbid clerics under penalties to be established by the bishop from attending theatrical spectacles.”⁷¹ The nature of the penalties remained unclear. In 1885, the Plenary of Bishops “commanded” priests to stop attending theatre, horse races and other entertainments.⁷² The following year, the Fifth Synod “decree under the most grave penalties that our clerics shall

never attend horseraces, public theatres, those shows which are called operas and other spectacles of this kind even outside the limits of the diocese.”⁷³ Through the establishment of the Catholic Theatre Movement in 1912, all church decrees on theatre repeated almost verbatim the decree in 1886.⁷⁴

When reissuing its theatre decrees, the Catholic leadership had priests like Burtzell in mind. Burtzell’s diary provides rare insight not only into the life of a nineteenth century priest, but also into one priest’s frequent theatre attendance. Around the time he established the Church of the Epiphany, Burtzell viewed a range of professional performances and commented on them in his diary entries. These entries reveal that attending theatre and other popular entertainments was routine for Burtzell and his clergy friends.

Over the three-year period before Burtzell’s fundraising campaign, he saw everything from Shakespeare and musical concerts to minstrelsy, circuses, illusionists, comedies, melodramas, jugglers at horse races, ballet dances, and acrobatics. His comments indicate that he was a long time theatregoer who made sure to see his favorite performers when they were in town and enthusiastically watched new acts passing through the city. He was particularly critical of leading actors’ ability to convincingly portray characters. Fond of Edwin Booth and Edwin Forrest, Burtzell often saw multiple productions a week when they performed in town. In his November 27, 1865 entry, he explains why he favors Booth: “In the evening I went to see Edwin Forrest play Hamlet: Here I could make a fair comparison between him and Edwin Booth: the later is far more refined, more intelligent, and interesting actor. Forrest is too uproarious and not sufficiently deliberate.”⁷⁵ In May 1865, he criticized Mr. Kean because “[h]e does not enter into the character fully: oftentimes very important sentences are flung out without attention to their sense.”⁷⁶ Burtzell also recorded his amazement at popular entertainers who performed awe-

inspiring feats. He found the Hanlon Brothers “truly astonishing: the brothers rolled over, as if a barrell, at full length: somersaults of the most surprising character were performed by them. Two dogs were trained to jump the rope: one walked on his fore-legs: the other on his side legs alone.”⁷⁷ On another night in 1866, he “took Maggie Burtzell to see Hartz’ [sic] illusions: of which the most remarkable was the speaking wax head: which actually smiled.”⁷⁸ Even when he went on a trip to Washington DC, Burtzell spent most nights in the theatre.⁷⁹

It is possible that Burtzell is an exception and that his behavior does not represent how most Catholic priests interacted with the theatre. The other opinions expressed in the diary clearly mark him as radical. During his first few years in New York, Burtzell informally met with clergy to discuss matters related to the church. Since church leadership expected priests to accept their superiors’ decisions, it viewed such meetings suspiciously. At least in his diary, Burtzell challenged the church’s judgments on priest celibacy and Latin Masses. When more conservative parishes wanted to restrict contact between Catholic priests and Protestant leaders, Burtzell attended Protestant masses out of curiosity and supported their community fundraisers. He also adamantly defended the Fenians, an Irish-American nationalist group, to church leadership. On October 23, 1865, “Fr. Nilan and I undertook the defence of the Fenians very strongly against the Bishop, who expressed great surprise at sympathizing with their cause. I think we prevented him from a public condemnation of them.”⁸⁰ He not only repeatedly defended the rights of the Irish and Fenians in private. He also made his political beliefs public, which concerned some of his colleagues. In May 1866, Burtzell writes that “Dr. McSweeney gave me an open rap for going to the Fenian fair thinking I would do more good by not being openly opposed to my Ecclesiastical superiors, even in politics. I replied I simply did it to do away with the idea, which the Fenians have, that they are under the ban of the church.”⁸¹ On

various occasions, he challenged the validity of the bible. At a meeting with his clergy friends on January 23, 1867, he records, “We agreed that the story of Eve’s creation as an afterthought to keep Adam company is ridiculous!”⁸² Combined with his unwillingness to give up on his parish plan, these views and actions caused his friend Dr. McGlynn to warn him that he would lose his “influence for the good by the too bold expression of [his] radical ideas.”⁸³

When Burtzell records and discusses his radical opinions, he recognizes that he might be out of line. In his entries, he develops arguments and provides real life examples to support his liberal views. In spite of his self-consciousness about his political and religious viewpoints, he never reflects on the propriety of his theatre visits. In only one instance between 1865 and 1867, he discusses the Catholic leadership’s commentary on the theatre. A few months after President Lincoln’s assassination at Ford’s Theatre, Burtzell dined with his clergy friends. During the meal, they “discussed the impropriety of the pope’s taking Lincoln to task for being at a theatre on Good Friday: whilst in Rome the theatres are open on Sunday which would shock American Protestants.”⁸⁴ Their criticism of the pope reflects both respect for Lincoln and amazement at the pope’s hypocrisy. Yet their comments on the theatre never address day to day issues of the theatre at home. Burtzell never records any discussion of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore’s 1866 ban or any warnings from friends or superiors about his theatre going behavior. Although it is impossible to know how many priests spent their evenings visiting the theatre, Burtzell and his friends did not think attending the theatre courted controversy.

It seems likely that American bishops felt the need to issue their decrees because it was not uncommon for priests like Burtzell to visit the theatre. The economic structure of Catholic churches reinforced the church’s connection with the theatre, not just for amusement, but for

survival. As the fundraising drive for Burtzell's church illustrates, the hibernicon, picnics, and fairs earned more than half of the money for his church building. Burtzell's use of these entertainments was not unusual. When connected with raising money for the church and its charitable organizations, even the Archbishop of New York attended productions. In 1862, several professional companies and acts, including Laura Keene's company and Wood and Bryant Minstrels, held a benefit for the Catholic Orphan Asylum at the New Bowery. The *New York Times* reported that "Right Rev. Archbishop Hughes occupied a stage-box, and the performances were further countenanced by a goodly number of clerical groups."⁸⁵ Burtzell also records the attendance of the Archbishop at the theatre. On April 18, 1866, Burtzell "went to the Concert in aid of Seton Hall College at Demonico's music-hall...It was quite a fashionable affair. [Archbishop] McCloskey, Bish. Bayley, Frs. Starrs and McQuade were in the front seats. The hall was filled."⁸⁶ MacEvoy's Hibernicon, Morrissey's Grand Hibernicon, Dan Morris Sullivan's Hibernicon, McGill's Mirror of Ireland, John Burke's Tableaux of Erin, and Dan MacEvoy's Hibernicon Irish Comedy Company all performed benefits for the Catholic church and its organizations. Across the country, these companies held benefits for parishes, new church buildings, Catholic schools, orphan asylums, and Catholic social organizations.⁸⁷ These types of benefits appear quite common through the beginning of the twentieth century.⁸⁸

The Church particularly appealed to Catholic performers for assistance. In 1886, Archbishop Corrigan asked Augustin Daly to take charge of the Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum benefits, which he would then organize for several years. Arranging for both matinee and evening performances, Daly asked a wide range of performers, Catholic and non-Catholic, to participate. Popular entertainers such as Edward Harrigan, Tony Pastor, Frank Bush, and W.F. Cody and more legitimate performers such as Madame Modjeska, Ada Rehan, and A.M. Palmer

and Daly's companies filled the bill.⁸⁹ Daly also organized a 1889 benefit for the Catholic Industrial School for Deaf-Mutes, which "a number of clergymen and officials high in the Catholic Church" attended.⁹⁰ These benefits suggest that a wide-variety of performance, both legitimate and popular, were acceptable for clerical attendance as long as it financially benefited the Catholic Church.

While members of the Catholic Church attended the theatre, theatre and popular entertainment also infiltrated the church. The hibernicon performed in church basements and parish halls throughout its existence. In New York, MacEvoy's Hibernicon appeared at St. Anthony's Church and St. Mary's Hall among other religious locations in the 1878 season.⁹¹ Performing in religious spaces also characterized their performances outside of New York. In 1884, Morrissey's Hibernicon performed at St. Patrick's Church in Denver.⁹² The hibernicon was not the only popular entertainment to perform in churches. In an entry for November 1882, George Odell records about a dozen performances of minstrels, variety performers, singers, and moving panoramas that appeared in religious houses in Brooklyn alone. Although hibernicon companies typically performed in parish buildings for community benefits, most of Odell's performers did not have charitable goals. Odell confesses that he is "surprised at the apparent commercializing of what were then called holy edifices."⁹³ Although it does not appear unusual for professional touring companies to appear in parish buildings by the 1870s, church fairs and the "parish theatre" provided the two main avenues for performers, both professional and amateur, to play for Catholic audiences.

Church fairs played a major economic and social role in the development of the nineteenth century Catholic Church. As Burtzell mentioned, along with hibernicons, church fairs contributed the largest amount of funds to his church building fund. They ranged from

small events lasting only a few weeks to large affairs held for a month or more. Historian Colleen McDannell has traced Catholic fairs back to at least 1834. After the Civil War, the demographics of the Catholic Church shifted to include a higher percentage of women, which contributed to an explosion of church fairs around the country. Sometimes referred to as “ladies’ fairs,” Catholic women of all ages and classes took a leading role in organizing church fairs’ booths and entertainments. This leadership typified Irish-American women’s involvement in the Catholic Church. Deeply committed to their parishes and grateful for their services, Irish-American women dominated the church’s fundraising activities.⁹⁴ Through the fairs, women “raised money for communal needs” and created a social event that reinforced community and religious identity.⁹⁵ By 1882, a *Chicago Daily Tribune* writer observed that the church fair “has become almost as regular a feature of the church machinery as the prayer-meeting...The fair seems to have originated in the financial necessities of the church.”⁹⁶ Complaining that “[f]airs and festivals retard the world’s redemption” in 1879, a Protestant writer bemoaned that church fairs “are universally held. Churches where they have not been held are exceptions.”⁹⁷ Although church fairs peaked in the 1870s and 1880s, churches continued to use them as fundraisers and social events until the turn of the century. McDannell observes that parishes of Irish heritage held all the major fairs between 1870 and 1900.⁹⁸ This ethnic characteristic implies that the church fairs’ amusements and entertainments reflected the preferences of New York Irish communities.

Building elaborate churches and schools and operating social welfare organizations and charities created a large financial need within the expanding nineteenth century Catholic Church. Church fairs helped parishes deal with the financial burden. By 1878, the New York archdiocese owed over three million dollars. As McDannell notes, this was three times more than any other

religious organization in New York.⁹⁹ As a result, many church fairs tried to eliminate their parishes of debt. In one instance, the “ladies of St. Ann’s Catholic Church wishing to aid in paying off the debt upon the church and parochial school, open[ed] a fair last evening in Ferrero’s Assembly Rooms, in the Tammany Building, on East 24th St.”¹⁰⁰ Another *New York Times* article explained how “[t]he fair in the basement of St. Stephen’s Church...is filled every evening with persons desirous of assisting the Rev. Dr. McGlynn in the reducing of the debt on his church and other property.”¹⁰¹ However, other causes, such as the Catholic New York Foundling Asylum and new church buildings and cathedrals, also benefited from the fairs. From the figures collected from newspapers, histories, and diaries, late nineteenth century Catholic Church fairs raised between two thousand five hundred dollars for St. Joseph’s Church uptown and one hundred seventy-two thousand, six hundred and twenty-five dollars for St. Patrick Cathedral. These were huge sums for the late nineteenth century. The amount raised at these fairs rivaled the funds acquired from pew rentals, which made up a substantial portion of church income. St. Bernard’s church raised eight thousand seven hundred and sixty-four dollars at its fair and its pew income was less than six hundred dollars more.¹⁰² Burtzell frequently comments on attending and organizing church fairs in his entries for 1865-7. In one particular proud moment, he records, “[Archbishop] McCloskey was surprised that our fair made twelve thousand dollars.”¹⁰³ Burtzell’s diary reflects how expensive it is to run a parish. In spite of Burtzell’s financial victory, it is not long before he is involved in organizing another fair.¹⁰⁴

The fairs’ success relied in part in its appeal to a variety of classes and religions. It allowed Irish Catholics to socialize within their own community and in a time of fervent anti-Catholic prejudice, it provided an opportunity for the Catholic Church to be viewed as an acceptable component of the surrounding society. When reporting on the church fairs, which

typically received positive coverage in the secular press, newspapers recorded a large number of working class attendees, especially domestic servants. In 1879, the *New York Times* reported that “The effect of raffles at church fairs, particularly in entertainments of this kind gotten up by Roman Catholics, has been to make this species of alms-giving exceedingly popular among the lower classes in our large cities. Those who will take the trouble to question their servants...will learn that they have almost daily call make upon them.”¹⁰⁵ A few years earlier, the *New York Times* explained that “The most profitable patrons of Catholic Fairs are servant girls, who are very profuse, and often spend a month’s wages in an evening.”¹⁰⁶ Protestant reformer Jeremiah Crowley complained that “Although their Protestant employers would have been horrified, domestic workers essentially created a direct flow of money from middle-class homes into working-class and often Catholic institutions.”¹⁰⁷ Perhaps since women ran the fairs, which were typically held in religious buildings, the community viewed the fairs as morally acceptable for their young women to attend. This behavior reflects the broader general pattern of servant girl donations to the church. In Buffalo, New York, there is a record of a house-keeper, Miss Elizabeth McKee, who donated significant amounts of money for a church memorial and the parish building fund over a thirty-year period. She eventually contributed one thousand dollars towards her parish’s maintenance.¹⁰⁸ In Hartford, Connecticut, Judge Thomas McManus described servant girls as “the best of Catholics, and the most liberal supporters of the church.”¹⁰⁹ A Boston Catholic remember how “Father Ronan used to go round to the back door of all the houses and talk to the living-in girls – they’re the ones that really started St. Peter’s Church.”¹¹⁰ Aside from Catholics, Protestants also had a presence at the fairs. On occasion Protestant politicians addressed the fairs and gave their public approval of the events, such as when New York Mayor Smith Ely Jr. address the fair at the church of the Holy Trinity in

1877.¹¹¹ Moments like this highlighted how Protestant communities could be supportive of Catholic community members and institutions.¹¹²

Part of the appeal of Catholic Church fairs depended on its variety of amusements, which had the potential to appeal to a wide audience. The organization of most Catholic fairs distinguished it from Protestant church fairs, which were also quite popular. A series of booths selling donated or homemade goods comprised the fair's main event. Yet, unlike Protestant fairs, instead of buying the goods, Catholics purchased raffle tickets for an item. This allowed participants an opportunity to win a wide range of prizes, including flour, furniture, pianos, clocks, china tea sets, silver pitchers, dolls, paintings, embroidery, food, religious paraphernalia, and occasionally livestock.¹¹³ The parishioners won the goods through luck instead of purchasing power. This method allowed Catholics from all classes to participate and reflected the church's recognition that their parishioners' had limited funds to spend on leisure activities.¹¹⁴ The types of goods varied, but they usually included some items with Irish connections, such as portraits of Irish nationalist leaders or pictures of Ireland.¹¹⁵ However, as the nineteenth century progressed, the church fairs incorporated a wide variety of amusements and entertainments, depending on the wishes of the local organizers and clergy. In 1881, *The New York Times* described how church fairs involved "oyster suppers, festivals, necktie socials, leap year parties, charades, tableaux, cantata, wax-works, theatrical entertainments."¹¹⁶ Other fairs held popularity contests that asked parishioners to vote for their favorite priest and awarded a prize to the winner.¹¹⁷

Theatre receives the most attention in fairs' newspaper coverage when critics, usually Protestant, publish anti-fair articles. The inclusion of variety and vaudeville performers as part of the festivities receives the most criticism. Jeremiah J. Crowley discusses the inclusion of

cheap vaudeville performers at one fair. To support his argument for the separation of church and theatre, he relies on the old argument tying together the theatre and sexual impropriety and he claims that one of these performers seduced an audience member.¹¹⁸ In “A Study of Church Entertainments” (1896), Rev. William Bayward Hale strongly condemns churches for their use of fairs and other public entertainment to raise funds. He protests that “The world does not need the Church as a purveyor of vaudeville.”¹¹⁹ Newspapers throughout the country published responses to Hale’s essay. Most agreed with Hale on theatre, even if they believed him too harsh in his condemnation of fairs. The *Washington Post* agreed that religion cannot be helped by gambling at church fairs, by living picture exhibitions, by skirt dances, or any other encroachment on the domain of the variety theatre.”¹²⁰ Several denominations also released official statements in response to Hale, including the Catholic Church. The assistant pastor of a major Boston parish explained that Hale’s views were “substantially the view of the Catholic church, as far as I am able to judge. Church fairs were condemned by the third council of Baltimore...No Catholic pastor is permitted to hold a fair for the purpose of raising money without first getting the sanction of his bishop. And it is safe to say that if there were any quicker means of raising money for church purposes fairs would not be allowed at all. I am sure that no pastor enjoys them.”¹²¹ Burtzell’s diary would suggest otherwise.

However, as early as 1866, the Second Plenary Council of the Roman Catholic Church started advising its constituents about the dangers of fairs and performance. It warned the laity “most solemnly against the great abuses which have sprung up in the matter of fairs, excursions, and picnics, in which, as too often conducted, the name of charity is made to cover up a multitude of sins. We forbid all Catholics having anything to do with them, except when managed in accordance with the regulations of the Ordinary, and under the immediate

supervision of their respective pastors.”¹²² Shortly after, the Second Synod stated that “The necessity of sustaining Catholic schools, and the dangers of theatrical exhibitions, immodest dances, and festive amusements or exhibitions intended for the benefit of pious causes, such as picnics, fairs, and excursions, are noticed.”¹²³ In an article that surveyed the response of non-Catholic ministers for their reaction to Hale, Rev SH Roblin, a Universalist pastor, explained that “There is a tendency on the part of many churches to outdo their neighbors in the direction of sensationalism, so that they can attract members and secure dollars.”¹²⁴ Ministers also complained that the Catholic churches did not follow the decrees issued by the bishops at Baltimore, including decrees against entertainments and saloons. Yet, similar to how the Catholic Church defended saloon owners to help their parishioners succeed economically and to help foster a sense of community, in the same way, local parishes and schools encouraged theatre and popular entertainment in church activities.¹²⁵ Even as the hibernicon’s popularity started to decrease in major variety hall, it still successfully performed “between different glowing features of a church fair.”¹²⁶

In 1866, a fair run by Burtzell for St. Ann’s illustrates how amateur performance was incorporated into church fairs. In the fairs at St. Ann’s, Burtzell ran the rehearsals for the theatrical performances. In March, he spent several nights rehearsing *Box and Cox* and *Toodles* with boys from the parish. On March 6, Burtzell complained about small fair attendance after Toodles’s matinee only had an audience of twenty. The evening show was better attended with an audience of a hundred and fifty. After the evening performance, the boys also put on a minstrel show, in which according to Burtzell, they “succeeded beyond my expectations.”¹²⁷ *Toodles* still was running at the fair over four weeks later, when the Archbishop and Father McNierney visited. His reaction, recorded by Burtzell, indicates the mixed feeling of the

Archbishop towards including performance in church fundraisers. Burtzell describes how “He was shocked when he heard Charles Fenton and Mr. Toodles say ‘damn me’ but especially when he saw Mar come out (he took John E. Burke for a girl) till Fr. Preston told him it was an altar boy. Otherwise he laughed heartily at all the jokes of the play.”¹²⁸ Yet, the Archbishop’s concern over language and boys and girls acting together was not enough for him to stop theatre’s inclusion and Burtzell had no problem leaving the “damn me” in, even though he does not seem surprised at the Archbishop’s shock. When Burtzell and the Archbishop discussed the fair’s profits two weeks later, the Archbishop even complimented Burtzell, saying “I had immortalized myself by the theatrical performance.”¹²⁹ Other performances were also held at church fairs, including a production of “Ireland and America” at a church fair in Northhampton in 1874.¹³⁰

The frequency of theatrical performance at fairs led to the transformation of church spaces. Some pastors made temporary changes for the duration of the fair, removing pews and expanding the choir platform “to accommodate professional vaudeville performers” hired by the church.¹³¹ The frequency of fairs led to some more permanent changes in the structure and decoration of new church buildings. A writer for the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported that “The frequenters of the old conventicles would be amazed if they could look into our church and find not only pews, pulpit, organ, and vestry-room, but libraries, dressing-rooms, parlors, drawing-rooms, kitchens, stage and curtain, and many of the properties that go to the equipment of the lecture-room, music-hall, and theatre.”¹³² Church fairs became such big business in the late nineteenth century that “several men well known in connection with mining and railway speculations” formed the Church Fair and Entertainment Agency to “take the entire charge of all church fairs and exhibitions.” It offered to defray the cost of putting fairs together and handle all the administrative issues, including providing fair ladies and hiring performers. It is unclear if

the agency was successful, but the owners were confident enough that they published suggestions for church architects. They suggested that “every good church should be furnished with a good-sized stage situated in the chancel, so that in removing the altar and pulpit theatrical entertainments could be effectively given.”¹³³ The performances may not have explicitly attacked the church’s morals as some Catholics feared. Yet, restructuring the church so that performers and parishioners acted in the same space where priests performed the transubstantiation potentially appeared not only subversive, but also undermined the church’s strict hierarchy.

Parishes addressed the problem of performance space by building parish halls. Smith recalls how “[w]hile doing parish work on Lake Champlain thirty years ago [in the 1880s], the town hall was my home for the parish theatre. It had no stage, scenery, lights or curtain, so the players manufactured them of their own accord. In the time they made it worth the while of the local magnates to build a proper stage with all the accessories. This improvement brought in the travelling professional companies, whose skilled performances roused the parish theatre actors to higher levels of effort.”¹³⁴ Smith claims that the performances of companies like the hibernicon on these stages inspired churches to “train amateur companies for social aim as well as for profit.”¹³⁵ A turn of the century survey conducted by Father E. Vincent Mooney from Austin, Texas, reflects how a well-equipped parish hall became a necessity for hosting and producing theatre with local parishes. One pastor wrote to Mooney about having “just completed a magnificent hall, equipped with a large stage and some scenery” and asked advice about setting up his own amateur theatre group.¹³⁶ Another priest complained that the “war took my young people away, and to-day things are at a standstill, although I have a well-equipped hall.”¹³⁷ By 1917, Smith estimated that three thousand parish halls operated in the United States.¹³⁸

The slow creation of more permanent theatrical spaces in American Catholic parishes resulted from and helped lead to the development of lasting Catholic amateur theatrical groups, referred to by Smith in his 1917 book as the “Parish Theatre.” Once again, Burtzell’s experiences in 1860s New York illustrate the early impulse toward involving theatre and popular entertainment in church life. On June 11, 1866, Burtzell “attended the first general meeting of the Sunday School Union at Nativity Church.” At the meeting, the organization outlined its purpose as first a social organization that would give members access to Catholic books and to establish a “place where various plays may be inaugurated.” The organization viewed its secondary purpose as religious instruction and training, which was characteristic of the plays produced by Catholic theatre groups throughout the rest of the century.¹³⁹ Although religion was never entirely absent from Catholic-supported productions and some Catholics promoted plays on religious topics, the majority of plays produced and supported by Catholics on church property reflected the popular trends of professional theatre and popular entertainment. Incorporating these types of entertainments into church life allowed the church to reinforce a sense of local community and collaboration.

A lack of records on Parish Theatre makes it difficult to trace, but the efforts of Smith and Mooney to centralize, organize, and control the decentralized movement in the first few decades of the twentieth century allows us a glimpse into how they functioned. Their work outlines the current state of the Parish Theatre and argues for more collaboration between parishes. According to Smith, the parish theatres “work[ed] haphazard, without leaders, standards, ideals, or organization.”¹⁴⁰ Mooney agreed that the biggest difficulty facing parish theatres was the “lack of organization,” which “may be easily overcome if the proper initiative and cooperation is manifested on the part of those interested in parish dramatic activity.”¹⁴¹ The

lack of organization could be attributed in part to how “our people as a general rule do not usually associate the work with a larger community or nation-wide movement.”¹⁴² Working against such organization, Mooney claimed, were past attempts to link various parish theatres into a “Catholic Neighborhood Theatre” that created friction within local communities.¹⁴³ The extent to which Parish Theatre had become entrenched in Catholic life led Smith to believe it “must be regulated, directed, disinfected if need be, supported, praised judiciously, and occasionally disciplined.”¹⁴⁴

Although Smith and Mooney’s dreams of a national parish theatre would not be realized, their work indicates that Parish Theatre thrived in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Smith believed that “There must be thirty thousand parish theatre actors in this country, divided into three thousand companies. It is likely that they give ten or twelve thousand plays a year, and double that number of performances.”¹⁴⁵ In *Producing Little Theatres*, Clarence Stratton claimed that ten thousand parish theatre groups operated.¹⁴⁶ Mooney wrote his articles based on a series of surveys sent in by parish pastors. According to his results, many parishes in major cities reported theatre groups that had existed for over thirty years. Typically a parish organization, Dramatic and Literary Society, or a formal dramatic club organized the performances. Sixty percent of the dramatic groups surveyed were led by the church pastors or their assistants. Performing as frequently as “once a week to once a year,” groups produced a wide variety of entertainments including “[d]rama, comedy, comedy-drama, minstrelsy, revues, farces, light opera, musical comedy, pageantry and pantomime.”¹⁴⁷ This range is represented in the list of recommended Parish Theatre plays at the end of Smith’s book. Although Smith cautions his readers not to just copy the hits on the professional stage, he suggests a hundred works for production in the following categories: six war plays, eleven Irish plays, ten westerns,

thirteen “rural” plays, six historical plays, eleven religious plays, eleven farces, twelve entertainments, and twenty romances. Smith includes both burlesques like *Milkmaids’ Convention*, *Old Maids’ Association*, *Woman’s Convention*, *Punkville, USA* as well as several entertainments that lend themselves to a variety format.¹⁴⁸ Newspapers also report the performance of minstrel shows annually by groups such as the Catholic Literary Union of Charleston.¹⁴⁹

Mooney’s surveys indicate mixed motives for bringing entertainment into the church. He claims that Catholics “desire to see their children and neighbors acts, to do an interesting thing, to be entertained in a novel way...the actors are pleasing themselves and helping the parish and achieving local fame.”¹⁵⁰ Various groups claimed educational benefits, recreation, and the opportunity to create good drama that improved on the work of the professional stage. Economic benefits played a major role. Smith suggested that “a quarter of a million dollars are spent annually on these plays, and the investment brings in nearly twelve million dollars.”¹⁵¹ Mooney reported a more realistic figure when he claimed that collectively parishes earned thousands of dollars. Parishes raised the funds for everything from buying a new parish organ to decreasing church debt.¹⁵² In 1887 Cincinnati, the archdiocese created a traveling theatrical company “under the auspices and with the approval of the Catholic Church, with the object of collecting a fund for the relief of creditors of the late Archbishop Purcell.”¹⁵³ However, Mooney’s survey respondents’ most common explanation for their theatres involved the social benefit to their parish communities.

A New York State assistant pastor wrote to Mooney that his dramatic “club is not only the centre of the artistic life of the parish, but is the *centre* around which all the *social life* of the parish rotates.”¹⁵⁴ A Philadelphia pastor echoed these sentiments. He explained that the club

formed first out of financial need, “but we no longer consider this the important thing in the work. The social benefits are remarkable” and even if “the club never makes another dollar, I shall consider it the greatest single factor for good in the whole parish.”¹⁵⁵ Pastors around the country repeatedly emphasized the importance of theatre “in *keeping my young people together*” and involved in the church.¹⁵⁶

An incident reported in the *New York Irish World* illustrates the Parish Theatre’s acceptance of popular entertainment and its conventions in the service of the church’s economic and social needs. In a letter to Patrick Ford, the *Irish World* editor, Michael Scanlan complained about a concert given for St. Ann’s Infant Asylum in Washington DC. Scanlan describes:

Prof. Charlemagne Koehler...teacher of elocution in the Georgetown University, announced, in a funny speech, that he would give a representation of an Irishwoman at her husband’s wake...drawing out a mop handkerchief to absorb Mrs. Molony’s tears, and making faces supposed to be very Irish, he proceeded to weep and keen; one moment addressing the corpse and the next addressing the neighbors as they came to the wake. He kept the sacred concert in roars for about fifteen minutes, showing the foreign legations, the priests of Washington, and a supposedly Catholic audience what an Irish wake was!¹⁵⁷

Scanlan complaints echoed Father Larkin’s critique of Boucicault decades earlier. Scanlan was not only offended by the performance, but also by the behavior of the other audience members, who he thought respectable. He complained, “Myself and daughter, however, were the only persons who withdrew from the theatre, and as we were going out the professor was being recalled – an encore for this disgrace to common decency!”¹⁵⁸ In awe that the Catholic church supported such a performance, Scanlan questioned, “Are we [the Irish], then, only ‘bricks and mortar’ to be used in building churches, colleges, universities, wherein professors and students shall fill out their sacred concerts by reviling us with Irish wakes and other ‘funny business’ wherein priests as well as people shall laugh at the Irish?”¹⁵⁹ In a letter published in the *New*

York Irish World a few weeks later, the organizer of the entertainment agrees with Scanlan in one respect alone - no one else was offended. He argues that the variety sketch was compatible with the goals of the Catholic Church and the Irish in America.¹⁶⁰ Although for some like Scanlan the appearance of popular entertainment acts and stereotypes at church events seemed unnatural, the audience reaction and the organizer's surprise implies that the Irish sketch was not unusual for the Parish Theatre. Partially through the hibernicon and in spite of church leadership and protests by theatre-wary Catholics, theatre and popular entertainment had managed to infiltrate the everyday life of the Catholic Church.

Charitable Citizen or Charlatan?: The Church Benefit

When the Catholic Church finally created a central theatre organization with the Catholic Theatre Movement in 1912, it reacted to an informal and widely accepted practice of entertainment in the church. Even though the entertainments served local economic and social parish needs, they did not serve the larger spiritual and ideological goals of the Catholic leadership, which makes their rejection of Lummis's production plans understandable. However, the church leaders' fears about theatre professionals' morals was not entirely unwarranted. Popular entertainers also benefited from their closer relationship with the Catholic Church.

Performing for the Catholic Church benefited hibernicon companies financially because it allowed them to avoid local and state licensing fees. *Harry Miner's American Dramatic Directory* provides an overview of fees throughout the country in the mid-1880s. Although some towns only charged between one and ten dollars for a performance license, some cities,

including New York City, Springfield, Illinois, and Wilmington, Delaware, required payment of the yearly fee, even if the troupe planned on performing for only a few nights.¹⁶¹ In New York City, if the troupe wanted the license for less than three months, the law allowed the mayor to decrease the fee from five hundred dollars to between one hundred fifty and two hundred and fifty dollars.¹⁶² By utilizing the provision that allowed performances “for charitable and religious purposes” without a license, troupes could save significantly, especially since most laws did not specify how much of the profits needed to be donated to charity.¹⁶³ A 1879 lawsuit illustrates how one MacEvoy company took advantage of the charitable/religious purposes exemption in New York state. The village of Sag Harbor filed a complaint against the MacEvoy family for not obtaining a license and “[t]heir defense was that they were performing for a charitable object.”¹⁶⁴ The trustees claimed that the state exemption conflicted with the village charter and the troupe “paid \$3 thro’ Rev. JJ Heffernan.”¹⁶⁵ It seems that at least for the MacEvoy family, their friendship with local Catholic leadership helped them settle legal matters as well, even if it did not help them avoid the licensing fee.

In 1884, a *New York Clipper* writer also points to a widespread “playing-for-the-church benefit scheme” commonly perpetuated by hibernicon companies. After the church publically endorsed the performance, the companies benefited from large audiences that wanted to support their local parish and conveniently forgot to donate any proceeds. Although evidence indicates that John and Charles MacEvoy cultivated a strong relationship with Catholic parishes and helped out churches and charities financially, priests “throughout the country complain[ed] bitterly of the treatment received from certain ‘will--the-wisp’ Hibernicon managers” who “defraud[ed]” priests and churches.¹⁶⁶ It is understandable why hibernicon companies used churches to attract audiences. The Catholic Church allowed them to reach a core segment of

their target audience – Irish-American working-class Catholics. Communities believed that “[c]harity and pleasure combined should suffice to fill the hall, floor and gallery” and indeed, many charity performances were “very largely attended. Even Irish-American Catholics who were wary of the theatre might attend if church leaders condoned the performance. Supposedly, John MacEvoy even published a letter addressed “[t]o the Reverend Catholic Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the United States” that informed them he sold his hibernicon to Mr. W.S. Humphreys. MacEvoy “recommend[s] [Humphreys] to the Reverend Catholic Clergy and citizens, wherever he may exhibit, as a liberal and patriotic Irish gentleman in every respect worthy of their patronage.”¹⁶⁷ It is possible that MacEvoy wrote the letter, as the signature claims, but it is also possible that a new hibernicon owner wanted to use the Catholic connections established by MacEvoy and his family to bring in an audience. Either way, the letter illustrates how the companies hoped to take advantage of their relationship with the Catholic community for profit. In spite of what hibernicon advertisements or Catholic Theatre Movement leaders claimed, the relationship between popular entertainment and the Catholic Church was mutually beneficial and its informality made it difficult to eliminate through decree or minor scandal.

Notes

¹ The Catholic Church believed only the reform of the individual soul could lead to social change, which led a Baltimore Cardinal to claim that “the only genuine social reformer” was Christ. Cardinal James Gibbons, *Discourses and Sermons for Every Sunday and The Principal Festivals of the Year* (Baltimore: John Murphy Company, Publishers, 1908), 522; John M. Berry and Frances Panchok, “Church and Theatre,” *US Catholic Historian* 6, no. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 1987): 176.

² Frances Panchok, “The Catholic Church and the Theatre in New York, 1890-1920” (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, 1976), 89, 542. Panchok’s dissertation is the main study of Catholic Theatre in America pre-1920. For more on ideological divisions within American Catholicism, see Panchok, 70-90 and Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 528-534.

³ Eliza O’Brien Lummis, “The Catholic Theater in New York,” *Catholic News*, 15 June 1912, 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵ Panchok, 105, 108.

⁶ Cardinal Farley qtd. in “Farley Begins War on Infamy of Stage,” *New York Times*, 19 December 1912. Even though Lummis agreed with the church’s conservative philosophy on women’s social role, many Catholic leaders felt threatened by her attempts to take on leadership positions within the church. See also Panchok, 96-8.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Bulletin*, February 1914.

⁹ *Bulletin*, April 1914.

¹⁰ Panchok, 168. See also Panchok 106-70. Lummis published her play in spite of the professional production’s cancellation. Eliza O’Brien Lummis, *The Dear Saint Elizabeth* (Boston: Gorham Press, 1912).

¹¹ Smith was editor of the *Catholic Review* from 1889 to 1892. His editorship shifted the paper’s focus towards literature and the arts. Aside from theatre reviews, he also added a book review section. *Catholic Review*, 1889-1892.

¹² Cardinal Farley, qtd in Berry and Panchok, 174.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ “Farley Recognized Catholic Players,” *New York Times*, 2 February 1915, 7. For more on the Catholic Actors Guild, see Panchok 497-535.

¹⁵ Panchok, 15.

¹⁶ Miller, 527.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 527.

¹⁸ John Talbot Smith, “An Inside View of the Stage,” *Donahoe’s Magazine* 56, no. 2 (1906): 141. He also speaks of the hibernicon and weakening Catholic prejudices against the theatre in Smith, *The Parish Theatre*, (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1917; reprint, General Books, 2009), 7.

¹⁹ Smith, “An Inside View of the Stage,” 141.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² John Finerty, *Chicago Citizen*, 8 March 1884, 4. See also “Criticizing ‘The Shaughraun,’” *New York Times*, 4 March 1884, 5; “Boycotting ‘The Shaughraun,’” *New York Herald*, 3 March 1884, 3; “The Drama,” *Life*, 13 March 1884, 3, 64; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 6 March 1884, 4; Richard Hogan, *Dion Boucicault* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1969), 81. See also Deirdre McFeely, “Between Two Worlds: Boucicault’s *The Shaughraun* and Its New York Audience,” in *Irish Theater in America*, ed. John P. Harrington (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009), 54-65; Gwen Orel, “Reporting the Stage Irishman: Dion Boucicault in the Irish Press,” in *Irish Theater in America*, ed. John P. Harrington (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009), 66-77.

²³ J. Lloyd, “Who Would be a Nun?,” *The Moet and Shandon Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1870), 48-9. Harvard Theatre Collection.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 49.

²⁵ “Play by a Priest,” *Grand Rapids Evening Press*, 5 May 1908, 7.

²⁶ *Ibid.* Vaughan responded to his critics: “The celebration of mass is stopped before the consecration of the host. It is simply a picture, a living painting and should offense no one any more than a representation of the same thing in water colors or oils. The subject is handed reverently both by the matter of the play and the acting. I hope it will lead people to think rather than to criticize. Lawrence James Vaughan, *Life and Works of Father Vaughan, Volume 2* (Chicago: Vaughan Publishing Company, 1909), 11.

²⁷ John Talbot Smith, *The Catholic Church in New York: A History of the New York Diocese From Its Establishment in 1808 to the Present Time*, Volume 1 (New York and Boston: Hall and Locke Co., 1905), 304. Boucicault claimed that the production Larkin saw changed his original script and added an offensive scene. "Boycotting the Shaughraun," *New York Herald*, 3 March 1884, 10; "The Drama," *Life*, 13 March 1884, 3, 63.

²⁸ Bernard Comment, *The Panorama*, trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1999), 117-8.

²⁹ Mimi Colligan, *Canvas Documentaries: Panoramic Entertainments in Australia and New Zealand* (Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2002), 8; Comment, 117-8.

³⁰ Richard L. Burtzell, *The Diary of Richard L. Burtzell, Priest of New York: The Early Years, 1865-1868*, ed. Nelson J. Callahan (New York: Arno Press, 1978), July 3, 1865, 93.

³¹ Colligan, 8.

³² Smith, *The Parish Theatre*, 7.

³³ "Paddy's Wedding," in *Howarth's Grand Hibernica Songster* (Trenton: Wm. S. Sharp, 1885?), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 1. Other songs that fall into this category include "That Little Church Around the Corner," "When These Old Clothes Were New," "Rollicking Rody," "Widow Mavrone," and "Barney be Aisy." Dexter Smith and C.A. White, "That Little Church Around the Corner," in *W.F. Lawlor's Original Barney the Guide Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1871), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 33; "When These Old Clothes are New," in *W.F. Lawlor's Original Barney the Guide Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1871), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 11; JH Ryan, "Rollicking Rody," *Rody the Rover Songster* (New York: Robt M. De Witt, nd), 27, Mick Moloney Irish-American Music and Popular Culture Collection, Part IV, Box 48, Folder 29, Archives of Irish America, Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives; Charles MacEvoy, "Barney be Aisy," in *W.F. Lawlor's Original Barney the Guide Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1871) Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 4; John MacEvoy, "Widow Mavrone," (New York: C.H. Ditson and Co, 1872), 1-4, from Library of Congress, *Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885*, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/sm1872.03984> (accessed September 10, 2010).

³⁴ For more on the place of the church in Irish-American life and the increasing religious devotion due to church efforts, see Miller, 527. See also Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815-1865* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975).

³⁵ “Birth of Saint Patrick,” in *J.L. MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon Songster* (New York: DeWitt, 1881), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 51. “Paddy’s Wedding” is also a comic song, even though the priest is not directly involved in the humor.

³⁶ J.H. Ryan, “St. Patrick’s Day,” *Rody the Rover Songster*, 37. See also “The Dear Little Shamrock,” in *W.F. Lawlor’s Original Barney the Guide Songster*, 31.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ “Father Tom O’Neil,” in *W.F. Lawlor’s Original Barney the Guide Songster*, 46.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 46-7

⁴¹ Ibid., 47.

⁴² Burtzell, March 27, 1865, 27.

⁴³ *MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon*, broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle), American Broadside and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8).

⁴⁴ *Gavin and Ryan’s Emerald Isle* program, *Rody the Rover Songster*, 51 and 53.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 52-3. The program includes two pages worth of text that describe the scene and this description might have comprise some or all of the accompanying lecture in performance.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 52-3.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 57.

⁴⁸ John Talbot Smith, “Experiments in Drama,” *Donahoe’s Magazine* 55, no. 4 (April 1906): 425.

⁴⁹ John Talbot Smith, “The Fiske Season in New York,” *Donahoe’s Magazine* 52, no. 4 (October 1904): 355.

⁵⁰ Introduction to *Women of the West*, in *Life and Works of Father Vaughan*, 5.

⁵¹ Berry and Panchok, 176. For more on Smith’s opinion of modern drama, see John Talbot Smith, “The Laughing Play,” *Donahoe’s Magazine* 55, no 5. (May 1906): 493-500; Smith, “The Fiske Season in New York,” 352; John Talbot Smith, “Foreign Plays on the American Stage” *Donahoe’s Magazine* 52 (1904): 480; John Talbot Smith, “James O’Neill,

Actor,” *Donahoe’s Magazine* 52 (1904): 228; John Talbot Smith, “Chauncey Olcott’s Irish Drama,” *Donahoe’s Magazine* 52 (1904): 83.

⁵² Smith, *The Parish Theatre*, 27.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ *MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon*. Broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle). American Broadside and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8).

⁵⁵ “Resolutions,” *Utica (New York) Daily Observer*, 23 January 1864.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ *Syracuse Courier and Union*, 1 March 1864.

⁵⁸ *Utica (New York) Daily Observer*, 28 January 1864.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ See Burtzell’s diary entries for 1865-7.

⁶² “The Parish of the Epiphany,” *New York Times*, 11 January 1869, 8.

⁶³ Burtzell, February, 6, 1866, 227.

⁶⁴ “The Hibernicon at Pike’s,” *New York Tribune*, 23 September 1868, 2. The author of this review’s harsh comments about the lecturer’s talkative nature, his prejudiced comments about the Irish, and his complaints about the “shamefully bad” door arrangements seem to indicate that this article is not a puff piece

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ The early twentieth century Canon law was more lenient than any decree passed in the United States over the previous four decades. It only banned priests from attending shows “which are unbecoming to the clerical state or entail scandal arising from the presence of clerics.” Canon law quoted in Panchok, 31. Since all the decrees by the Vatican as well as American councils and synods were written in Latin, I am relying on Panchok’s translations for my analysis. Panchok includes full translations of the decrees pertaining to theatre in her footnotes.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Panchok, 27-8, 10n.

⁶⁹ Panchok, 27-8.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Panchok, 29, 13n.

⁷¹ Ibid., 30, 15n.

⁷² Ibid., 30, 16n.

⁷³ Ibid., 33, 23n.

⁷⁴ For further discussion of these decrees in dialogue with the Catholic Theatre Movement, see Panchok. She discusses how after 1886, even though the Catholic leadership felt the need to reissue the theatre ban, they did not spend much time, if any, discussing the matter in council.

⁷⁵ Burtzell, November 27, 1865, 181.

⁷⁶ Ibid., May 1, 1865, 40.

⁷⁷ Ibid., September 7, 1866, 304.

⁷⁸ Ibid., September 25, 1866, 316.

⁷⁹ Burtzell discusses his attendance at theatre and popular entertainments in the following selected entries from 1865-1867: February 9, 1865, 4; February 13, 1865, 6; February 20, 1865, 10; May 1, 1865, 40; May 2, 1865, 41; June 22, 1865, 80; August 8, 1865, 123; October, 19, 1865, 160-1; November 21, 1865, 175; November 23, 1865, 176; November 27, 1865, 181; January 15, 1866, 216; January 22, 1866, 218 [in Washington DC]; January 23, 1866, 219 [in Washington DC]; January 24, 1866, 220 [in Washington DC]; September 7, 1866, 304; September 18, 1866, 313; September 24, 1866, 315; September 25, 1866, 316; April 2, 1867, 373; May 6 1867, 375.

⁸⁰ Ibid., October 23, 1865, 162.

⁸¹ Ibid., May 1, 1866, 265.

⁸² Ibid., January 23, 1867, 348.

⁸³ Ibid., October 2, 1866, 316. Burtzell's ideas frequently reflect nineteenth century liberal Catholic beliefs. See the following selected entries for more on priests and celibacy, interdenominational interactions, debates on church hierarchy, and Fenians: March 8, 1865, 20; September 3, 1865, 139; January 28, 1866, 222; April, 18, 1866, 259; April 19, 1866, 260-1;

April 29, 1866, 263; May 1, 1866, 265; June 21, 1866, 288-9; Sept 25, 1866, 316; October 2 1866, 316. For more on how Burtzell's views and radical friends affected his later career, see Anthony D. Andreassi, "'The Cunning Leader of a Dangerous Clique?': The Burtzell Affair and Archbishop Michael Augustine Corrigan," *Catholic Historical Review* 86, no. 4 (October 2000): 620-639.

⁸⁴ Burtzell, June 7, 1865, 66. He only records someone commenting on his attendance once. While visiting the Winter Garden in December 1866, he reports that he "was mortified at a boy challenging a dollar bill of mine as bad and at my unneat appearance." His comment highlights the class prejudice of the boy and his disregard for his appearance. Burtzell, December 17, 1866, 339.

⁸⁵ "Local Intelligence," *New York Times*, 2 November 1862, 6.

⁸⁶ Burtzell, April 18, 1866, 259.

⁸⁷ *Decatur (Illinois) Review*, 17 October 1882, 3; "The Hibernicon at Pike's," *New York Tribune*, 23 September 1868, 2; *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 5 March 1884, 4; "The Mirror of Ireland," *Hartford Daily Courant*, 22 November 1870, 2; "MacEvoy's Hibernicon," *Hartford Daily Courant*, 14 September 1871, 2; *Sacramento Bee*, 2 November 1870; *Long Island City Star*, 22 October 1886, 2; *Baltimore Sun*, 24 May 1870, 2; *Baltimore Sun*, 23 November 1865, 2; *Baltimore Sun*, 24 November 1874, 2; *Syracuse Courier and Union*, 1 March 1864; *Buffalo Courier and Republican*, 14 April 1871.

⁸⁸ "Nearly Every Theatre Represented," *New York Times*, 14 April 1887, 8; "City Catholic Interests," *New York Times*, 14 November 1883, 3. For an example of how humorous recitations interpreted the economic situation of churches, see Samuel Lover, "Father Phil's Collection," *A Collection of Humorous, Dramatic, and Dialect Selections*, ed. Alfred P. Burbank (New York: Dick and Fitzgerald, 1878), 28-32.

⁸⁹ "A Notable Benefit," *New York Times*, 21 November 1886, 2; *New York Times*, 13 February 1887, 11; "In and About the City," *New York Times*, 15 January 1888, 3; *New York Times*, 15 November 1891, 7; A.M. Palmer took over arranging the benefit in 1894. "Notes on the Stage," *New York Times*, 28 October 1894, 13. Smith praised Daly in multiple publications, not only for his work in service of the church, but also for his production of moral dramas. According to Smith, Daly "demonstrated that the stage can be a power for good." John Talbot Smith, "Augustine Daly," in *Memories of Daly's Theatres* (New York: Augustine Daly, 1896), 142.

⁹⁰ "Daly Plays Usher," *New York Times*, 22 January 1889, 8. According to Armond Fields, Tony Pastor donated money to the Roman Catholic Orphan's Home for decades. Armond Fields, *Tony Pastor, Father of Vaudeville* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co, 2007), 119.

⁹¹ George Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage, vol. 9: 1870-1875* (Columbia University Press, New York, NY, 1937), 764, 773.

⁹² *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 2 March 1884, 7.

⁹³ George Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage, vol. 11: 1879-1882* (Columbia University Press, New York, NY, 1939), 638.

⁹⁴ With religion often viewed as a women's domain in the nineteenth century, this trend is reflected in many Protestant churches as well. According to historian Haiser Diner, "the histories of the Roman Catholic Church in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington DC, Chicago and every city where the Irish settled indicate that women contributed the vast bulk of financial support for both parish maintenance and Catholic charitable work generally." Haiser Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 137. "Catholic Church Fairs," *Boston Daily Globe*, 13 November 1877, 2. McDannell highlights the importance of studying church fairs: "Unlike church activities directed by Rome and organized by the clergy, parish fairs provide an indication of the religious behavior of the average Irish woman, man, and child. Thus it is useful to consider what went on at the fair, what kinds of good were raffled, and who helped organize the events." Colleen McDannell, "Going to the Ladies' Fair: Irish Catholics in New York City, 1870-1900," in *The New York Irish*, ed. Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher, (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1996), 236.

⁹⁵ See McDannell, 236; Margaret Lynch-Brennan, *The Irish Bridget: Irish Immigrant Women in Domestic Service in America, 1840-1930* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009), 140; Diner, 137.

⁹⁶ "Church Fairs," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 22 January 1882, 4. The church fairs were common enough to provoke mocking treatments in papers such as the *Washington Post*. "Church Entertainments," *Washington Post*, 20 October 1894, 5. Although only a small section of Beverly Gordon's *Bazaar and Fair Ladies: The History of the American Fundraising Fair* addresses church fairs, she highlights several important reasons why fundraising fairs have been overlooked by scholars: "Despite the importance and ubiquity of the fundraising fair, however, it is not generally taken very seriously. It is seen as an amusing but trivial event, outside the 'real' world of work and business. The only people who devote time to fairs or bazaars, according to the popular stereotype, are housewives or others with time on their hands. The real economic, social, and political role of the fair is masked by this cavalier attitude." Beverly Gordon, *Bazaar and Fair Ladies: The History of the American Fundraising Fair* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998), 105.

⁹⁷ S.M. Beale, "Church Fairs and Festivals," *Zion's Herald*, 18 Dec 1879, 402.

⁹⁸ McDannell, 240-1. According to McDannell, German, French, Italian, Polish, and Canadian national parishes held bazaars instead fairs for fundraisers.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 244.

¹⁰⁰ “Two Church Fairs,” *New York Times*, 29 March 1883, 8.

¹⁰¹ “Three Catholic Church Fairs,” *New York Times*, 14 December 1883, 3. See also Katherine Frances Mullany, *Catholic Pittsfield and Berkshire* (Pittsfield, MA: Sun Printing Company, 1897), 82.

¹⁰² “Three Catholic Church Fairs,” *New York Times*, 14 December 1883, 3; “Jottings by the Way,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 3 November 1877, 2; Mullany, 71, 82; McDannell, 242-3; Diner, 137.

¹⁰³ Burtzell, April 24, 1866, 262.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., April 10, 1866, 257.

¹⁰⁵ *New York Times*, 26 April 1879, 4.

¹⁰⁶ “Church Fairs,” *New York Times*, 18 December 1868, 8. This article also details the various games that fair attendees could play.

¹⁰⁷ Jeremiah J. Crowley, *The Parochial School* (Chicago: author pub, 1905), 58.

¹⁰⁸ Diner, 137.

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in Diner, 138.

¹¹⁰ Diner, 138.

¹¹¹ Gordon, 105.

¹¹² McDannell, 247.

¹¹³ *Catholic Herald*, 1878-9. See also McDannell, 240.

¹¹⁴ McDannell, 239.

¹¹⁵ For more information, see Ibid., 240-1, 250. McDannell argues that “Catholics subverted the Victorian notion that hard work led to success, which in turn led to wealth.” She also argues that “Catholics did not need to give up either their religion or their ethnicity to become a part of America’s consumer culture.” McDannell, 247.

¹¹⁶ “Opposed to Church Fairs,” *New York Times*, 26 February 1881, 8. See also “Church Fairs: Letters to the Editor,” *New York Times*, 15 May 1873, 5; “Catholic Fairs,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 12 November 1879, 2.

¹¹⁷ “Close of St. Francis Xavier’s Fair,” *New York Times*, 8 December 1880, 5. Theatre was not necessarily included in every church fair.

¹¹⁸ Crowley, 58.

¹¹⁹ William Bayward Hale, “A Study of Church Entertainments,” *Forum* (January 1896): 570. For other responses, see “Plain Words: Church Fairs Denounced by Rev W. B. Hale. He Says That They Spell Ruin to Religions,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 5 January 1896, 24; “Church Fairs,” *New York Times*, 28 December 1896, 4. Others raised the issues addressed by Hale before 1896. For a critique of how the fairs overwork women, see Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher, “Are Church Fairs Beneficial?,” *Christian Union*, 2 April 1879, 312. For more early criticism see “Church Fairs,” *New York Times*, 14 May 1873, 6. The discussion of the negative side of church fairs was particularly prevalent at the turn of the century. “Two Sides of Church Fairs,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 13 December 1897, 5; “Opposes Church Fairs,” *Washington Post*, 14 January 1905, 3.

¹²⁰ “A Clergyman on Church Fairs,” *Washington Post*, 7 January 1896, 6.

¹²¹ “View of the Catholic Church: Church Fairs Condemned by the Third Council of Baltimore,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 5 January 1896, 24.

¹²² “Dancing, Church Fairs, etc.,” *Christian Advocate*, 27 December 1866, 410.

¹²³ “New Publications,” *New Catholic World* 11, no. 62 (May 1870): 287.

¹²⁴ “Boston Clergy: What They Say About the Church Fair,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 5 January 1896, 1.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.* The main criticism of the Catholic fairs throughout the late nineteenth century is the claim that they encourage gambling through the raffles. In 1878, Father McGlynn spoke out against these attacks. He claims that there is no rule either local or religious that prevents gambling at the fairs. He suggests that the raffles do not negatively affect the boys who are gambling. He also says that the Catholics took the idea from the Protestants and that the papers take a hypocritical stance by not attacking Protestant fairs. “Church Fairs: Views of a Catholic Priest on their Morality,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 1 December 1878, 9. [originally from the *New York World* on November 22]. In one theatre article, a downtrodden Smith complained that “Prejudice dies hard, even in the presence of facts and figures.” Since Smith refused to conform to the beliefs of the Catholic leadership, they mainly left him alone and Smith preferred to spend time with his theatre friends. See also Berry and Panchok, 173.

- ¹²⁶ "The Hibernicon Then and Now," *New York Clipper*, 1 November 1884, 519.
- ¹²⁷ Burtzell, March 5, 1866, 254-5; Burtzell, March 6, 1866, 256.
- ¹²⁸ Ibid., April 10, 1866, 257.
- ¹²⁹ Ibid., April 24 1866, 262.
- ¹³⁰ Gordon, 105.
- ¹³¹ Crowley, 317.
- ¹³² "Church Fairs," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 22 January 1882, 4.
- ¹³³ "A New Enterprise," *New York Times*, 6 December 1880, 4.
- ¹³⁴ Smith, *The Parish Theatre*, 10.
- ¹³⁵ Ibid., 7.
- ¹³⁶ Quoted. in E. Vincent Mooney, "The Parish Theatre," *The Ecclesiastical Review* LXIX (1923): 593.
- ¹³⁷ Qtd. in Mooney, "The Parish Theatre," 593.
- ¹³⁸ Smith, *The Parish Theatre*, 10.
- ¹³⁹ Burtzell, June 11, 1866, 287-8. For Burtzell's attendance at other amateur Catholic productions between 1865 and 1867, see entries for April 26, 1865, June 21, 1865, July 3, 1865, December 20, 1865, May 16, 1866, June 6, 1866, June 27, 1866, January 9, 1867, March 5, 1867, May 30, 1867, November 11, 1867.
- ¹⁴⁰ Smith, *The Parish Theatre*, 10.
- ¹⁴¹ Mooney, "Dramatic Activity in the Catholic Parish," *The Ecclesiastical Review* LXIX (1923): 275.
- ¹⁴² Mooney, "The Parish Theatre," 592.
- ¹⁴³ Ibid., 595.
- ¹⁴⁴ Smith, *The Parish Theatre*, 8. For more an amateur performance in general in nineteenth century America, see Eileen Curley, "Beyond the Pocket Doors: Amateur Theatricals in Nineteenth Century New York City" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 2006).

¹⁴⁵ Smith, *The Parish Theatre*, 10.

¹⁴⁶ Clarence Stratton, *Producing Little Theatres*, qtd. in Mooney, "Dramatic Activity in the Catholic Parish," 269. These numbers appear slightly problematic, since few records exist and Mooney and Smith only had records based on their personal correspondence and surveys. Many groups formed and disbanded rather quickly based on community commitment and economic circumstances, so ascertaining a specific number even with more in-depth evidence would be quite difficult.

¹⁴⁷ Mooney, "Dramatic Activity in the Catholic Parish," 266, 269-70; "The Parish Theatre," 593, 595-596, 598.

¹⁴⁸ Smith, *The Parish Theatre*, 29-44. Popular Irish-American melodramas from the late nineteenth century, such as the *Colleen Bawn* and *Robert Emmet*, also appear on the list.

¹⁴⁹ "Promise Up-To-Date Jokes," *Boston Daily Globe*, 27 April 1903, 3.

¹⁵⁰ Mooney, "The Parish Theatre," 601.

¹⁵¹ Smith, *The Parish Theatre*, 13.

¹⁵² Mooney, "Dramatic Activity in the Catholic Parish," 267-8.

¹⁵³ "A Catholic Theatre," *New York Times*, 28 January 1887, 4.

¹⁵⁴ Qtd in Mooney, "Dramatic Activity in the Catholic Parish," 268.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 267.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 266.

¹⁵⁷ Letter from Michael Scanlan to Patrick Ford, dated February 19, 1901, "Reviled in Our Own House," *New York Irish World*, 2 March 1901, 5.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ Letter from M.H.M. to Patrick Ford, "Irish Caricature: An Attempted Defense of Mr. Koehler's 'Irish Wake'," *New York Irish World* 30 March 1901. In bracketed comments after the article, Ford writes that he agrees with Scanlan and that the performance merely reflects the continuing slanders against the Irish.

¹⁶¹ *Harry Miner's American Dramatic Directory for the Season of 1884-5*, ed. Harry Miner (New York: Wolf and Palmer Dramatic Publishing Company, 1884).

¹⁶² *The Statute Law of the State of New York*, Volume III (New York: George S. Diossy, 1881), 403.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 404. *The Charter of the City of New York: Chapter 378 of the Laws of 1897* (Brooklyn, 1899), 143; Joseph Wallace and James W. Patton, *Springfield City Code* (Springfield: H.W. Rokker, 1884), 258.

¹⁶⁴ *Corrector* (Sag Harbor), 11 October 1879.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ "The Hibernicon Then and Now," *New York Clipper*, 1 November 1884, 519.

¹⁶⁷ "MacEvoy's New Hibernicon – A Card," *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, 8 December 1872, 5.

CHAPTER 5

“THE LAND OF THE BRAVE, BUT, OH, NOT OF THE FREE”: THE HIBERNICON AND
IRISH-AMERICAN NATIONALISM

While John MacEvoy experimented with musical comedy and Irish representation in his new hibernicon, New York’s Irish-American community became involved in a countrywide debate over its national loyalties. When the Prince of Wales announced his North American tour in 1860, Americans began planning a range of festivities to celebrate his visit, the first by an heir to the British throne. Aside from meetings with New York political leaders and a ball with the New York elite, the city also planned a parade featuring the local militia. New Yorker George Templeton Strong described how the Prince of Wales’s arrival “occasioned a week of excitement beyond that of any event in my time, and pervading all classes.” He noted that “[t]he protest of certain militia companies of Irishmen against parading to do honor to a Saxon and an oppressor of Ireland is the single exception.”¹ In spite of its military orders, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment refused to march in the parade for the Prince of Wales. The Sixty-Ninth’s leader, Colonel Michael Corcoran, argued that the regiment already had marched in the number of public celebrations required by the law. The controversy surrounding the protests by the Sixty-Ninth Regiment, which was comprised mainly of Irishmen and Irish-Americans, highlights the contentious conversation on the Irish and national loyalties that the hibernicon entered when it started its rise to popularity in 1860.

Suspicious of the Irish's allegiances to Ireland, the New York press criticized Corcoran and the Irish's ability to become proper Americans. In the eyes of the *New York Herald*, the Irish's refusal to march would damage America's international relations with the "future ruler of a great nation."² It then mocked the Irish-American communities' concerns and complaints about the British government. In their perspective, the Irish misinterpreted America's commitment to freedom and liberty, overreacted to grievances that only happened in the past, and betrayed the noble qualities of their "race." "The meaning of [the Irish-American community's] resolutions divested of their surplus verbiage," the paper explained, "is that the American government and people are bound to wage war against all the monarchies [*sic*] of the earth, and assist by money, men and arms all the revolutionists of Europe in their attempts to overthrow existing dynasties; that no freedom can exist under a monarchy."³ It continued:

[L]astly, that, as the government of the great grandfather of the Prince of Wales behaved badly to the Irish people sixty years ago, therefore their Milesian descendants now in this country should not conduct themselves as gentlemen...but insult the descendant of George III...who has never done any evil to Ireland or any other country. This is a small potato business, unworthy of the well known chivalry of the Irish race...There is no longer any case of quarrel between them; and Irish American citizens, who have renounced their allegiance to the British government and sworn allegiance to the American government, have no right to drag their own quarrels, much less the quarrels of their great-grandfathers, into this country."⁴

The *Herald* article concluded by stating that the Irish damaged their relationship with the Prince, even though they do not know how he will rule when he becomes king.

After echoing arguments made by papers like the *Herald*, *Harper's Weekly* characterized the regiment's behavior as a sign of the Irish's general ungratefulness and congratulated America for treating the Irish better than its writers believed they deserved. America gave the Irish "land — almost for nothing; employment at far better wages than they could have obtained at home; and political rights equal to those which are enjoyed by the sons of the best and noblest

Americans.”⁵ The writer lists what he views as the Irish’s faults and compliments Americans’ self-restraint for not punishing or legislating against the Irish. Even though the Irish arrived “steeped in ignorance and superstition; we have let them have their priests and their churches,” he explains.⁶ The article then continues with “statistics” about the plight of the Irish on American society:

[The Irish] have so behaved themselves that nearly seventy-five per cent of our criminals and paupers are Irish; that fully seventy-five per cent of the crimes of violence committed among us are the work of Irishmen; that the system of universal suffrage in large cities has fallen into discredit through the incapacity of the Irish for self-government; yet we have never countenanced any invidious legislation against them, have never thought of depriving them of the political rights they abused, have never sought to protect ourselves against their misconduct.⁷

The writer took offense at the regiment performing this misconduct for the Prince and all of New York to witness through their absence from the parade. The newspaper coverage typically failed to consider the current conditions in Ireland or that Irish immigrants who renounced their allegiance to their former home still had family and friends in Ireland. It also overlooked that many Irish objected to any foreign rule, no matter how potentially kind.

In spite of the technically legal reason for the regiment’s absence from the parade, the military took decisive action and charged Corcoran with disobedience.⁸ In response, Corcoran and the Irish-American press continued to insist on their inability to completely cut ties with Ireland, even though they now considered themselves Americans. Corcoran, who emigrated under threat of arrest for Irish nationalist activities over ten years before, argued that his loyalty to America in no way changed his feelings for Ireland. In a letter, he explained that “Although I am a citizen of America, I am a native of Ireland...[I]n the Prince of Wales I recognized the representative of my country’s oppressors...[and] in my opinion no change of circumstance should efface the memory of the multiplied wrongs of fatherland.”⁹ A published poem dedicated

to the Prince reminded him that distance did not erase the memories of Irish emigrants: “Go join in the revel and riot, and steep/ Your shame’s sense in pleasure, and leave us to weep;/But curses will blacken your way, /Whenever the wandering skeletons creep/Who fled from your rule in dismay.”¹⁰ Unlike the American publications, which viewed the Prince as a future ruler, the Irish argued that the Prince remained complicit in their current oppression.

With the election of Abraham Lincoln and the beginning of Southern succession soon after the parade, the military’s priorities shifted away from critiquing Irish dual loyalties. While Corcoran awaited a court-marshal, military leaders ordered him to rejoin his brigade and march south.¹¹ The outbreak of the war and the heroic service by Irish servicemen changed the perspective on the events or at least how people remembered them in song. Although the newspaper coverage typically portrayed the Irish in the wrong, songwriters mainly composed pro-Irish tunes about the conflict and used them to argue for Corcoran and the Sixty-Ninth’s dedication to America. This is not surprising considering most of the songs were published after the beginning of the war. The song “Col. Corcoran and the Prince of Wales” memorialized how upon his release, “The Stars and the Stripes with the Green did unite, He raised them upright in his Country’s defence [sic]; And said to his men all to Washington we’re called, We’ll defend it or fall but won’t honour [sic] the Prince.”¹² “The Gallant Sons of Erin” used the regiment’s refusal to march to illustrate Corcoran’s loyalty and bravery. Faced with the parade decision, the song tells of Corcoran “boldly” saying, “though my orders always I obey’d, I vow this day I will not parade my gallant sons of Erin.”¹³ Song sheets record how these tunes were sung in popular variety houses where the Irish working class likely comprised a large percentage of the audience. Their pro-Irish sentiments probably resulted from the desire to sell song sheets as much as pride in Corcoran’s choice or a new perspective on the Irish in America.

When the MacEvoy's began performing their hibernicon in the Mid-West in 1860, they similarly had to negotiate appealing to the Irish working class without alienating their middle class native American and Irish-American audience members. Regardless of how most Irish and Irish-American Catholics and Protestants felt about Irish nationalism, in addition to Catholicism, it became a major symbol of Irish-American identity by the late nineteenth century. In this chapter, the term "Irish nationalism" refers to the movements and expressions of nationalism, both political and cultural, in Ireland. "Irish-American nationalism" references political and cultural movements and expressions that developed in America. Irish-American nationalism was a diverse and conflicted movement. It functioned as an expression of national and ethnic pride, served the American aspirations of Irish-Americans by helping them advance in Irish-American communities, and fueled anti-Irish prejudice. Unlike Catholicism, which even many middle class Irish-Americans viewed as a safe expression of ethnicity, evoking Irish-American nationalism elicited extreme emotions as evidenced by the Prince of Wales incident. Wary of aligning themselves with an Irish national allegiance and a movement that often used violence, many Irish-Americans saw Irish-American nationalism as an obstacle to acceptance in American society. Yet, from the beginning, the MacEvoy's incorporated nationalist images, stories, and songs into their shows. Although many imitation hibernicon companies copied how the MacEvoy's incorporated Catholicism, analyzing evidence of companies' interaction with nationalist causes and symbols reflects conflict among the hibernicon companies over how to deal with it in their supposedly Irish performances.

Arguably, all hibernicon performances celebrated Ireland and its people in one way or another. This chapter will look at how the hibernicon engaged with arguments for Ireland's home rule or independence. In his study of Irish performance in nineteenth century New York,

Stephen Rohs writes that “the national culture of Ireland was musical, and that performances of Irish culture furnished a link to the past – a crucial element of nationalist thought.”¹⁴ He discusses songs like “Bold Soldier Boy” and performances of Dion Boucicault’s *Colleen Bawn* and Edward Harrigan’s *Mulligan Guard Ball*. Unlike these examples, the hibernicon provides the opportunity to consider how a production that targeted Irish audiences and staked part of its survival on Irish-American Catholic communities negotiated Irish-American nationalism. Although music played a key role in the hibernicon’s construction of Irish-American nationalism, the productions also illustrate the importance of the visual in how performance reinforced and reimagined Irish-American nationalism for popular audiences. As opposed to other popular performances that traded on nationalist and landscape imagery and themes, hibernicon companies claimed that their performances demonstrated the “real” Ireland. In spite of the productions’ overt romanticism, these claims for realism allowed the hibernicon to invent or reinvent the real Ireland for Irish and Irish-American audience members, who reaffirmed the nationalist cause through their virtual witnessing.

Panoramas of Ireland and Young Ireland

Panoramas of Ireland began touring at a critical time for Irish-American nationalism. In Ireland, the events of the 1840s and 1850s led to the establishment of the parliamentary and revolutionary nationalist traditions. The conflicts between these two opposing traditions defined the movement in Ireland and America for the rest of the century. In the mid-1840s, the thousands of immigrants forced out of Ireland by the Great Famine gave the movement

unprecedented strength on the other side of the Atlantic. The circumstances of this mass exodus contributed to a sense of exile among emigrants, which the romantic nationalism of Thomas Moore's *Irish Melodies* helped reinforce. Even though there is little evidence indicating the content of the earliest panoramas of Ireland in the 1850s, the newspaper record suggests that the companies addressed contemporary events in Ireland and potentially took sides in the emerging parliamentary/revolutionary nationalist split. Aside from the MacEvoy's, the performances rarely involved vocal music and as a result, their primary means of nationalist expression remained visual.¹⁵

According to one advertisement, the MacEvoy singers "touch[ed] the [audience's] hearts with some of Moore's Melodies."¹⁶ Even though few panoramas of Ireland included vocal music during the 1850s, the MacEvoy's choice to include Thomas Moore's *Irish Melodies* reflected a romantic vision of Irish-American nationalism that later became closely associated with the hibernicon. As a relatively accepted expression of Irish-American nationalism, the MacEvoy's selection illustrates one strand of Irish-American nationalist sentiment that was grounded in nostalgia and exile. The themes in Moore's songs also reinforced the visual tactics of the panoramas of Ireland.

First published in 1808 in Ireland and reissued ten times by 1834, the songs of Thomas Moore helped establish romantic images of a colonially oppressed Ireland that longed for its Gaelic past. Scholars view Moore's work as part of the eighteenth century Celtic revival that resulted in a brand of Anglo-Irish nationalism. Scholar Edward Snyder notes that the revival attempted to replace Greece and Rome as the source for Ireland's mythic past with a history and tradition rooted in the Irish people. Often focusing on Ireland's historic defeats, scholars have credited Moore with spreading a romantic fatalism. His songs helped transform the harp,

shamrock, and color green, which all played a large role in hibernicon imagery, into well-known symbols of Irishness. Moore's songs also championed the ideal of liberty, nostalgia, a sense of victimhood, and a connection between the people and the land.¹⁷ As scholar William H.A. Williams has observed, "The immigrant, then, could not leave Ireland behind, nor cease to be Irish. Ireland and Irish identity became internalized. As Moore himself wrote, Ireland was 'the country of all others, which an exile from it must remember.'"¹⁸ By tying Moore to their panorama, the MacEvoys framed their performance in part as a vehicle of remembrance. With images of the Irish landscape playing a central role and the desire to return home the main narrative thrust, the visual experience of the panorama reinforced Moore's ideas of Irish nation.

By the 1850s, the panorama of Ireland performances suggest that the MacEvoys were not the only ones to view Moore's work as an obvious compliment. During a performance of Nagle's Panorama of Ireland, which did not include vocal music, two audience members "delighted the audience by singing some of Moore's most exquisite melodies" while "Meeting of the Waters and other scenes of loveliness were in view."¹⁹ The song "Meeting of the Waters," which the audience members potentially sung during this performance, demonstrates how Moore's songs neatly tied together the land, the Irish people, and a non-confrontational dream of freedom that served the production's visual imagery. In the final verse of "The Meeting of the Waters," Moore writes, "Sweet vale of Avoca! How calm could I rest/In thy bosom of shade, with the friends I love best, / Where the storms that we feel in this cold world should cease, /And our hearts, like thy waters, be mingled in peace."²⁰ By performing this verse and viewing the supposedly realistic paintings of the Meeting of the Waters, audience members had the opportunity to imagine themselves sitting in the shade with friends and envisioning a free future for Ireland. Although Irish-American nationalists often drew on romantic visions of Ireland, the

panorama of Ireland's use of landscape imagery and Moore were not necessarily calls to action for Irish freedom, but a way to evoke comforting memories of home. The connection established between Moore and the panoramas of Ireland by MacEvoy and these amateur singers continued to be strong throughout the hibernicon's existence.

Two incidents in 1851 and 1852 suggest that the panoramas of Ireland were not solely symbolic and nostalgic. Some companies engaged with contemporary political events in Ireland. In an 1852 Brooklyn performance of a Panorama of Ireland, the travelers stopped in Waterford, Ireland. During his description of the city, the lecturer mentioned Waterford native and Irish nationalist Thomas Francis Meagher. The lecturer then "recited [Meagher's] celebrated apostrophe to the sword."²¹ Meagher gave his "celebrated apostrophe" during a speech in front of the Repeal Association on July 16, 1846. In a performance that earned him the nickname "Meagher of the Sword," he declared, "Be it for the defence [*sic*], or be it for the assertion of a nation's liberty, I look upon the sword as a sacred weapon...Abhor the sword? Stigmatise the sword? No, my lord."²² The speech represented a historical break within the Irish nationalist movement and the championing of Meagher reflected the political leanings of the panorama.

In 1800, the Irish Parliament passed the Acts of Union, which abolished the Irish Parliament and gave control over Ireland to the British Parliament. As a result, the British Parliament became the focus of Irish nationalists' reform movements. A member of the Catholic gentry, Daniel O'Connor emerged as a pivotal leader who became known as the "Great Emancipator." He helped push the Catholic Relief Act of 1829 through Parliament, which allowed Catholics to serve in political office. Unhappy with the lack of legislation to help Ireland, in 1840, he founded the Repeal Association, which campaigned for the repeal of the Act of Union. In support of the movement, a group of young men, mainly Protestant and middle

class, formed the Dublin *Nation*, “the most brilliant and influential paper in nationalist history.”²³ The paper and its supporters, later known as Young Ireland, viewed Irish nationalism, its tactics, and goals differently from O’Connell and these differences led to conflicts within the Repeal Association.

Unlike O’Connell, who believed in moral and legal approaches to political and social change, Young Ireland advocated a romantic view of Irish nationalism that “was concerned with the claims of a proud nation to its own identity.”²⁴ Their romantic vision influenced the rhetoric of Irish nationalism for the rest of the century and helped make nationalism a fitting compliment to the panoramas of Ireland and the hibernicon. The Young Irelanders believed that O’Connell’s modern reforms would simply “make our people politically free but bond slaves to some debasing social system like that which crowds mines and factories of England.”²⁵ Young Ireland wanted to create a nation that accepted all religions, economic classes, and ethnicities. By the mid-1840s, they committed to using any means to reach their goals. Meagher’s speech was a turning point in the relationship between Young Ireland, O’Connell, and the Repeal Association. His support for using violence to attain freedom went directly against O’Connell. O’Connell’s son interrupted Meagher and prevented him from finishing after he began repeating, “Abhor the sword? Stimatize the sword? No, my lord” as a rhetorical flourish in between his examples of successful violent revolutions. After a brief conversation about how to deal with Meagher’s treatment, Meagher and the other Young Irelanders walked out of the hall. The action was their final break with O’Connell and the Repealers.²⁶

By championing Meagher and his sword speech, the Panorama of Ireland seemingly supported violent revolution as one means of achieving Irish independence. The subsequent actions by Young Ireland further reinforced this connotation. Advocating for violent revolution

cost Young Ireland the support of the gentry and Protestants and they continually failed to connect with the peasant class, who were mainly concerned with land reform. An increase in British troops in Ireland and the threat of a bill eliminating habeas corpus convinced Young Ireland that they were quickly losing their opportunity to act. At the end of July 1848, William Smith O'Brien, the group's leader, led an uprising against local police in Ballinacorney. Lacking arms and manpower and facing Catholic priests who convinced many peasants to abandon Young Ireland, the uprising quickly fell apart and Young Ireland leaders went on the run. The British arrested Smith O'Brien and Meagher among others and after their trial, exiled them to Van Diemen's Land in Australia.²⁷

The Panorama also depicted the seeming end of Young Ireland's story. After the excerpt from Meagher's speech, the Panorama "pictured his sufferings in the penal colony of Van Diemen's Land."²⁸ It is not surprising that the Panorama chose to represent Meagher because "The iconic 'Meagher of the Sword' was the most celebrated of all the Young Ireland rebels in America."²⁹ The arrangement of the performance components seemed to celebrate Meagher and hold him up as a martyr for the Irish cause. However, on this evening, the Panorama of Ireland became not only an event for remembering and celebrating, but also for keeping abreast of contemporary developments in the movement. After presenting the painting, "W.E. Robinson, of this City happening to be present, rose and stated that he had just come from New York, and that Mr. Meagher was safe in that City."³⁰ Along with other Young Irelanders over the past year, Meagher had managed to escape to America. The arrival of Meagher and his colleagues would invigorate the Irish-American nationalist cause. According to the *New York Irish-American*, "The scene that followed showed in what estimation Mr. Meagher is held by the people in this country."³¹

This moment was not unprecedented. Nagle's Panorama of Ireland made its first public gesture of support for Young Ireland the year before. As discussed in Chapter 1, not long after the *New York Irish-American* scolded Nagle's for not acting patriotically and supporting Irish-American institutions, including their paper, the Panorama held a benefit night for John O'Donnell in 1851. An Irish solicitor and member of Young Ireland, O'Donnell refused to testify against Smith O'Brien. As a result, he was imprisoned and stripped of his livelihood. In the advertisement for the benefit performance, the *New York Irish-American* stated that O'Donnell's "character and sacrifices are well known. His heroism under circumstances the most trying was noble...A long imprisonment and the loss of his means were his reward."³² Nagle's donation to a Young Irelander not only appeared to be a conciliatory gesture towards the local Irish-American community, but also indicated the Panorama's support of the revolutionary nationalists. Although the narrative of nationalism and Nagle's donation may have reflected the company's personal politics, the relationship of the Irish-American community, especially the working class, to the nationalist movement also made these choices smart in terms of marketing.

Irish-American Nationalism and the Irish-American Working Class, 1860s-1880s

Based in Chicago before the launch of the hibernicon in 1860, the MacEvoy's lived in one of the largest Irish communities outside of the northeast. Although not as organized as New York, Boston, or Philadelphia, the city's Irish still found ways to participate in the Irish-American nationalist movement. In the early 1840s, Chicago established its own branch of the Repeal Association and in 1863, it hosted the Fenians' first national convention.³³ Working in

an environment that tolerated and even celebrated Irish-American nationalism, the MacEvoy's had to decide if and how to include Irish-American nationalism when creating their hibernicon. Regardless of its appeal for many Irish-Americans, the ability for Irish-American nationalism to alienate native Americans, aspiring middle-class Irish Americans, and the Irish who were indifferent to Ireland's plight complicated any inclusion of nationalism. The continuing tension between the Catholic Church and the nationalist movement also created a potential problem for hibernicon companies who courted Catholic support. Yet, the enthusiasm of the Irish and Irish-American working class for the nationalist movement provided hibernicon companies with a strong financial incentive to include nationalist symbolism and ideology into their performances, if only superficially. Before discussing how the hibernicon incorporated (or did not incorporate) Irish-American nationalism into its performances, it is necessary to talk about late nineteenth century Irish-American nationalism's development and how it related to Irish and Irish-American working class audiences. This relationship helped define how the hibernicon dealt with Irish-American nationalism as well as how it negotiated its connections to the Irish-American community.

In the late 1840s, Irish-American nationalists tended to support Young Ireland. After the Young Irelanders' failed uprising, many Irish-Americans continued to back the revolutionary arm of the movement, which led to the 1858 establishment of the Fenians in New York. Intended as the American wing of the new Irish Republican Brotherhood, the organization quickly became popular in Irish-American communities and among Irish soldiers during the American Civil War. It also organized groups in Ireland. The Catholic Church opposed the Fenians for most of their existence, which placed many religious Irish-American nationalists, such as Father Richard L. Burtzell, in a difficult position. Burtzell supported the movement and

attempted to convince his superiors to not publically condemn it. In the autumn of 1865, Burtzell wrote that “Fr. Nilan and I undertook the defence of the Fenians very strongly against the Bishop, who expressed great surprise at sympathising with their cause.”³⁴ Burtzell also tried to convince the Fenians that the Catholic Church did not oppose them. After a friend scolded him for attending the Fenian fair, “I replied I simply did it to do away with the idea, which the Fenians have, that they are under the ban of the church.”³⁵ At a church fair, Burtzell even put up a Fenian bond for auction.³⁶

Yet, the church’s position against the Fenians hardened after the events of the late 1860s. Frustrated by the Fenian leaders’ lack of action, one Fenian faction attempted to spark “an uprising in Ireland with an invasion launched from the United States.”³⁷ The faction attempted to invade Canada from Buffalo, New York and St. Albans, Vermont in 1866 and again from St. Albans in 1870 in hopes of provoking a war between the United States and Britain. They believed that the war could end in Irish independence. After the miserable, public failure of these attacks, the Fenians lost their popularity and effectiveness as an arm of the Irish-American nationalist movement.³⁸ A Fenian bombing of a British prison in 1867 also damaged the group’s international reputation. These events led the Pope to denounce the Fenians in 1870, but the conflicting loyalties of god and country continued for many priests and bishops through the 1910s.³⁹

In spite of this setback, the revolutionary factions of the Irish-American nationalist movement re-formed into the Clan na Gael. Founded as a secret society by disenchanted New York Fenians in 1867, the Clan na Gael also pledged to fight for “the complete and absolute independence of Ireland by the overthrow of English domination by means of physical force.”⁴⁰ Yet, overall, the 1870s remained a relatively inactive decade for Irish-American nationalists.

They dealt with the ramifications of the Fenian embarrassment and attempted to regain public face while dealing with internal ideological divisions. Yet, for the Irish-American community, nationalism remained a lingering concern, especially for the working class. The working class comprised the membership of the Clan na Gael, which saw its numbers grow throughout the 1870s. The Clan na Gael continued to prepare for revolution in Ireland by collecting funds for Irish revolutionaries and waiting for an opportune time to strike.⁴¹

The organizational shift did not alter the position of the Catholic Church. A *New York Times* investigation into a local Clan na Gael branch called the Emerald Club reveals how strong Catholic beliefs limited the actions of some Irish-American nationalists. The *Times* reporter asked John Breslin, who worked for the *Irish Nation*, about an Emerald Club member. Breslin responded that the man in question “was too devout a Catholic to join any secret-bound organization. There are a great many nominal Catholics among the Nationalists, but none who goes to confessional and mass can belong to the order [of the Clan na Gael].”⁴² As a result of this conflict between Catholicism and the Clan na Gael, several New York State Archbishops, including New York Archbishop Michael Corrigan, attempted to have the Committee of Archbishops condemn the group.⁴³ Yet, there remained exceptions to the hostility between the Catholic Church and revolutionary nationalists. Regardless of the eastern churches’ rejection of revolutionary nationalism, the Chicago’s archbishop Patrick Feehan remained on good terms with Chicago’s Clan na Gael chief. His church paper became a mouthpiece for anti-British views and at one point, even “called for the burning of London.”⁴⁴

At the end of the 1870s, however, the Catholic Church found a segment of the Irish-American nationalist movement that did not conflict with its morals. In 1879, a series of crop harvests failed and Western Irish tenants organized to protest landlords’ rents. Nationalist

Michael Davitt organized this protest into the Land League, led by Irishman Charles Stewart Parnell, which raised money for Irish relief, demanded an end to evictions, and called for widespread land reform that would redistribute land from landowners to tenants. The American affiliate, the Irish National Land League of America, became the first mass Irish-American nationalist movement with over fifteen hundred local branches and 200,000 members. During the Land War (1879-1882), the Irish tried to convince the British government to end the landlord system through primarily non-violent forms of resistance. With the passage of the Land Act (1882), the British addressed the major grievances of the Irish peasantry and the concerns of many Irish-American nationalists shifted towards Home Rule, which helped revive the parliamentary nationalist tradition. The Catholic Church supported its Irish worshippers by backing this non-violent movement that attempted to work with the British. Led by Parnell, the Home Rule movement focused on establishing an independent government for Ireland within the British Empire instead of an independent Irish republic.

Yet, this focus on Home Rule exacerbated divisions within the Irish-American nationalist movement. Some Irish-American nationalists wanted to continue to prioritize further land and social reforms. Whether through politics or violence, other nationalists wanted the establishment of an Irish republic. Although Home Rule failed to unite all Irish-American nationalists, it gave middle and upper class Irish-Americans a more respectable nationalist organization to support.⁴⁵

The hibernicon's peak of popularity coincided with these decades of fervent Irish-American nationalism. The class politics surrounding Irish-American nationalism potentially influenced the early hibernicon companies marketing and performance decisions. Many Irish-Americans did not support the nationalist movement because of indifference, fears of the ramifications of independence, more pressing problems in America, and disenchantment with the

frequent calls for money. In 1880, one Irish-American commented that “[I]f the [Irish] People are getting all the money that is sent to them from this Country they Ought to be rich.”⁴⁶ In spite of the involvement of some middle and upper class Irish-Americans in nationalist leadership, prominent nationalist like Thomas McCarthy Fennell and Jeremiah O’Donovan Rossa believed that respectable Irish-Americans saw nationalism as “vulgar” and “cared ‘very little for the cause of the green sod...[once] their shamrocks have blossomed into diamonds’.”⁴⁷ Although “at least rhetorical obeisance to Irish freedom” was often necessary to advance within Irish-American communities, invoking nationalism also could lead to “nativist backlash and charges of disloyalty from increasingly Anglophile American Protestants.”⁴⁸

Yet, support for Irish-American nationalism remained strong throughout the century among the Irish-born working class, who became the main financial contributors to Irish-American nationalist causes. A nationalist leader once remarked that “the dollars of those who though they can least afford it are ever the readiest to give support and sustenance to the Irish Cause.”⁴⁹ Reflecting back on the Fenians fundraising activities, one newspaper commented that the Fenian Sisterhood brought “\$4,000 into the treasury,” which caused “lamentations over the robbery of the poor Irish servant girls.”⁵⁰ In an anti-Irish 1881 article, the *New York Times* commented that “We know that [the Irishman] is not without love for his adopted country, but it is a passion which moves him little. He cares no more for the American eagle than of an owl, but a sprig of shamrock stirs his warm heart to ecstasy.”⁵¹ Unhappy that the Irish ask Americans to support their causes, the writer explained that “The money that has kept the Land League together has come mostly from the day laborers and servant maids of America.”⁵² This trend highlighted that if any Irish-American population would be willing to give up their hard-earned wages for an Irish cause, it was the working class. As previously discussed in Chapter Four,

working class Irish and Irish-Americans comprised a large number of Catholic Church supporters as well, but some seemingly did not perceive the same conflict of interest as Church leaders. The hibernicon exploited this connection both in its targeting of Irish working class audiences and in the construction of its performances.

Early 1860s advertisements for MacEvoy's Hibernicon show the company marketing their performances based on national sentiment. Unsurprisingly, these advertisements coincide with their most targeted attempts to market to the Irish. The MacEvoy's appealed to their audience's fond ideas of home when they explained that "All who admire and appreciate genuine talent ought to be present at the hall, particularly every Irish citizen, who must feel proud of their country."⁵³ Cries of "Erin Go Bragh," the Anglicized Irish for "Ireland forever," headed their ads and puffs, especially when playing at mostly working class New York venues in 1863.⁵⁴ MacEvoy's Hibernicon also promised to help stir up love for the Irish nation. The panorama scenes, one ad claimed, "cannot fail to excite the enthusiastic love of our people for the spot which they hail as that of their birth."⁵⁵ According to one observer, whose letter the MacEvoy's published in the *New York Irish-American*, the expertise of the Irish performers highlighted how "no nation except Ireland could present so many talented persons in one family to the public."⁵⁶ Importantly, the MacEvoy's also promised to instill nationalist feeling in Irish-American children, who "will feel a renewed pride in being descended from the people of fair Ireland."⁵⁷ The MacEvoy's use of nationalist sentiment to market their productions declined in the 1870s and 1880s, which coincided with their attempts to expand their audience. Yet, the incorporation of nationalist symbolism and politics remained a persistent issue throughout the hibernicon's existence.

The importance of Irish-American nationalism in the Irish and Irish-American working class imagination helps explain the continued popularity of the hibernicon and the national resonance of its imagery for decades. Feelings of exile and nationalist memories remained present within the Irish-American community, even as emigrants aged and had American children. New immigrants continually brought reminders of the wrongs still committed at home, but the experiences of life in America and Irish-American culture also help perpetuate these feelings for years. According to historian Kerby Miller in his seminal study of Irish emigration, “many of the letters written in the 1870s and 1880s expressed burning hatreds of landlordism and English rule directly traceable” the Great Famine.⁵⁸ British Consul Frederick Leahy complained that “Irish-Americans’ ‘minds hark back to the past, and their mental picture is based upon an Ireland of seventy-five to one hundred years ago’.”⁵⁹ Yet, Irish-Americans’ mental picture also relied on the turbulent decades of the late nineteenth century. As Miller discusses, Post-Famine Irish Americans “were the most effectively politicized, Catholicized, and nationalized in history: heirs not only transmitted Famine memories but also of Fenianism, of the Land War, of the mass mobilizations of the Irish National and United Irish leagues, and of the pervasive, multifaceted Irish-Ireland movement.”⁶⁰ Miller quotes one emigrant who observed that “those enthusiastic Irish youths...seem to live, move, and have their being in the memories of Sarsfield, Emmet, Fitzgerald, [and] Tone’.”⁶¹ Events in Ireland and memories of home inevitably contributed greatly to the sustaining of this nationalist consciousness, but I suggest that hibernicon also played a role in keeping nationalism and its symbols present and relevant in the lives of Irish-Americans.

Virtual Witnessing, Nationalism, and the Hibernicon

As the company to imitate, MacEvoy's Hibernicon set the standard for how hibernicon companies incorporated Irish-American nationalism. A combination of symbolic and political expressions of nationalist sentiment appears relatively consistent in the MacEvoy productions from the 1860s and 1870s. In 1863, one review described:

MacEvoy *pere* explains those paintings in an intensely Hibernian lecture... [He] is so thoroughly permeated with the wrongs of his country, that his patriotism is constantly exuding, as it were, from him, and finding expression in belligerent phrases or in disquisitions on Ireland's past and future glory. [His] reminiscences of 'me resident in Dublin' add a unique charm to the professor's extremely national remarks.⁶²

Five years later, another audience member observed how the audience became involved. The writer explained that "MacEvoy was an Irishman, and he was talking about Ireland. He spoke with lively disrespect of her oppressors; said that justice had not been done to her; and intimated a hope for better days; whereupon a loud-voiced Irishman in the pit vociferated 'Amen.'"⁶³

Reports of the family's performances as late as 1879 suggest that other members of the family often expressed patriotic sentiments on stage as well. During one Long Island performance, "The exercises opened with an article upon the warm affection and true patriotism of the Irish race read by Miss MacEvoy in a clear voice and an expressive style."⁶⁴ Summing up his experience at the MacEvoy's Hibernicon, another reviewer commented that the performance "is calculated to arouse the admiration and secure the attendance of every wearer of the green and hater of the red in New-York. N.B. --- No English need apply."⁶⁵ Although nationalist sentiments infiltrated the visuals and musical portions of the MacEvoys' production as well, not all hibernicon companies felt comfortable following their lead. Yet, for those who did, the hibernicon's emphasis on the moving panorama allowed its nationalist themes to serve a broader

purpose. With the audience viewing the panorama paintings as literal representations of real life, the experience of the hibernicon transformed the audience into virtual witnesses of the Irish-American nationalist cause.

When the MacEvoy's launched their hibernicon in 1860, including nationalist themes was not revolutionary. Nationalist themes and representations appeared on popular and legitimate stages for much of the late nineteenth century. In the 1860s, comedic and melodramatic afterpieces focusing on Ireland and nationalist themes were common. Scholar Susan Kattwinkel examines post-Civil War afterpieces in Tony Pastor's Opera House and pays special attention to how these pieces may have played to Pastor's working class dominated audience. Particularly popular between 1865 and 1870, Irish-centered afterpieces, such as *The Fenian's Dream; or Ireland Free at Last* and *The Idiot of Killarney; or the Fenian's Oath*, were "little more than Fenian battle cries" for Irish freedom.⁶⁶ Variety performances through the end of the century also represented nationalist ideas. In Stephen Crane's *Maggie: Girl of the Streets*, Crane imagines the continuing resonance and enjoyment of Irish nationalist symbols in a 1890s variety performance:

As a final effort, the singer rendered some verses which described a vision of Britain annihilated by America, and Ireland bursting her bonds. A carefully prepared climax was reached in the last line of the last verse, when the singer threw out her arms and cried, 'The star-spangled banner.' Instantly a great cheer swelled from the throats of this assemblage of the masses, most of them of foreign birth. There was a heavy rumble of booted feet thumping the floor. Eyes gleamed with sudden fire, and calloused hands waved frantically in the air.⁶⁷

The popularity of legitimate productions preoccupied with these themes indicates their currency outside of the Irish working class. Productions celebrating Irish martyr Robert Emmet appeared on American stages as early as the 1850s and remained popular through the turn of the century. Dion Boucicault's melodramas often incorporated important nationalist events, like the 1798 and

Fenian risings, into their plots. After Irish themed plays and performances lost popularity with general audiences, they remained in the repertoire of amateur and Catholic performers well into the twentieth century.⁶⁸

Even though other contemporary entertainment focused on Ireland and themes of nationalism, the hibernicon was distinct for the supposed realness of its paintings and production. When the audience saw the defeat of the Danes or witnessed Emmet's love and death, the companies wanted it to truly believe it was there seeing the events. As discussed in Chapter Three, companies marketed their productions' realness as one of its main draws. In spite of the fictional aspects of the Irish guide plot, companies used the character as a device to highlight the realness of the panorama paintings and the content provided by the lecturer. The Irish guide explained the sites and provided "inside" information about their true stories. The audience reinforced the realness of the paintings through their reactions. One reviewer commented on the key role of the visual in the hibernicon performances and the joy of "seeing" Ireland again for Irish audience members. He wrote, "All that skillful painting and fair singing can do toward bring the Green Isle home to its children in this country, is done...But the paints, we fancy, are more enjoyable than the vocalism; at least, the greatest bursts of applause seem to follow the recognition of familiar views in the panorama."⁶⁹ Another remarked that the hibernicon's success relied on how quickly Irish emigrants recognized the scenes. The reviewer explained that "Those to whom the scenes are familiar easily recognize them, and to those who have not been fortunate enough to enjoy the enchanting beauties of Irish landscape the pictures will give a fair idea of its peculiar loveliness."⁷⁰

I argue that the hibernicon paintings helped encourage nationalist sentiment among the Irish through their "virtual witnessing." In *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition*, scholar Kelly

Oliver describes how “The process of witnessing is both necessary to subjectivity and part of the process of working through the trauma of oppression necessary to personal and political transformation...subjectivity is not formed through subordination, but, rather, that extreme forms of subordination destroy the witness necessary for subjectivity.”⁷¹ By viewing scenes of their past in the hibernicon, Irish emigrants and Irish-Americans reclaimed their subjectivity and ability to witness events of oppression from their past. In their discussion of scientific experimentation, scholars Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer explain how scientists developed alternate methods for readers to witness experiments’ validity, including changes to how scientists wrote their descriptions and what types of visuals journals published. They refer to this technique as “virtual witnessing.” Shapin and Schaffer write that “[t]he technology of virtual witnessing involves the production in a reader’s mind of such an image of an experimental scene as obviates the necessity for either direct witness or replication.”⁷² “Virtual witnessing,” Shapin and Schaffer argue, “acted to ensure that witnesses to matters of fact could effectively be mobilized in abstract space.”⁷³ In their scenario, witnessing Irish oppression through the viewing of the paintings allowed audience members to see and confirm the injustices committed in Ireland as fact. As discussed in previous chapters, “visiting” Ireland through the hibernicon may have replaced the need to visit in reality. They saw the “real” events, even if they never lived in Ireland themselves.

Irish-American nationalism benefited from the images’ potential because “[t]hrough virtual witnessing the multiplication of witnesses could be in principle, unlimited. It was therefore the most powerful technology for constituting matters of fact.”⁷⁴ If the hibernicon’s “outcome” was that Ireland needed to be free, then the companies’ bragging about the accuracy of their drawings related to not only the quality of the spectacle, but also the validity of their

productions' argument. As Shapin and Schaffer conclude, "The validation of experiments, and the crediting of their outcomes as matters of fact, necessarily entailed their realization in the laboratory of the mind and the mind's eye. What was required was a technology of trust and assurance that the things had been done and done in a way claimed."⁷⁵ Through the moving panorama, the hibernicon found the technology that allowed them to gain the trust of audience and argue the truthfulness of its claims. The Irish-American community occasionally validated the ability of this technology to function in this manner. The St. John's Sick and Burial Society of Hartford thanked McGill and Strong's *Mirror of Ireland* "for their correct and splendid paintings of the principal cities and historical places in Ireland, together with the graphic reminiscences of the leading events of Irish history, which transport us for the moment on the soil of old Ireland again."⁷⁶ If the premise of the hibernicon allowed the Irish to become virtual witnesses, what arguments did their acts of witnessing validate? Although the extent of the companies' performance of Irish-American nationalism varied, the hibernicon engaged with ideas of Irish-American nationalism through its depiction of landscape, race, and political events. The musical accompaniment often developed and reinforced the ideas conveyed visually.

By their definition, all hibernicon companies created an idea of the Irish nation through its landscape. Similar to Moore's songs, which remained popular in hibernicon productions, romanticizing the Irish landscape became a safe way to show appreciation of Ireland without becoming directly involved in heated contemporary politics. At the same time, the hibernicon's focus on Western landscapes reflected one strain of Irish nationalist rhetoric that focused on exclusion. Depictions of the idyllic and lush Irish landscape allowed for a construction of "Irishness" that differed from England. Repeatedly invoke by many nationalist leaders, "[t]he invented, manipulated geography of the West portrayed the unspoilt beauty of landscapes, where

the influences of modernity were at their weakest and which evoked the mystic unity of Ireland prior to the chaos of conquest.”⁷⁷ The travelers in Ireland also visited cities and towns, but advertisements, broadsides, and programs heralded the beautiful Western landscapes as the highlights of the show. Broadsides and songsters list the Lakes of Killarney, Giant’s Causeway, River Lee, the Meeting of the Waters, Loch Foyle, Davenish Island, Cahirna Mountains, Glenna Bay, Killiny Hill and Bay, Glen of the Downs, and Rock of Cashel among the local sites displayed. Companies bragged about the exquisite beauty that audience members experienced. The program for McGill and Strong’s *Mirror of Ireland* promised spectators that they would see “a perfect realization of these beautiful and picturesque Lakes [of Killarney], with their sheets of transparent water, glassing the sunniest skies, dotted with innumerable islands while around stand the grim masses of the McGillicuddy Reeks, frowning, like stern sentinels, over so much beauty.”⁷⁸

Hibernicon songs reinforced the romantic ideas of Irish landscape and helped frame the scenes witnessed by the audience. Even companies that shied away from other expressions of nationalism participated in the celebration of Irish landscape through music. Frank MacEvoy’s *New Hibernicon* songster contains a song, “Dear Land,” which exemplifies this type of romantic nationalism. For the song’s narrator, gazing on the Irish landscape automatically reminds him of Ireland’s political struggles. He recounts how “When I behold your mountains bold, /Your noble lakes and streams, / A mingled tide of grief and pride/Within my bosom teems. /I think of all, your long dark thrall/Your martyrs brave and true.”⁷⁹ Later in the song, the strongest evocation of hatred for Britain still is minor and cloaked in romantic and vague language. The narrator remembers, “Ere Norman foot had dare pollute/Her independent shore. /Of chief’s [sic], long dead, who rose to head/Some gallant patriots few, /Till my aim on earth became/To strike one

blow for you.”⁸⁰ The effectiveness of this imagery as a marketing technique also is apparent in how John MacEvoy advertised his New Hibernicon in the early 1870s. Written by John MacEvoy and published on a MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon broadside, the song attempts to lure audience members into the theatre with the promise of natural beauty authentically realized: “The river, the mountain, the lake and its shores, The fields in their verdure, the trees in their bloom, The sweet briar breathing its richest perfume, You’ll own that our art is not proffered in vain, To recall the loved scenes of your childhood again.”⁸¹

The ability to recognize the scenes for their “realness” supposedly belonged to the Irish emigrants in the audience. However, even they might not have recognized everything they saw from first hand experience. Before emigrating, many Irish from the West rarely traveled outside of a twelve to fifteen mile marriage circle.⁸² The emigration journey mainly involved walking or, if they had money, riding in a cart to a port like Dublin or Cork. This route would not necessarily allow them to see the sites in their country. As a result, when the audience members recognized the sites as “real” and performed that recognition at hibernicon performances, they validated the truthfulness of the romanticized pictures for themselves as well as the non-Irish audience members.

The images of the lakes, green hills, and majestic castles do not betray the famines that continued to plague the country or the English military and government presence in Dublin, where the tour begins. A thriving, lush countryside that seems to promise health and bountifulness appears instead. These images coincided with the image of a noble Ireland, which served the nationalist cause of creating an oppositional Other to the British colonizer. Instead of desensitizing Irish-Americans to the struggle in Ireland, I suggest that they may have functioned in a way that helped reinforce the idea of Ireland’s oppression and need for help from Irish

emigrants and Irish-Americans. Aside from replacing Irish emigrants and Irish-Americans' images of home that were rooted in personal experience or the experience of family and friends, it is possible that the visual presentation of the idealized landscape caused an experience that resembles scholar Harry Elam Jr.'s notion of a "reality check":

[A reality check] is a moment that traumatically ruptures the balance between the real and representational...Reality checks brusquely rub the real up against the representational in ways that disrupt the spectators and produce new meanings. Most significantly, reality checks, in the unease that they cause audiences, can excite social action...Context is critical for such reality checks, as the spectators' unease comes from experiencing the grotesque, the unfamiliar in familiar circumstances.⁸³

Unlike Elam's reality check, which results from a grotesque image contrasted with the image held by the viewer, such as the contrast between a photograph of a smiling Emmet Till and his brutally disfigured body in his casket, I suggest that it is possible a version of a "reality check" happened in reverse for Irish audience members. Irish audience members who witnessed and experienced Ireland's struggles may have experienced unease through the juxtaposition between the romanticized images and their memories. Seeing what Ireland could be, but clearly was not, instead of subverting and replacing memories from home, may have spurred some audiences members to renew their commitment to help Ireland move closer to freedom and the ideal depicted on stage.

Part of creating an oppositional Otherness to the British colonizer also relied on the construction of an Irish race on the idealized Irish landscape. Using a racial argument to motivate rebellion was not a new tactic, but simply "an Irish expression of the 'racial' aspect present in European nationalism since the early nineteenth-century when Prussian nationalists used folk, race, and blood arguments to energize their people against the imperialism of the French Revolution."⁸⁴ Both the British and Americans used racism as a justification for their

poor treatment of the Irish and the nationalists' argument for a noble Irish race worked against this reasoning.⁸⁵ In the 1870s, this tactic became a large piece of Irish-American cultural nationalism and the Irish language movement. Instead of arguing for a distinct Irish race through language, the hibernicon created Irish race through its emphasis on historical Irish Celtic victories. This approach also put the hibernicon's romanticism in opposition to the romantic fatalism of Moore's *Melodies*. The MacEvoys portrayed the battle between the Irish and the Danes and "the Danes get the worst of it."⁸⁶ The MacEvoys' broadside describes how the audience views the "Village of Clontarf, scene of the last Great Battle between the Danes and the Irish under King Brian Borohme. Grand Picture of the Battle."⁸⁷ Borohme, also known as Boru, became popularly known as the High King of Ireland who supposedly brought temporary unity to a country divided into various tribes and occupied by the Danes. In the early eleventh century, he finally pushed the Danes out of Ireland, but he died in the battle.⁸⁸ Charles MacEvoy even celebrated this event in his version of "Invitation to the Hibernicon" as a moment of Irish freedom. He wrote, "From Clontarf, where the Danish trumpets clang, Resounded fiercely through the 'Marathon' of Erin, 'Till Brian's war-cry shrill around them rang, To burst our chains, and banish our despairing."⁸⁹ By highlighting Irish victories in the past, the company foreshadowed the hoped for victory of the Irish over the British in the future. The audience also viewed St. Patrick's "preaching before the Kings, Princes, and Chiefs, assembled at Tara," which contributed to the characterization of the Irish race as Catholic.⁹⁰

The paintings reinforce this connection through the depiction of important historical religious sites. Introducing the Seven Churches, the lecturer of Gavin and Ryan's Emerald Isle explained how "on a wild and dreary piece of grass land on the borders of the Shannon, which here is sluggish, and anything but noble or inviting stand the time worn relics of primitive

Christianity in Ireland.” He continued to detail how St. Kiernan founded them as a “seat of learning” in the medieval period and how “the place was in good condition up to the year 1201 when the work of dilapidation commenced by a sack of it under the English soldier named Fitz-Henry.”⁹¹ The more stringently Irish-American nationalist productions like the MacEvoys and Gavin and Ryan’s tended to emphasize the Irish’s Gaelic past through their panoramas, but the old religious sites appeared in many hibernicons and help contribute to the sense of an ancient Irish race. Whether they included commentary about how the English helped destroy their nation’s sacred sites like Gavin and Ryan’s is unclear.⁹²

Through the juxtaposition of these medieval images with depictions of rebellions in later decades, the hibernicon creates a genealogy of Irish fighters and nationalists. The strength of the genealogy depends on the company, but most companies ended their productions with an image of Ireland’s future. It is implied that this future has something to do with Irish freedom, but how remains unclear. The MacEvoys’ reference to the audience members as the “sons” of the nationalists completes the genealogy with Irishmen and women in the present.⁹³ One MacEvoy painting shows the “Splendid Painting of Lord Thos. Fitzgerald (Silken Thomas) renouncing his allegiance to Henry VIII” in England. This visual articulates Irish rebellion without placing the English on Irish soil.⁹⁴ Another commonly depicted image of victory was MacEvoy’s “Grand Painting of the Destruction of King William’s Siege Train by Sarsfield” referred to as the “The Siege of Limerick” in Gavin and Ryan’s *Emerald Isle*. In 1690, Catholic aristocrat Patrick Sarsfield led the Irish forces for King James II as he fought for the British crown in the seventeenth century. James abandoned his Irish forces for France and King William continued to storm Irish cities, including Limerick. After a four-hour battle in which the Irish were

outnumbered, the lecturer for Gavin and Ryan's Emerald Isle described how Sarsfield won the day for the Irish:

Suddenly a terrific explosion shook the city to its foundation. Sarsfield had sprung the mine which ran beneath the Black Battery, and the whole of the Bradenburghers were blown to pieces. For a moment the combatants on both sides seemed paralyzed. Then with a wild cheer the Irish rushed on the panic-stricken foe. The women, with disheveled hair streaming behind them flew to the front, calling on the men to follow them. One last desperate charge, and the enemy were hurled back through the breach in confusion and dismay, and chased into their camp by the victorious Irish.⁹⁵

Remembering this moment highlighted the Irish's ability to win, even when the odds were against them.

In the Dublin part of the MacEvoy tour, the lecturer tells anecdotes about nationalist leaders O'Connell, Grattan, another Parliamentary opposition leader Henry Flood, and Saint Oliver Plunkett, who was tried for treason and executed by the English. The production paid special attention to Robert Emmet and visualized "his Love and Death."⁹⁶ This choice is not surprising considering that according to scholar Charles Fanning, "No other Irish historical figure had so powerful and lasting an effect on the consciousness of Irish America in the nineteenth century as Robert Emmet."⁹⁷ Emmet's Speech from the Dock appeared in American performance only three years after his death. Along with figures like O'Connell, Grattan, and Flood, Emmet became one way to evoke "the importance of oratory in the struggle for Irish freedom," which "was a constant theme at nationalist gatherings in the United States."⁹⁸ The figures that they celebrated may have lived decades before, but the hibernicon's use of Emmet would recall the other Emmet songs and plays as well as Emmet's symbolic use in contemporary nationalist movements. Fenian bonds depicted Emmet and a plate with his image was sold to benefit Irish relief efforts. Even though these figures technically remained in the past, they also had a life of their own in the present, which made references potentially seem more

contemporary and personally relevant to audience members.⁹⁹ Gavin and Ryan's Emerald Isle and McGill and Strong's Mirror of Ireland celebrated Daniel O'Connell in their panoramas. Although a less radical image, O'Connell still represented Ireland's struggle for independence.¹⁰⁰ One of the most contemporary references to the fight for Irish independence occurred right after McGill's Mirror of Ireland combined with Howarth's Hibernica. Their production included a painting of "Parnell, making his famous speech in favor of the land league, and boycotting, etc."¹⁰¹ It is not surprising that for their contemporary depiction, the company chose to illustrate Parnell, who received widespread acceptance by Irish-Americans and native Americans.

Hibernicon Songsters and Irish-American Nationalism

In terms of Barney and Nora's story, the MacEvoy broadside only indicates one instance in which the conflict between the Irish and English directly affects the lives of Barney and Nora and therefore becomes involved in the plot of the sketches. Towards the end of Act II, the broadside records that the audience sees "Barney at the Races, [and he] meets a Recruiting Sergeant, who persuades him to enlist in the 88th or Connaught Rangers." In a following scene the audience sees Barney go to war for the British and his parting from Nora.¹⁰² Whether explicit or not, the scene conveys the personal heartbreak caused by Barney's recruitment. The song, "Barney I Hardly Knew Ye," which was published in a songster for Charles MacEvoy's company, suggests one way this plot point may have been performed. The song is a lament by Norah about how war has changed Barney. The consequences that she lists are devastating. Norah sings, "Where is your nose, ye pitiful crow, ahoo!/Ye had it when going to scatter the

foe;/The loss of it has disfigured ye so.” She then talks about how he lost his legs: “Where are the legs wid which ye run, ahoo! /When first ye went to shoulder a gun;/ I fear your dancing days are done.” She describes how Barney has lost the twinkle in his eye and how “Wid drums and guns, and guns and drums, The enemy fairly slew ye; My darling dear, ye look so queer- Och! Barney I hardly knew ye.” Even though she declares him an “object of woe,” Norah still pledges to stand by Barney’s side. Depending on the production, this moment in the story could have connected the wrongs caused by British colonization in Ireland’s past with Ireland’s present.¹⁰³

The songs included in hibernicon songsters frame and emphasize these nationalist images. For hibernicon companies which did not leave records of their moving panoramas behind, it is possible to speculate about their Irish-American nationalist sentiment or lack thereof from their songsters. As previously stated, the MacEvoy companies and Gavin and Ryan’s Emerald Isle most strongly conveyed nationalist sentiment and hope for Ireland’s freedom from British rule. In “Invitation to the Hibernicon,” John MacEvoy asks his Irish audience members to remember heroic Irishmen and reminds them of Ireland’s continued oppression:

Come, soldiers of Sarsfield, and see it portrayed –/No country for valor and beauty surpasses/The Garryowen boys and the Limerick lasses. /Men of Wexford, your sires won honor and glory;/Still stained with their blood are Bullring and Gorey;/Sons of Redmond, Walsh, Sinnot, Roche, Grogan and Power, / Your fathers fell fighting by Fitzstephen’s Tower, / That stands a proud records by Slaney’s soft waves, / To mark where they sleep in their patriot graves. /Come, look on these scenes, their sad history scan, / Scenes dear to the heart of the true Irishman...And though you may weep o’er our poor country’s wrongs, / Your hearts will feel joy from exquisite songs...There’s the house where the thunder of Grattan was heard, / That the heart of the nation triumphantly stirred...Your generous hearts will be moved when you see/The land of the brave, but, oh, not of the free.¹⁰⁴

The verse singles out several seminal moments in the fight for Irish freedom. The “Men of Wexford” seemingly referred to Battle of Vinegar Hill in Wexford, which was a turning point in

the United Irishmen's uprising of 1798. Fitzstephen's tower, or the White Tower at the tower of London, became "emblem of internal and external English conflict."¹⁰⁵ For the Irish, it also conjured up memories of the executed Irishmen, like the United Irish rebels. Mentioning Henry Grattan, who fought for Ireland's independence in Irish Parliament and opposed the Act of Union, illustrates the hibernicon's recognition of the parliamentary tradition of nationalism. By limiting their comments in this "Invitation" to past events and omitting mention of the Fenians or Clan na Gael, the MacEvoy's avoided potential controversy while still supporting Irish independence. John MacEvoy also links the causes of American and Irish independence when he riffs on the line "land of the free and home of the brave" from the "Star Spangled Banner" to comment on Ireland's continued problems.¹⁰⁶ Even though MacEvoy's hibernicons held a staunchly nationalist position, they did not call for direct violence or explicitly specific contemporary nationalist organizations that might alienate potential audiences. When inviting the MacEvoy's into their churches, the Catholic Irish could cheer nationalist sentiments without fear of violating the Catholic leadership's policy. Although the MacEvoy's hibernicons imply the potential need for violence, they do not directly call for it. The hibernicon may have been a way for placating nationalist sentiment among Catholic Irish audiences in a safe and contained way.

Companies like John Burke's *Tableaux of Erin* and *Erin and the Brennans*, starring Miles Morris, closely copy the approach of the MacEvoy's. Miles Morris performed songs like "The Roving Irish Boy," which was also popular with Tony Pastor. The song's chorus exclaims, "Except the cry will be – come Paddy, and go with me, And brave once more the Atlantic's war, and set old Ireland free."¹⁰⁷ This song did not differ much from the generalized Irish tunes performed by companies like Frank MacEvoy's. However, Morris also performed songs like

“Terrible Times,” which described the current events in Ireland. The song outlines how “Oh these are the Terrible Times, If one’s single why so you must tarry, For except a few fools that are mad, There’s no one would venture to marry, For bacon is nine pence a pound, And sorrow much cheaper the meat is.”¹⁰⁸ Later verses reference the unrest and fighting in Ireland, which the song ties to the failed potato crops and the conflicts between landlords and tenants over “Tenant Right.”¹⁰⁹ Burke even recited part of a speech by an Irish exile during his performance. Burke declared, ““I long to bow o’er the sacred steel, And I long to bow o’er the sacred sod, Above Erin’s martyred pride, To bless the heroes sleeping there, And the cause for which they died...But better than all, I long to see Ten thousand heroes rise, And ‘neath that fading Flag of Green, To which we proudly bend the knee, To Strike one blow at the Saxon foe, Which would make poor Erin free.”¹¹⁰ Burke also includes a song about Emmet, “My Emmet’s No More,” which focuses more on Emmet’s lost love than his political beliefs.¹¹¹ “Paddy Burke” evokes the Fenians and characterizes America as “the land where Erin’s Harp is free from British tread, Where every noble Fenian can go forth with warlike tread, And raise the noble banner, the Green above the Red, And freedom on Old Ireland will be dawning.”¹¹² Although their general references to Irish nationalists and contemporary events do not take a staunch political position, they do place Irish nationalists within the important historical events of Ireland and use them to evoke nationalist sentiment among audience members. Through the inclusion of an additional panorama that portrays the struggle for American independence, Burke’s *Tableaux of Erin* even tries to argue for Irish independence by drawing a parallel with the American Revolution.¹¹³

James A. Gavin and J.H. Ryan, an Irish emigrant from Dublin, made the most explicit personal statement of support for Irish freedom in their songster (Fig. 8). Unlike the prefaces to



Fig. 8 J.H. Ryan's Dublin Bard Songster

other hibernicon songsters, the preface to the company songster reads like a political manifesto.

Gavin and Ryan claim that they run their hibernicon to help stir up support for Irish rebellion:

We place Ireland on the stage in its true colors and really characteristically, viz: - pure, simple, moral, social, combined with sorrow, misfortune, trouble, and down-trodden, as she is by an alien government. We exhibit her as though the last chord of her harp had been torn from its place; and again we place her, if so, before the world as a nation though down-trodden, glorious; though in sorrow, proud, as it were, looking towards the utmost ends of the earth to see her bereaved children in exile to her aid. And lo! They hear her wailings and feel the pangs of her heart-stricken grief. They hear and rise! And to promote their rising in her holy cause, we have, though in a very limited manner, sought to put her present blighted condition, condensed within the space of a few yards of canvass, and only indeed pictured before the public.¹¹⁴

In support of this goal, the nationalist songs fall into several categories. Several romantically invoke the Irish landscape and historical events in the Irish's fight against Britain, such as "The Wexford Massacre." Multiple songs discuss and champion nationalist leaders, including "A Toast to the Sons of Ireland." "A Toast" not only recalls the expected figures of Emmet and O'Connell, but it also celebrates the more recent nationalist heroes of Young Ireland and the Fenians. Discussing "our own day," the song praise "Jim Stephens, our patriot so great, /Who baffled England's devils, boys, in dreary Forty Eight...Hurrah for gallant Stephens, and the Fenians of the day."¹¹⁵ According to the *Sunday Citizen*, "J.H. Ryan has gained a good deal of importance as an Irish comedian and renders his songs with that amount of patriotic sentiment and pathos which only an Irish exile (as he is) and worthy son of old Ireland can feel."¹¹⁶

In contrast, Frank MacEvoy's New Hibernicon and Howorth's Hibernica songsters include a minimal number of songs that reflect Irish nationalist sentiment. Howorth's Hibernica songsters are almost devoid of songs about Ireland. When the company became Howorth's Double Show and Dublin Comedy Company in the late 1880s, it handed out audience souvenirs "of those famous statesmen Gladstone and Parnell," which indicates the company still tried to

appeal to Irish-American nationalist sentiment in some way.¹¹⁷ However, changes in the Irish-American nationalist movement in the late 1880s and 1890s possibly influenced how companies dealt with nationalist themes. The mass support for Irish nationalism declined after Parnell's divorce, which cost his reputation, and his death in 1891. Although the movement's support decreased on a national level, it still remained vibrant in local Irish-American communities, especially with the revival of strong anti-Irish prejudices in the 1890s. Yet, if Irish-American sentiments no longer appealed to mass audiences, hibernicon companies like Howorth's may have eliminated some nationalist references from their performances.¹¹⁸ Other popular entertainments as well as Irish-American literature also abandoned many previously popular Irish themes in the 1890s.¹¹⁹ If witnessing Irish nationalist sentiment increased the hibernicon's appeal, the lack of popular support for the movement in the 1890s also might have contributed to the form's steep decline during the same decade.

The Hibernicon, Nationalism, and the Irish-American Community

Unlike the hibernicon's close involvement with the Catholic Church and their celebrations and charities, hibernicon companies tended to not involve themselves in fundraisers for Irish-American nationalist causes or celebrations of Irish-American nationalism, unless they had a clear Catholic connection. St. Patrick's Day and the Irish Relief movement comprise the two main moments when the hibernicon broke with this trend to demonstrate its support of Irish-American nationalism in a public manner. Since many Irish-Americans considered Catholicism one of the few respectable ways to express their Irish ethnicity, perhaps hibernicon companies

similarly want to restrict their public expressions of Irishness to those perceived as more respectable. This leaning is reflected in how they chose to interact with the Irish-American community in relation to nationalist issues.

The hibernicon became a popular entertainment hit at the same time that St. Patrick's Day acquired a heightened profile in American society as an Irish-American celebration. Between 1860 and 1914, the Irish-American community used the St. Patrick's Day parade and its accompanying celebrations to draw attention to the distress in Ireland and to demonstrate the Irish's dedication to America. Irish nationalist exiles often played a prominent role in these celebrations. As scholars Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair note, "[t]ension between openly supporting the cause of Irish political independence on 17 March and celebrating St. Patrick's Day in its American context recurred annually."¹²⁰

In terms of what issues should be discussed and represented, the hibernicon, either implicitly or explicitly, argued that the focus should be on Ireland. Even though the press and native American often perceived St. Patrick's Day celebrations as lower class events, participating in St. Patrick's Day allowed the companies to associate itself with the symbolic Irish-American nationalism of shamrocks and the color green. The perception of the day as an Irish-American community celebration that encompassed a variety of political opinions allowed the hibernicon to avoid associations with "unrespectable" political positions. As opposed to its relationship with Catholic institutions, instead of establishing a direct connection, the hibernicon simply marketed itself as part of the day's celebrations. In 1863, the *New York Herald* reported that MacEvoy's Hibernicon as part of the St. Patrick's Day events and referred to it as one of the "novelties of the celebration this year."¹²¹ A few years later, a Cincinnati paper described the success the MacEvoy's could expect by launching their hibernicon on St. Patrick's Day. "When

the day and the purpose for which the exhibition is given are considered,” the *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer* wrote, “we expect a large crowd will be on hand.”¹²² The shows’ typical celebration of St. Patrick’s life in painting and in song made their performances appropriate celebrations without any additional cost to the companies.¹²³ Most importantly, the production could benefit financially from its association with St. Patrick’s Day. What better way to celebrate than to “visit” the Emerald Isle?

In one instance, the MacEvoy’s raised money for the Fenians in 1865 Cleveland. This occurrence was exceptional in its support of the often violent Fenian cause, but the MacEvoy’s held the fundraiser only a few days before St. Patrick’s Day, which fit their pattern of marking the holiday with a special performance.¹²⁴ Yet, in terms of fundraising, hibernicon companies primarily participated in Irish Famine Relief campaigns. Although usually supported by Irish-American nationalists who argued that the Irish’s suffering resulted from British oppression, a diverse group of Irish-Americans tended to support these relief efforts. The diversity of relief supporters allowed the hibernicon to avoid pledging public allegiance to a particular brand of Irish-American nationalism. The Irish Famine Relief campaigns in 1863 and 1880 reveal how the hibernicon tried to negotiate a respectable public image through their relief efforts. Comparing the campaigns also demonstrates how views of Irish-Americans transformed over the two decades.

In the early 1860s, crop failures, a longer rainy season, and the death of livestock brought the Irish to the brink of famine. Irish-Americans began encouraging a relief effort and in February 1863, an Irish-American wrote a letter to the *Irish-American* appealing to the Irish-American community’s national sentiment and pleading with the community to provide financial assistance. He proclaimed that “The Saxon robbers of our country are exulting over the

anticipated annihilation of our race, and smile placidly on the ruin that is widening every day, while we, in America look calmly and quietly on.”¹²⁵ “Irishmen of America,” he declared, “we must awake, we must bestir ourselves; the poorest of us can contribute something, not in charity, but in love.”¹²⁶ About a month later, a committee of middle and upper class Irish-Americans formed an Irish Relief Committee in New York chaired by Judge Charles Daly. Aside from alleviating Irish suffering, the Irish Relief Committee believed that fundraising for Ireland would also benefit the Northern war cause. In an address, the committee explained that the fundraising would be a “befitting answer” to the North’s European critics. Though their generous response, Americans could show that “mighty as is the struggle in which we are engaged, and many as may be the burdens it imposes upon us, we will not turn a deaf ear when the suffering people of other lands cry aloud to us for assistance.”¹²⁷

Irish-Americans rallied to the cause and middle and upper class Irish-Americans began organizing fundraisers. The committee held a Ball attended by Archbishop Hughes and General McClellan. Irish-Americans organized lectures and Irish-American businesses collected funds from their workers.¹²⁸ Fighter John Morrissey organized a “grand sparring match” on the Bowery.”¹²⁹ Irish-Americans mailed in donations to the *New York Irish-American*, which printed their letters. A schoolgirl donated fifty cents while another Irishman gave three dollars and “[r]egret[ed] not being rich.”¹³⁰ Irish-American soldiers collected money at the war front and mailed the funds to Daly. Even a “Protestant Clergyman, who has been with the Irish in the Army of the Potomac” donated five dollars.¹³¹

Although the committee raised thousands of dollars for Ireland, it faced the lack of enthusiasm from some community members and organizers feared how class politics would influence the fundraising. The *New York Irish-American* scolded community members for not

attending lecturer Henry Giles's Brooklyn fundraiser. The paper explained that it "was not as largely attended as it should have been" and "[i]t is really discreditable to us, as a people that while we can claim, as wholly our own, one of the ablest lecturers in this hemisphere, he is better appreciated in purely American communities than among his own kindred."¹³² Daly's wife also worried that the sharp class divides in Boston would negatively effect the turn out for fundraising events. She reported how her Boston friends worried that the "aristocrats" of Boston "would not go where their servants would," but that the event ended up having a good turnout.¹³³

Barney Williams helped start the effort among Irish and Irish-American performers to help the Irish Relief Fund. In May 1863, Williams announced the "extensive scale" of his preparations at Laura Keane's theatre, which decoration of the "interior and exterior of the house...with Irish and American emblems."¹³⁴ During the benefit, Williams made a speech that tied the relief efforts directly to Ireland's oppression by the British. Williams thanked the audience for "given your mite to a good cause, for true hospitality is old Ireland's boast...A great deal has recently been said of Ireland by able writers and speakers; but, though she is truly a beautiful garden, the bitter storm of famine and oppression has passed over her, nipping the buds of her prosperity and blasting all her hopes. But this will not be forever."¹³⁵ The performance raised one thousand, three hundred and fifty-nine dollars and "inaugurated the movement for Irish relief amongst the theatrical managers around us."¹³⁶ Although the local papers were enthusiastic about support from the theatre community, the effort appeared minimal and most of the contributors seemed to be popular Irish emigrant or Irish-American entertainers. In addition to a few other acts like the MacEvoy's, Dan and Neil Bryant organized a benefit matinee and in Brooklyn, Hooley's Theatre also pledged to hold a night for the fund.¹³⁷ The MacEvoy's performed for the fund in May 1863. The *New York Herald* reported that "Professor

McEvoy is a true, warm-hearted Irish patriot, and so in opening, on last night, at the Athenaeum, he devoted the proceeds of his exhibition to the benefit of the Irish Relief Fund.”¹³⁸

The controversy around Hooley’s benefit illustrates the tensions surrounding performers fundraising for Ireland in the 1860s. Hooley’s Theatre, which typically held minstrel or variety performances, attempted to hold the fundraiser at the larger Brooklyn Academy of Music, but the directors refused his request. Although the directors’ objections remained unclear, in a scathing article, the *New York Irish-American* claimed that they officially rejected Hooley’s plan based on the respectability of the performance. The paper protested that Hooley’s performance would be “infinitely more decorous...than dozens of others which have had the use of the Academy for nothing... Hooley’s Negro Minstrel Opera would have been as incontestably ennobling as some other exhibitions at the Academy have been full of depravity and sensual promptings.”¹³⁹ The *New York Irish-American* claimed that the real reason was their prejudice and “despicable fanaticism towards the Irish.”¹⁴⁰ The directors had no problem donating the house to other causes, the paper stated. The *New York Irish-American*’s comments about the directors’ prejudices revealed several of their own as well:

[The directors] have given their house and their genteel applause to Fred. Douglass, the black man, and Wendell Phillips, the white, who have pronounced the Constitution of the United States ‘a covenant with Hell.’ They have taken to their bosom Mr. Tilton, the ‘Amalgamationist,’ whose doctrines are more repulsive than ever-reached by Free Lover or Mormon, and against which even Nature has set her ban...They have hired it for the exhibition of brutes...But they could not hire it for one night for the collection of food for the famine-stricken, faithful Catholic people of Ireland. O ye hypocrite rulers of that Academy of Music.¹⁴¹

Hooley eventually held his benefit elsewhere. Since the Academy of Music often hosted variety performances, the *New York Irish-American* appeared accurate in accusing the directors of not objecting to similar performances. Yet, regardless of whether the directors were exercising Irish

prejudice or not, the incident highlights how raising money for Irish nationalist causes, even those as simple as famine relief, raised concerns about respectability and the Irish's treatment in America.

With the establishment of the Land League and the emergence of Irish-American nationalism as a mass movement, the circumstances surrounding Irish Relief fundraising shifted in 1880. In 1863, the hibernicon's fundraising performance displayed primarily the MacEvoy's' patriotism and its camaraderie with other Irish performers and the Irish-American community. These characteristics remained seventeen years later, but holding a benefit night for Irish Relief in 1880 also became an important moment for theatrical performers to claim a respectable and responsible position in American society. Considering the hibernicon's attempts to appeal to working class audiences while maintaining its respectability, it is not surprising that the Irish Relief effort in 1880 became the second main occurrence of the hibernicon fundraising for an Irish-American nationalist cause.

Organized to help the Irish suffering from Famine and evictions, the Irish Relief Fund received support from a diverse group of Americans. Part of its popularity related to the newfound respectability that Charles Parnell helped the movement attain. To help raise donations, Parnell even came to America on a lecture tour. James Gordon Bennett's *New York Herald* led the major push for donations. In February 1880, the paper pledged one hundred thousand dollars to the cause, promised to publish the names of every person who donated, and committed itself to a non-political fundraising campaign. Since Bennett had previously denounced Parnell, the *Herald's* new project raised suspicions among other newspaper editors. The *Boston Daily Advertiser* and *Chicago Daily Tribune* saw his effort as vulgar, an attempt for publicity, and an excuse for the rich to flaunt their wealth. The *New York Star* mused that

“Charity covereth a multitude of sins.”¹⁴² Others supported the *Herald* wholeheartedly and cheered the attempted separation of the cause from politics. This attempted separation made the cause seem more respectable to Americans who Parnell had alienated with his Irish agenda.¹⁴³ Parnell accused the *Herald* of “support[ing] the landlords in Ireland in attempting to put down the land movement” and wanting to increase paper sales.¹⁴⁴ Yet as *Philadelphia Press* noted, “The *Herald* has discovered a still more important field in the capabilities of the journalist, to wit, its power to enlist popular sympathy in behalf of the suffering.”¹⁴⁵

With most funds still coming from the working class, the *Herald* published the letters accompanying the donations, which made similar statements to many of the letters published in 1863. One boy claimed he saved a dollar seventy-five toward new skates, but he decided to give it to the Irish instead. He stated, “It will feed a little boy for a week, and I’ll do with my old pair.” Worker and emigrants apologized for their limited ability to give. In addition to workers, upper class Americans, lawyers, businesses, newspapers, and fire companies also made donations. For its part, the Irish-American community cancelled most of its St. Patrick’s Day celebrations and parades and gave the funds to relief. Their charity resulted in one the quietest St. Patrick’s Days throughout the country. Day after day the *Herald* published a list of diverse donors. Their efforts brought in over three hundred thousand dollars worth of contributions by the middle of March. By 1882, Irish-Americans raised over five million for Irish Relief and the Land War.¹⁴⁶

The theatre community took advantage of the occasion to show the profession’s value to society. Dion Boucicault started a campaign to have every theatre in the country host a benefit for the relief fund on St. Patrick’s Day. He also made a substantial donation and then later committed to giving an additional hundred dollars a week. He wanted the theatre community to

top the *Herald's* one hundred thousand dollar donation. The number of donations from individual performers and managers grew so large that the *Herald* started a new column to showcase their letters. Frank Mayo, manager of the Olympic Theatre, made a personal donation and then pledged ten percent of each night's profits until St. Patrick's Day. In a letter published in the *Herald*, Mayo pleaded that the participation of the theatres proved that performers were no longer vagabonds. Those who claimed that the theatres donated out of guilt for their sins, he stated, failed to acknowledge how the business had changed. He suggested that the theatres' participation demonstrated how they had reached a point where they benefited the surrounding society. Unlike in 1863, many of the contributors performed at legitimate theatres and they lent a further air of respectability to the cause. Others who joined in the effort included amateur theatre groups and songwriters, who donated song proceeds. An interesting letter published in the *Herald* suggests that support for Irish Relief crossed racial as well as class boundaries. Written by an African American performer who ran an amateur company, the letter requested help in booking a space for a benefit performance since the company legally needed a white man in order to reserve a theatre.¹⁴⁷

On St. Patrick's Day, the *Herald* reminded its readers of city-wide benefit day. The paper claimed that "[i]t has been suggested with true Irish humor that the Police Commissioners should issue an order requiring the police to arrest everybody of Milesian extraction found outside the theatres and concert rooms this afternoon."¹⁴⁸ Among the day's nationwide efforts, Howorth's Hibernica and MacEvoy's Hibernicon both participated in the fundraising day events. In spite of the large newspaper campaign, the profits disappointed in New York. Cleveland raised ten thousand dollars, but the *New York Herald* optimistically hoped that the final numbers in New York would approach that figure.¹⁴⁹ Although it would be too extreme to call the event a

failure, the lower than hoped for profits indicate that the cause of Irish Relief did not elicit sorrow and compassion from many New Yorkers, no matter how much it united the nation's theatre makers. Perhaps the fundraising day occurred too long after the initial call for help and those interested in contributing already sent in their donations to the *Herald*. However, among theatre professionals and newspapers, the cause remained important enough that after St. Patrick's Day a Cleveland paper observed, "It is worthy of note that J.H. Haverly has not yet given a single performance for the benefit of the Irish relief fund."¹⁵⁰ Even if the audiences did not pack the house, the theatres were expected to display their generosity. With this degree of pressure, hibernicon companies made the safe choice to participate in this public display of Irish-American nationalism.

As the hibernicon's old connections with Irish-American nationalism declined and disappeared, brief moments of its interaction with the Irish-American community in support of nationalist goals occurred in the late 1900s. During a 1908 Irish fair at Madison Square Garden in support of Irish crafts and the Celtic revival, Irish-Americans sold goods like Irish lace, rugs, carpets, and enamel work. People also walked around as Irish peasants near replicas of Irish cottages and Blarney Castle. A moving panorama of Ireland appeared as well. The *New York Sun* reported that "even if you are not familiar with the views of beautiful Ireland at least you can appreciate them as shown in the huge panoramic effect that occupies a conspicuous place on the east side of the Garden. Rapidly do pictures of Killaloe, Father O'Growney's funeral, a hurling march at Phoenix Park, the shrine at Gougane Barra, flit by." Charging five cents even though her friends told her to charge ten, a substantial decline in cost from the panoramas of Ireland's heyday, the proprietor explained how "For months me husband has been working to get it perfect at our flat on Twenty-third street. He used to work for Hammerstein, but since the

financial panic Hammerstein's let all his best people go'." The *Sun* writer then described how "[s]he turns away to shoo some more homesick ones toward the panorama just as the views of Blarney Castle, as like as two peas to its paper mache representative on the other end of the Garden, looms into view."¹⁵¹ The performance illustrated how panoramas of Ireland still attracted visitors. Their images continued to resonate within the Irish-American community, even after the loss of popular support and the advent of film.

Connections to the Irish-American community also remained a marketing tactic for the remaining hibernicons. In an August advertisement published in the New York's *Richfield Daily*, Dublin Dan's Hibernicon informed its potential audience that the panorama was "the same as those at the big Irish fair held in Madison Square Garden last winter."¹⁵² It is possible that the woman interviewed by the *Sun* and her husband sold Dublin Dan's the panorama or started their own hibernicon. It also is not impossible that the company made up the association. Regardless, in the twilight of the entertainment's existence, the advertisement demonstrates how hibernicon companies persisted in exploiting their connections with the Irish-American community to increase their financial gain. As the *New York Irish-American* correctly asserted back in the 1850s, the Irish-American community and public expressions of patriotism helped keep panoramas of Ireland, and eventually the hibernicon, alive.

Notes

¹ George Templeton Strong, *Diary of the Civil War, 1860-1865*, ed. Allan Nevins (New York: Macmillan, 1962), 51.

² “Visit of the Prince of Wales to America,” *New York Herald*, 25 March 1860, 4.

³ “The Sixty-Ninth (Irish) regiment and the Prince of Wales,” *New York Herald*, 18 October 1860, 6.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Harper’s Weekly*, 20 October 1860.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Technically, Corcoran and the Sixty Ninth followed the law. The state legislature passed a law that allowed militias to not parade as long as they met the minimum number of yearly appearances. See Susannah Ural Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle: Irish-American Volunteers And the Union Army, 1861-1865* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 45.

⁹ Letter from Colonel Corcoran to W.B. Field, 6 October 1861, in the private collection of Colonel Kenneth H. Powers; quoted in Joseph G. Bilby, *The Irish Brigade in the Civil War: The 69th New York and Other Irish Regiments of the Army of the Potomac* (Conshohocken, PA: Combined Publishing, 2000), 2. In Ireland, Corcoran was a member of the occasionally violent secret agrarian society, the Ribbonmen, who worked against evictions in the countryside.

¹⁰ *New York Herald*, 11 August 1860, 6.

¹¹ For more on the Prince’s visit and the controversy over Corcoran and the Sixty-Ninth, see Bruce, 42-5.

¹² “Col. Corcoran and the Prince of Wales,” (New York: J. Wrigley, n.d.), from the Library of Congress, *America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Streets*, <http://memory.loc.gov/cgibin/query/h?ammem/amss:@field%28DOCID+@lit%28cw100990%29%29> (accessed February 29, 2012).

¹³ “The Gallant Sons of Erin” (New York: H. De Marsan, n.d.), from Duke Digital Collections, http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/songsheets_bsvg100257/ (accessed February 29, 2012). For other songs about Corcoran, the Sixty-Ninth, and the Prince of Wales, see “Corcoran to his Regiment” (New York: H. De Marsan, n.d.), from the Library of

Congress, *America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Streets*, http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?amss:1:/temp/~ammem_HruW:: (accessed February 29, 2012); “Corcoran’s Ball!” (New York: H. De Marsan, n.d.), from the Library of Congress, *America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Streets*, http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?amss:1:/temp/~ammem_drZ7:: (accessed February 29, 2012). See also Mick Moloney’s version of “The Irish Volunteers” on *Far From the Shamrock Shore*, Mick Moloney, Shanachie 78050.

¹⁴ Stephen Rohs, *Eccentric Nation: Irish Performance in Nineteenth-Century New York City* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2009), 210.

¹⁵ A “current of Irish revolutionary sentiment” existed in the United States since the 1798 rebellion, but the Famine immigration gave the movement a voice and organization that was unprecedented. Michael F. Funchion, “Chicago’s Irish Nationalists, 1881-1890,” (Ph.D. diss., Loyola University, 1973), 48.

¹⁶ *Charleston Courier*, 17 June 1853, 2.

¹⁷ Thomas Moore, *Irish Melodies* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1852); William H.A. Williams, *‘Twas Only an Irishman’s Dream: The Image of Ireland and the Irish in American Popular Song Lyrics, 1800-1920* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 19, 23, 24-8; Mick Moloney, “Irish-American Popular Music,” *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, eds. J.J. Lee and Marion R. Casey (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 382; Linda Kelly, *Ireland’s Minstrel: A Life of Tom Moore* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006); Edward D. Snyder, *The Celtic Revival in Irish Literature, 1760-1800* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1923), 5-6; and Leith Davis, “Irish Bards and English Consumers: Thomas Moore’s ‘Irish Melodies’ and the Colonized Nation,” *Ariel* 24, no. 2 (April 1993): 7. Davis suggests Moore’s songs, for all their Irish pride and calls for liberty, reinforced British colonial ideology through their repeated depiction of Irish defeat.

¹⁸ Williams, 28. The establishment of these themes and symbols reflects scholar Anthony Smith’s notions of ethnicity and nationalism. Smith claims that the “core of ethnicity...resides in this quartet of ‘myths, memories, values and symbols’.” The continuity of these myths and symbols, he argues, contributed to the strength of nationalism in the nineteenth century and beyond. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 1988), 15, 92-104.

¹⁹ *New York Irish-American*, 15 March 1851, 3.

²⁰ Moore, 12.

²¹ *New York Irish-American*, 5 June 1852, 3.

²² Thomas Francis Meagher, "The Sword," in *Meagher of the Sword: Speeches of Thomas Francis Meagher in Ireland, 1846-1848*, ed. Arthur Griffith (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son, Ltd., 1916), 36. For more on the speech and how it related to the politics of Young Ireland and Meagher, see Paul R. Wylie, *The Irish General, Thomas Francis Meagher* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 30-40. The speech later became frequently used for school recitations.

²³ Thomas N. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism, 1870-1890* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1966), 7

²⁴ Brown, 8. Continental notions of romanticism influenced their interpretation.

²⁵ *Nation* quoted in Brown, 8.

²⁶ See Brown, 8-10. Lawrence McCaffrey, "The American and Catholic Dimensions of Irish Nationalism: Introductory Essay," in *Irish Nationalism and the American Contribution*, ed. Lawrence McCaffrey (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 1.

²⁷ Brown, 10-15; Laurence Fenton, *The Young Ireland Rebellion and Limerick* (Cork: Mercier Press, 2010), 125-135. As Brown notes, one of Young Ireland's main obstacles was the different priorities of the middle class and peasants: "[I]t is true that peasant and nationalist conceived of Ireland in different ways... Young Ireland was a product of English culture; its values were not those of the Gael. The Young Irelander wanted the peasant to act in the name of an abstraction called the Irish nation, but his loyalties lingered in more concrete relationships – those of the family, the parish, the village, and Whiteboy society." The Catholic Church worked against Young Ireland because it feared religion's omission from Young Ireland's rhetoric. Brown, 13.

²⁸ *New York Irish-American*, 5 June 1852, 3.

²⁹ Fenton, 167.

³⁰ *New York Irish-American*, 5 June 1852, 3.

³¹ Ibid. Those who did not escape, such as Smith O'Brien, were given conditional pardons in 1854. In part, this was a political move because the British government needed to recruit Irish soldiers for the Crimean War. See Fenton, 167-9.

³² "The Panorama of Ireland –Mr. O'Donnell," *New York Irish-American*, 7 March 1851, 3. See also "John O'Donnell, of Ballingarry," *New York Irish-American*, 15 March 1851, 3. Horace Greeley also held a fundraiser for O'Donnell. "Horace Greeley, John O'Donnell," *New York Irish-American*, 8 February 1851, 2. For more on O'Donnell, see Sean McConville, *Irish Political Prisoners, 1848-1922: Theatres of War* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 44, 129n; Fenton, 34-6, 156.

³³ For more on the Irish in Chicago, see Funchion, 12-3.

³⁴ Richard L. Burtzell, *The Diary of Richard L. Burtzell, Priest of New York: The Early Years, 1865-1868*, ed. Nelson J. Callahan (New York: Arno Press, 1978), 162.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 265.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 257.

³⁷ Brown, 39. See also, Funchion, 48-9; William D'Arcy, *The Fenian Movement in the United States* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1947); Brian Jenkins, *Fenians and Anglo-American Relations During Reconstruction* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969).

³⁸ Brown, 39-40. Non-Irish newspapers also widely reported the failed Fenian invasions. See the *New York Times*, *New York Herald*, and *New York Tribune* for the years 1866 and 1870. Arrests of Fenian leaders in England also contributed to the movement's decline.

³⁹ Mark Wyman, *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 163.

⁴⁰ "Constitution of the United Brotherhood, 1877," reprinted in *Special Commission Act, 1888: Reprint of the Shorthand Notes of the Speeches, Proceedings and Evidence Taken Before the Commissioners* Vol. IV (London: H.M.s.O., 1890), 493. The choice to form a secret society related directly to the perceive harm done to the Fenians by poor publicity. See Funchion, 50.

⁴¹ Funchion, 53. See also Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 538, Eric Foner, *Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 154.

⁴² "The Irishmen in America," *New York Times*, 21 April 1883, 1.

⁴³ Michael F. Funchion, "Irish Chicago: Church, Homeland, Politics, and Class – The Shaping of an Ethnic Group, 1870-1900," in *Ethnic Chicago: A Multicultural Portrait*, eds. Melvin G. Holli and Peter d'A Jones (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 70. According to Funchion, many Catholic clergy "agreed with traditional Catholic teaching that membership in such groups was sinful because their required oaths conflicted with one's religious and civic obligations, and because their revolutionary aims violated the conditions for a just war."

⁴⁴ Richard Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics: Class Conflict and the Origins of Modern Liberalism in Chicago, 1864-97* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 121. Include a note about the strength of Clan na Gael in Chicago and cite Funchion.

⁴⁵ Foner, 155; David Brundage, “‘In Time of Peace, Prepare for War’: Key Themes in the Social Thought of New York’s Irish Nationalists, 1890-1916,” in *The New York Irish*, eds. Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 321; Brown, 159-69; Miller, 538-547. “Radical” nationalists tended to support socialist reforms that would lead to land nationalization. Led by men such as Henry George and the editor of the *New York Irish World* Patrick Ford, radical nationalism advocated for “a variety of tactics to work an economic as well as a political transformation of the old country.” Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy Meagher, “Conclusion,” in *The New York Irish*, 540. For more on how the Land War helped introduce boycott tactics, see Lawrence McCaffrey, *The Irish Catholic Diaspora in America* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1997), 159.

⁴⁶ Quoted in Miller, 536.

⁴⁷ Quoted in Miller, 537. Leaders also commented on how respectable Irish-Americans supported nationalism for their own selfish reasons instead of because of their dedication to Ireland. In contrast to Miller and others, Thomas Brown and Michael Funchion argue that some Irish Americans saw nationalism as a tactic for achieving respectability. Yet as Miller notes, “for men preoccupied with amassing wealth or intent on mobility and respectability in native society, deep or obvious devotion to Irish-American nationalism could be more liability than leverage.” Miller, 544-5.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 545.

⁴⁹ Quoted in Miller, 548.

⁵⁰ “Irish Funds,” *Springfield Globe-Republic* (OH), 1 March 1885.

⁵¹ “The Irish in America,” *New York Times*, 24 June 1881, 4.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ “Cyclorama of Ireland,” *Buffalo Daily Courier*, 3 June 1861.

⁵⁴ *New York Herald*, 12 April 1863, 7; *New York Irish-American*, 25 April 1863, 1. “Erin Go Braugh” remained an important expression of nationalist sentiment in songs and marketing throughout the rest of the century. See also Jacobson, 232.

⁵⁵ “The ‘Hibernicon’,” *New York Irish-American*, 4 April 1863, 2.

⁵⁶ “The ‘Hibernicon’,” *New York Irish-American*, 18 April 1863, 2.

⁵⁷ *New York Irish-American*, 25 April 1863, 1.

⁵⁸ Miller, 550.

⁵⁹ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 551.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 551.

⁶¹ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 551.

⁶² "Music and Drama," *New York Evening Post*, 25 March 1863.

⁶³ "The Hibernicon at Pike's," *New York Tribune*, 23 September 1868, 2.

⁶⁴ *Huntington Long-Islander*, 26 September 1879.

⁶⁵ "Amusements," *New York Times*, 9 September 1868, 4.

⁶⁶ Susan Kattwinkel, "Negotiating a New Identity: Irish Americans and the Variety Theatre in the 1860s," in *Interrogating America through Theatre and Performance*. Eds. William W. Demastes and Iris Smith Fischer (New York: Palgrave, 2007), 51.

⁶⁷ Stephen Crane, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1896), 58.

⁶⁸ Charles Fanning, "Robert Emmet and Nineteenth-Century Irish America," *New Hibernia Review* 8, no. 4 (Winter 2004): 68. Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Special Sorrows: The Diasporic Imagination of Irish, Polish, and Jewish* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 84-6. See the works of Dion Boucicault, including *Arrah-na-Pogue* (1864), which included a version of "The Wearing of the Green" that the English later banned, *The Colleen Bawn* (1860), and *The Shaughraun* (1874). Plays focusing on Robert Emmet include Dion Boucicault's *Robert Emmet*, James Pilgrim's *Robert Emmet*, *The Martyr of Irish Liberty: A Historical Drama in Three Acts*, Joseph I.C. Clarke's *Robert Emmet, A Tragedy of Irish History*, and B.M. O'Boylan's *The Rebels; The Irish Insurgent Chiefs of 1803, An Historical Drama in Five Acts*. From the late 1840s, J.H. Amherst's *Ireland As It Is*, which condemned the landlord system in Ireland, also remained popular with audiences. For more discussion of nationalist themes in Irish performance, see also Rohs, 195-219.

⁶⁹ "Amusements," *New York Times*, 9 September 1868, 4.

⁷⁰ "The Hibernicon," *Chicago Tribune*, 21 September 1869, 4.

⁷¹ Kelly Oliver, *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 85.

⁷² Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 60.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 336.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 60. In *Travel and Experience in Early Modern English Literature*, Melanie Ord uses the concept of virtual witnessing to discuss how travel literature can substitute for the experience of readers. Melanie Ord, *Travel and Experience in Early Modern English Literature* (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 8.

⁷⁶ “The ‘Mirror of Ireland,’ *New York Irish-American*, 7 January 1871, 8. On rare occasion, Irish American newspaper criticized the representation of Ireland. In 1868, the *Irish Citizen* praised the landscape paintings, but expressed less appreciation for the historical scenes. The writer explained that “Those [scenes] that struck us particularly were the ‘Glen of Downs,’ the ‘Middle Lake of Killarney,’ and the ‘Rock of Cashel,’ . . . The historical and allegorical pictures might have been omitted with advantages, especially if replaced by a few more of Irish scenery.” Examples like this highlight the diverse opinions of the Irish population on what they viewed as entertaining and how they wanted to see Ireland depicted on stage.

⁷⁷ Brian Graham, “Ireland and Irishness: Place, Culture and Identity,” in *In Search of Ireland: A Cultural Geography*, ed. Brian J. Graham (New York: Routledge, 1997), 7. As Graham notes, “Thus there is little that is conceptually exceptional about the construction of Irish nationalism. The politics of exclusion in nationalist discourse is embedded in all European movements.” See also N. Johnson, “‘Building a Nation: An Examination of the Irish Gaeltachy Commission Report of 1926,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 19, no. 2 (1993): 159.

⁷⁸ *McGill and Strong’s Mirror of Ireland*, (Worcester, MA: 1872), 3, American Broadside and Ephemera Series I: 1760-1900.

⁷⁹ *Frank MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon Songster* (Philadelphia: Merrihew and Son, 1874), 10, American Antiquarian Society.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁸¹ John MacEvoy, “Invitation to the Hibernicon,” *MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon*, broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle), American Broadside and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8).

⁸² Miller, 406.

⁸³ Harry J. Elam Jr., “Reality Check,” in *Critical Theory and Performance*, eds. Janelle G. Reinelt and Joseph R. Roach (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2007), 173-4. Elam argues for this concept’s rootedness in performances of blackness. I am not attempting to conflate and

reduce the experiences of African Americans and the Irish in America, but I am interested in how his idea allows for exploring how the juxtaposition of images functions in ideologies, memories, and experiences of oppression.

⁸⁴ McCaffrey, 2.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ "The Hibernicon at Pike's," *New York Tribune*, 23 September 1868, 2.

⁸⁷ *MacEvoy's New Hibernicon*, broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle), American Broadside and Ephemera Series I (10F455D54A460CF8).

⁸⁸ The popular image of Boru as the Irish unifier started in the accounts of his reign written by his descendants. Medieval historians have complicated and challenged this depiction. See Michael Richter, *Medieval Ireland: The Enduring Tradition*, trans. Brian Stone and Adrian Keogh (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1988).

⁸⁹ "Invitation to the 'Hibernicon'," *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1872), 7, Borowitz Collection, Department of Special Collections and Archives, Kent State University Libraries and Media Services.

⁹⁰ *MacEvoy's New Hibernicon*, broadside.

⁹¹ *Gavin and Ryan's Emerald Isle* program, *Rody the Rover Songster* (New York: Robt M. De Witt, n.d.), 53, Mick Moloney Irish-American Music and Popular Culture Collection, Part IV, Box 48, Folder 29, Archives of Irish America, Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives.

⁹² See also *McGill and Strong's Mirror of Ireland*, 3; "The Emerald Isle," broadside (Boston: F.A. Searle, 1873), American Broadside and Ephemera, Series 1: 1760-1900 (24041).

⁹³ *MacEvoy's New Hibernicon*, broadside.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ *Gavin and Ryan's Emerald Isle* program, 53.

⁹⁶ *MacEvoy's New Hibernicon*, broadside.

⁹⁷ Fanning, 53.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 55.

⁹⁹ For more on Emmet and how his image proliferated through Irish-American culture, see *Ibid.*, 55-68.

¹⁰⁰ *Gavin and Ryan's Emerald Isle* program, 56; *McGill and Strong's Mirror of Ireland*, 3.

¹⁰¹ *Daily Gazette (Illinois)*, 3 March 1882, 4.

¹⁰² *MacEvoy's New Hibernicon*, broadside.

¹⁰³ "Barney I Hardly Knew Ye," *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster*, 14.

¹⁰⁴ John MacEvoy, "Invitation to the Hibernicon," *MacEvoy's New Hibernicon*, broadside.

¹⁰⁵ Kristen Deiter, *The Tower of London in English Renaissance Drama: Icon of Opposition* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 32.

¹⁰⁶ John MacEvoy, "Invitation to the Hibernicon." The MacEvoy's also drew a parallel to other struggles for freedom. Charles MacEvoy's version of the song includes this verse as well:

Three hundred years had Israel's children wept, Three hundred years had Aztecs knelt
Spain, Three hundred years the Roman Eagle swept/ O'er Briton's [sic], hunted to their
hills again, Three hundred years, (a little more or less), Art thou despoiled by hand of
ruthless stranger, Ireland! My fatherland, may heaven send to bless, And free thee, Vick
Machree, some strong brave avenger.

In the same song, Charles MacEvoy also references Meagher, but only in regards to his Civil War service. "Invitation to the 'Hibernicon'," *Barney and Nora Songster of Charles MacEvoy's Original Songster*, 8.

¹⁰⁷ *Miles Morris Irish Gems* (New York: AJ Fisher, n.d.), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Songsters, Brown University, 7.

¹⁰⁸ "Terrible Times," *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ "Lines to Mr. Burke," *John M. Burke's Dublin Carman Songster* (New York: Robert M. DeWitt, 1871), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University, 16.

¹¹¹ My Emmet's No More," *Ibid.*, 47.

¹¹² “Paddy Burke,” *Ibid.*, 50.

¹¹³ “Tableaux of Erin,” broadside, (Augusta, ME.: 1876) American Broadside and Ephemera, Series 1: 1760-1900.

¹¹⁴ *Rody the Rover Songster* (New York: Robt M. De Witt, n.d.), 3-4, Mick Moloney Irish-American Music and Popular Culture Collection, Part IV, Box 48, Folder 29, Archives of Irish America, Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives.

¹¹⁵ N.J. O’Mahony, “A Toast of the Sons of Ireland,” *Rody the Rover Songster*, 5.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in *Rody the Rover Songster*, 4.

¹¹⁷ *Bridgeton (New Jersey) Evening News*, 16 November 1888, 4. See also *Wheeling (West Virginia) Register*, 16 February 1889, 4. *Frank MacEvoy’s New Hibernicon Songster* (Philadelphia: Merrihew and Son, 1874), American Antiquarian Society; *Howorth’s Grand Hibernica Songster* (Trenton: Wm. S. Sharp, 1885?), Harris Collection of Poetry and Plays, Brown University; *Howorth’s Hibernica Songster* (New York: New York Popular Co., n.d), Mick Moloney Irish-American Music and Popular Culture Collection, Part IV: Irish Americana, Box 48, File 18, Archives of Irish America, Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives. William Gladstone, Prime Minister of Britain, formed an alliance with Charles Parnell to help pass land reform in the early 1880s. Radicals like the *Irish World*’s Patrick Ford were unhappy at the compromises made by Parnell.

¹¹⁸ For the decline in Irish-American nationalism, see Miller, 540-1; Brown, 133-182.

¹¹⁹ Jacobson, 125.

¹²⁰ Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *The Wearing of the Green: A History of St. Patrick’s Day* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 67, 64-5. During these years, Irish-American groups conflicted over who should run the parade. The Ancient Order of Hibernians, a Catholic and nationalist group, was in charge for most of these decades. Cronin and Adair, 68-73.

¹²¹ “St. Patrick’s Day,” *New York Herald*, 17 March 1863, 1.

¹²² *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, 15 March 1866, 2. For more instances of the hibernicon and their incorporation into St. Patrick’s Day celebrations, see *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 17 March 1876, 2; “Entertainments to Come,” *Jersey Journal*, 16 March 1878, 4.

¹²³ *Rody the Rover Songster* (New York: Robt M. De Witt, n.d.), 3-4, Mick Moloney Irish-American Music and Popular Culture Collection, Part IV, Box 48, Folder 29, Archives of Irish America, Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives.

¹²⁴ *Cleveland Leader*, 15 March 1865, 4.

¹²⁵ “An Irish Relief Association,” *New York Irish-American*, 21 February 1863, 4.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ “The Suffering in Ireland: Address of the Executive Board of the Irish Relief Committee to the People of the United States,” *New York Times*, 4 April 1863, 8. The *New York Times* first reported the formation of the committee in March 1863. “General News,” *New York Times*, 24 March 1863, 4. See also “Relief for Ireland,” *New York Times*, 21 March 1863, 1.

¹²⁸ “The Irish Relief Fund,” *New York Times*, 6 April 1863, 5. “Irish Relief Fund Ball,” *New York Times*, 13 April 1863, 4. “The Irish Relief Ball,” *New York Times*, 14 April 1863, 5. “Relief of the Irish Sufferers,” *New York Times*, 2 April 1863, 2. “Irish Central Relief Committee,” *New York Irish-American*, 25 July 1863, 4.

¹²⁹ “Relief of the Irish Sufferers,” *New York Times*, 2 April 1863, 2.

¹³⁰ “Brooklyn Irish Relief Fund,” *New York Irish-American*, 30 May 1863, 2. “Irish Relief Meeting in Brooklyn,” *New York Irish-American*, 23 May 1863, 1.

¹³¹ Letter from Michael Corcoran to Charles Daly, 13 May 1863, Charles P. Daly Papers, Box 3, Folder 35, Manuscript and Archives Division, New York Public Library; “Irish Relief Meeting in Brooklyn,” *New York Irish-American*, 23 May 1863, 1.

¹³² *New York Irish-American*, 6 June 1863, 2.

¹³³ Entry for May 5, 1863, Maria L. Daly Diary, Volume 26, 1862 June 15- Nov 12. 1863, Charles P. Daly Papers, Manuscript and Archives Division, New York Public Library. For more on fundraising activities of the committee see “List of Subscribers,” *New York Times*, 17 April 1863, 7; “American Topics in England,” *New York Times*, 4 June 1863, 2.

¹³⁴ “Theatricals,” *New York Herald*, 5 May 1863, 7.

¹³⁵ “Performance in Aid of the Irish Relief Fund – Speech of Barney Williams,” *New York Herald*, 8 May 1863, 5.

¹³⁶ “The Theatre and the Irish Relief,” *New York Irish-American* 16 May 1863, 2.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.* For more on the benefit see *New York Herald*, 29 April 1863; *New York Times*, 4 May 1863, 7; *New York Herald*, 14 May 1863, 7.

¹³⁸ *New York Herald*, 20 May 1863, 9.

¹³⁹ “Fanaticism in Brooklyn,” *New York Irish-American*, 4 July 1863, 2.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. For more on the Hooley incident, see "City Intelligence," *New York Herald*, 1 April 1863, 5; *New York Irish-American*, 30 May 1863, 2; "Hooley's Irish Relief Benefit," *New York Irish-American*, 18 July 1863, 2.

¹⁴² *New Haven Register*, 6 February 1880, 2.

¹⁴³ *New York Herald*, 4 February 1880; *Chicago Tribune*, 5 February 1880; *Journal of Commerce*, 5 February 1880; *New York Herald*, 28 February 1880; Merle Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad* (Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers State University, 1963), 88-90.

¹⁴⁴ Parnell quoted in Curti, 92.

¹⁴⁵ Quoted in Ibid., 93.

¹⁴⁶ "The Cry of Irish Distress," *New York Herald*, 4 February 1880, 6; "The Famine Fund," *New York Herald*, 5 February 1880, 7; *New York Herald*, 6 February 1880, 3; *New York Herald*, 16 February 1880, 3; *New York Herald*, 25 February 1880, 5; *New York Herald*, 27 February 1880, 3; *New York Herald*, 29 February 1880, 7; "St. Patrick's Day Celebration," *New York Irish-American*, 6 March 1880, 4; *New York Herald*, 14 March 1880, 4; *New York Herald*, 19 March 1880, 3; "American Sympathy for Ireland," *New York Irish-American*, 27 March 1880, 4; Miller, 540.

¹⁴⁷ *New York Herald*, 8 February 1880, 7; "An Amusement Fund," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 10 February 1880, 3; "Dramatic Charity to Ireland," *New York Herald*, 13 February 1880, 3; *New York Herald*, 14 February 1880, 3-4; *New York Herald*, 16 February 1880, 3; "Dramatic and Other Benefits," *New York Herald*, 19 February 1880; *New York Irish-American*, 21 February 1880, 5; *New York Irish-American*, 28 February 1880, 5; "Dramatic and Other Benefits," *New York Herald*, 1 March 1880, 3; *Times-Picayune*, 1 March 1880, 2; *New York Herald*, 3 March 1880, 1 and 3; "Dramatic and Other Benefits," *New York Herald*, 5 March 1880, 3; "St. Patrick's Day Celebration," *New York Irish-American*, 6 March 1880, 4; *Times-Picayune*, 6 March 1880, 5; *New York Herald*, 14 March 1880, 4; "The Relief Fund Benefits," *New York Times*, 17 March 1880; *New York Herald*, 17 March 1880, 5; *Trenton State Gazette*, 19 March 1880, 2; *New York Herald*, 23 March 1880, 5; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 17 March 1880, 4; *Times-Picayune*, 4 April 1880, 9; "The Irish Famine Fund," *New York Herald*, 6 April 1880, 3; "The Irish Famine Fund," *New York Herald*, 7 April 1880, 3; *New Orleans Item*, 8 April 1880, 1; *Times-Picayune*, 8 April 1880, 8; *New Orleans Item*, 18 April 1880, 1.

¹⁴⁸ *New York Herald*, 17 March 1880, 5.

¹⁴⁹ *New York Herald*, 19 March 1880, 3.

¹⁵⁰ “MacEvoy’s Hibernicon,” *New York Herald*, 14 March 1880, 7; *New York Herald*, 17 March 1880, 5; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 20 March 1880, 4;

¹⁵¹ The fair was supposed to benefit a proposed Hibernian Institute. “Exhibits at the Irish Fair,” *New York Sun*, 26 January 1908. For more on the events at the fair, see also “Mark Twain Visits the Irish Fair,” *New York Evening Telegram*, 9 January 1908; “Special Nights at the Irish Fair,” *New York Herald*, 14 January 1908.

¹⁵² *Richfield (New York) Daily*, 19 August 1908, 1.

CONCLUSION

The last company referring to itself as the hibernicon performed in April 1910. Appearing at St. Jerome's Hall in Brooklyn, Dan Morris Sullivan's company returned to town for the third time in three years and remained a lingering reminder of the hibernicon's vibrant past. The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* happily welcomed Dan Morris Sullivan, who played Barney with MacEvoy's Hibernicon and ran a hibernicon company on and off for about thirty years. After fifty years, the hibernicon remained defined by more than its panorama of Ireland, songs, and comically misfortunate lovers, "[t]hose favorites of our childhood," Barney and Nora. Demonstrated by the *Eagle*'s claims of Sullivan having "taken up the mantle of MacEvoy," the MacEvoy name continued to have marketing potential and resonance in the Irish-American community. The production still promised up-to-date spectacle with "modern effects such as moonlight on the Lakes of Killarney and a terrific storm off the North Coast of Ireland." Finally, viewing the hibernicon remained a way for Irish and Irish-Americans to stay in contact with Ireland and its past. However, the hibernicon's ability to transport its audience to the past expanded beyond Ireland in the 1910 performance. As the *Eagle* noted, "The offering promises a genuine treat, and will afford the younger generation a chance to see just the sort of show that their granddaddies and daddies enjoyed in the good old days when a 'theater' on every street corner was a thing unknown and the visit of the panorama was an event looked forward to with the greatest eagerness."¹ By witnessing the hibernicon at St. Jerome's, audience members connected to past generations in America as well as Ireland. The performance itself had become as much of a relic of the past as the ruins and buildings that scrolled by on the panorama.

The rise of new technology made the performance of moving panoramas look dated and hastened the hibernicon's erasure. The predominance of film as a popular entertainment by 1910 caused the *Eagle* to remark with both surprise and pride that the hibernicon had "not been entirely squelched by the advent of motion pictures."² Projected photographs and film created new technological wonders for the audience to experience and left the excitement of viewing the scrolling moving panorama paintings mostly forgotten.

However, the hibernicon's final 1910 performance was not solely the result of technological advances.³ The years around the hibernicon's last performance are an important moment to examine, I suggest, because they reveal popular entertainment's declining ability to function as a tool of Irish ethnic community participation. Even when the content was structurally reimagined and used in the service of a contemporary movement, such as in the Irish Historical Pageant, the images no longer caught the popular imagination on the same scale. Social, economic, political, and cultural shifts during these years contributed to the imagery's declining appeal to the Irish and Irish-American working class. Second, in the first decades of the twentieth century, I suggest that performances influenced by the hibernicon, such as the stereopticon travel lecturers, were successful for targeting the increasingly middle class Irish-American population. As other American concerns and institutions supplanted connections to Ireland, popular theatre attendance no longer held the ability to rally the Irish and Irish-American working class around legitimate ethnic causes.

The staging of '*An Dhord Fhiann*': *An Irish Historical Pageant* at New York's Sixty-Ninth Regiment Armory in May 1913 demonstrates how performance tactics similar to the hibernicon failed to spark a popular craze among the Irish and Irish-American working class.

Incorporating visual spectacle, songs based on traditional Irish music, and the participation of about five hundred actors, the *Irish Historical Pageant* focused on recreating two scenes, “The Proclaiming of Finn” at Tara and “The Convention of Dromceatt.” Written and produced by Anna Throop Craig, the production attempted to recreate a vision of Ireland’s past at a moment when Home Rule seemed imminent in Ireland’s future.⁴

Although the hibernicon and the *Irish Historical Pageant* differed in various ways, especially in the pageant’s “focus on race rather than place,” emphasis on pagan Ireland, and incorporation of hundreds of actors, each production used similar tactics and narrative strategies in their attempts to entice a popular audience.⁵ The pageant’s creators worked within pre-established popular entertainment conventions and adapted them to a new form. The pageant used a two hundred foot long moving panorama to illustrate the historical scenes. Scholar Deborah Ryan concludes that “Accounts of the pageant stress its visual spectacle rather than its oral content. This points to an interest in the (re)invention of Irish culture that gives primacy to the visual gesture rather than the spoken word.”⁶ Instead of a “(re)invention of Irish culture” towards the visual, the pageant seemingly adapted older tactics of representation to suit its different ideological needs, in this case, the Celtic and Gaelic Revivals. Other adaptations included the pageant’s use of music and content. Although the pageant stressed its music’s roots in traditional airs, the organizers hired an American composer of comic operas to write the production’s songs.⁷ Observers even perceived the *Irish Historical Pageant* in terms that harkened back to the hibernicon’s depictions of Ireland’s history. A pageant audience member commented that the production presented the “idea of the glories of ancient Irish civilization when the other nations were still submerged in medieval gloom.”⁸

Like the hibernicon, the creators of the *Irish Historical Pageant* wanted to reach a popular Irish, Irish-American, and American audience and its two sell out performances illustrate its singular success.⁹ The *Irish Historical Pageant* organizers hoped their work would benefit from the pageants' current popularity and inspire imitations across the country. Yet, like the hibernicon in the first decade of the twentieth century, the production's influence seems limited.¹⁰ In spite of the *Irish Historical Pageant*'s success in filling the Sixty-Ninth Regiment's Armory and its use of tactics designed to appeal to a popular audience, Irish pageants failed to catch on with audiences and Irish-American middle class leaders. In this context, reminders of the Irish and Irish-American working class and their Irish past worked against popular perceptions of the Irish as increasingly middle-class and "the ultimate assimilable ethnics."¹¹ As scholar Charles Fanning discusses, "[t]he Irish had 'made it' to the extent that this was their first American generation to be able to afford the luxury of a purely literary self-definition."¹² Popular forms worked against attempts to define Irishness through its literary tradition.

Although local nickelodeons became important centers of Irish ethnic community, newer popular entertainment like vaudeville, where the stage Irish still held great sway with audiences, failed to serve Irish ethnic community on the same scale. The nationalized, regulated, and sanitized business model of vaudeville developed by Keith and Albee made direct appeals to specific segments of the American audience unwise marketing decisions. Similar to how Tony Pastor, Keith, and Albee claimed to have made variety respectable, attending vaudeville demonstrated how the Irish and Irish-American working class similarly were moving into a more respectable and acceptable position in American society. Although attendance at a hibernicon could be construed as Irish ethnic community participation depending on the performance venue and extent of connections between the company and local Irish-American community, theatre

attendance at vaudeville performances illustrated how Irish-Americans were in step with more dominant, respectable American values.¹³

In the early twentieth century, there also emerged a more limited symbolic idea of Irish identity. In the late nineteenth century, popular entertainment supported multiple notions of Irishness and the hibernicon allowed its audiences to tap into these various conceptions through the variety and gaps in performances. Instead of a figure with multiple meanings, the stage Irishman increasingly became understood as a flat and negative character. Popular Irish plays, like the works starring star Chauncey Olcott, erased characteristics like the Irish drinking and decreased their British villains' evilness. Themes of love for mothers and childhood innocence dominated songs, which omitted calls for Irish freedom. Describing the works of Olcott, Mari Kathleen Fielder remarks that "Instead they allowed their images of the free child to implicitly convey that the Irish people, too, craved such freedom. Rebellion in this context was a soft natural longing, more like an expression of love than war."¹⁴ The hibernicon's images declined in popularity as these watered down of Irish images became popular with Irish-American and American audiences. The emerging images of Irishness on the American stage made it easier for Irish-Americans to assimilate into American society and decreased their sense of connection to Ireland.¹⁵

The changing relationship between Irish Americans and popular Irish performance reflected social, economic, and political shifts within the Irish-American community. Even though there always existed divisions and conflicts among Irish and Irish Americans in America, rallying the Irish-American community around ethnic causes and institutions became increasingly difficult in the first few decades of the twentieth century. Support for Irish-American nationalism greatly weakened after 1890, but enthusiasm and political organization

continued to exist in some Irish-American communities. The Easter Rising of 1916 marked the beginning of the second mass Irish nationalist movement in America. Although the rebels' initial arrests did not inspire outrage, their execution and the postponement of Home Rule measures caused Irish Americans to rally around the revolutionary tradition's calls for Irish independence through any methods necessary. Between 1916 and 1922, Irish Americans sent ten million dollars across the Atlantic to support Irish independence efforts. Although the *hibernicon* often supported nationalist sentiments, most companies did not advocate for violent resolutions to Ireland's conflict with Britain. For this reason, it served poorly as a form of nationalist propaganda after the Easter Rising. The declaration of the Irish Free State in 1922 marked the end of Irish-American nationalism as a uniting force and major symbol of Irish-American identity. For many Irish Americans, the establishment of the Free State, even without the northern six counties, accomplished the movement's major goals. With Irish political and religious issues distant from the Irish-American experience, others remained confused about the violence in the subsequent Civil War. Siding with the Irish against the British aligned Irish Americans with their families and a rhetoric that paralleled American ideas of freedom and liberty. It became difficult for some Irish Americans to side against their fellow countrymen.¹⁶

The Irish-American involvement in World War I highlights this shift in national loyalties. In spite of Irish-American protests against an alliance with England prior to April 1917, after Congress declared war on Germany, the Irish-American community united behind the American war effort. Across the country, Irish Americans publically performed how their loyalty to America superseded their hatred of the British and desire for Irish independence. Irish-American organizations passed resolutions in support of the war, which circulated through the national

press. The articles' titles boasted "New York Irish Americans are Loyal to US in War" and New Orleans's "Irish-American Societies are Loyal." The resolutions passed by the Ancient Order of Hibernians in Oregon even requested that men not eligible for the draft practice military drills at the local Irish Hall. Irish Americans often accompanied their public expressions of war support with requests for the United States to champion Irish self-government during the eventual peace talks.¹⁷ Only these resolutions courted controversy. In New York, the unwillingness of about thirty Irish-American organizations to support a resolution for post-war American intervention in Ireland sparked a riot. Irish-American leaders blamed the disturbance on "German spies."¹⁸ The incident highlighted the fragmentation and disagreement in the New York Irish community over Irish nationalist tactics and the propriety of linking Irish patriotic sentiment to expressions of American loyalty. Yet, resolutions of war support often passed unanimously. By 1917, Irish Americans conceived of themselves as Americans. Once Congress declared war, there existed little controversy over where Irish-Americans' true loyalties lay.¹⁹

The insistence on American identity over Irish identity reflected a major shift in Irish-American community sentiments. In 1860, Colonel Michael Corcoran refused to march in the Prince of Wales's honor because he felt it betrayed Ireland. In 1917, Irish Americans willingly fought and died alongside English allies. This transformation illustrates how Irish and Irish-Americans not only reconceived of their national loyalties, but also how they functioned as actors on an international stage.

As historian Lawrence J. McCaffrey discusses, "[g]rowing Irish-American indifference to Ireland revealed Americanization as well as a decline in immigration and negative reactions to the civil war and Irish-Ireland nationalism."²⁰ More Irish Americans began moving into the middle class and Americans began to perceive them as an ideal ethnic group. There was an

increasing sense, if false, that the Irish were disappearing as they became more American. The increase in Southern and Eastern European immigrants also decreased Irish-Americans' long held political power as a voting bloc. Although the Catholic Church increased in power and organization throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, by the early 1920s, the "American born Irish, not the immigrants, would now define what it meant to be Irish and Catholic in America."²¹ This shift began the Church's transition to an American, as opposed to an Irish- dominated, community institution.²²

In this emerging context, when images of a return trip to Ireland succeeded with audiences, they increasingly were produced for middle-class Irish Americans. At the same time, they demonstrated the continuing influence of the hibernicon on performance culture. For example, travel lecturers started using the stereopticon in a similar way to the hibernicon's panorama at least by the mid-1870s. Created in the 1850s, a stereopticon was a "projector of photographic slides."²³ These performances retained the same narrative structure as the hibernicon, except they eliminated the comic sketches and an Irish guide character. The lecturer still encouraged his audience to imagine they traveled with him to Ireland. One review described how "His audience, which filled the hall, was composed of the young people of the parish, who were invited to accompany Father Holland in spirit on the thirteen day motor tour through Ireland."²⁴ The pleas of realism surrounding the performance also could have appeared in a hibernicon advertisement. As one newspaper noted, "The scenes thrown upon the canvas were in every respect true to life."²⁵

The content of the "journey" remained the same with the lecturer taking the audience to religious and nationalist sites as well as points of natural beauty. The Four Courts, Blarney Castle, and Lakes of Killarney continued to be popular destinations. Some of the lecturers also

used their speeches to push their Irish nationalist politics. At St. Vincent's Catholic Church in Illinois, Prof. Turner "interwove scraps of Irish history that were intensely interesting. Chief among the latter were reference to Daniel O'Connor, while the finale was the description of the execution of the Irish patriot Robert Emmet."²⁶ Popular fiction writer and lecturer Seumas MacManus interrupted his prepared remarks to comment on Ireland's current oppression:

He told of the men who had worked for the emancipation of Ireland, led on by O'Connell and Parnell, and of the men who had fought at the siege of Limerick and again at Fontenoy. In the midst of his lecture he broke the thread of his discourse to say "Ireland for 700 years as fought for freedom from the yoke of the conqueror and when home rule is achieved, as we hope it will be in the near future, and we have an Irish parliament sitting in the beautiful old parliament building in which it used to deliberate, the real struggle will only have been well begun. What Ireland wants as her just due is absolute independence."²⁷

Similar to the hibernicon, the stereopticon performers also wanted to maintain their novelty. As a result, they did not hesitate to add unrelated or topical material to their entertainment. For example, in 1898, Father Sheehy took his audience through key battles in the Spanish-American War before starting his tour of Ireland.²⁸

These stereopticon and lecture performances satisfied many of the same desires for Ireland and spectacle that the hibernicon previously filled. During these years, more affordable and efficient travel allowed more people than ever before to visit Ireland. More Irish Americans moved into the middle class and earned enough to afford a trip to Ireland. As a result, these performances functioned as advertisements, as opposed to replacements, for the audiences' own Ireland experiences.²⁹

Unlike the hibernicon, the performances distanced themselves from the stage Irish and Irish ethnic comedy that still attracted audiences to variety and vaudeville houses. Some reviews imply that the lecturer maintained an Irish comic persona. Others suggest that the jaunting car

driver functioned as a character in the performance, even if he did not materialize onstage. A Los Angeles viewer of one lecture observed, “The jaunting car driver – the jarvey – was the source of many of MacManus’s tales.”³⁰ Although the comic sketches’ elimination may indicate the audience’s distaste for ethnic comedy, it also is possible that the new audiences, who attended performances at churches, universities, travel clubs, fraternal organizations, and the Chautauqua circuit, expected more respectable entertainment. Many of the venues were geared toward a higher class than the variety houses and halls leased by the hibernicon. Many of the lecturers also were Catholic priests, which may have influenced the content as well. It is possible that like Father John Talbot Smith, many of these priests watched the hibernicon when it visited their town or church and dreamed of performing in one. At their core, the performance also still focused on reinforcing ideas of Irish-American ethnic identity and demonstrating its compatibility with American values. During a 1912 lecture, “In closing Fr. Hollan made a particular appeal to the children to study the history of the Irish in America who were, he said among the most loyal and trusted friends of George Washington.”³¹

Yet, in spite of social, political, and cultural transformations and new technology and entertainment trends, the hibernicon continued to linger in Irish-American and Catholic memory. It is possible to trace its resonance through a comic monologue entitled “The Irishman’s Panorama.” Originally written by James Burdett in the 1870s, “The Irishman’s Panorama” sends up the lecturer of a hibernicon. Delivered in “Irish dialect: Conversational Tones,” the monologue is comprised of five segments. Each is introduced with the lecturer addressing the audience as “Ladies and Gintlemen” and ends with comic business as the lecturer tells his man to turn the crank or start the music. In between, he briefly talks about a new site and makes a joke or delivers a comic anecdote. Many of the jokes relate to potatoes and some do not connect to

Ireland at all. For example, after explaining how he visited Niagara Falls, he describes how ‘When passin’ by the falls wan evenin’, I heard the following remarks pass between a lady an’ gentleman. Says he to her, ‘Mary Ann,’ says he, ‘cast your eyes up on that ledge of rocks, and see that vast body of water rushing over that precipice. Isn’t that a great curiosity?’ ‘I know that,’ says she, ‘But wuddent it be a greater curiosity if they’d all turn and pass back again?’”³² The piece’s humor seems to emerge from not only the text, but from the presumed exaggerated performance and mocking of the lecturer persona. Although often at the expense of the Irish, the humor is fairly clean and inoffensive.

When Burdett published “The Irishman’s Panorama,” it had the potential for both professional and amateur performers’ stage use. By the 1870s, the rapidly expanding number of variety performers created a demand for new comic material. Cheap joke and sketchbooks became an affordable way for lower tier variety performers to keep their performances fresh. Publishers also churned out the joke and sketchbooks for amateur performers, who emerged as a viable market in the 1860s.³³ “The Irishman’s Panorama” became popular enough with these audiences that it remained in print from the 1870s until at least 1925.³⁴ In 1902, one publisher sold it separately to customers for thirty cents.³⁵ It became well known enough that a stenographer even used it as an example of “Hibernicized English” in 1895.³⁶

As a performed piece, newspapers record amateur performances of “The Irishman’s Panorama” through at least 1935 at churches, schools, fraternal organizations, and St. Patrick’s Day celebrations. Amateur actors performed it for the YMCA, high school glee clubs, the Young Ladies of St. John’s Church, the Woman’s Institute St. Patrick’s Tea, speaking contests, and the Chicago College of Dental Surgery among other groups and events. In these contexts, the comic piece seemed to please audiences. Its performance at a hotel was “considered a fine

success.”³⁷ The *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean* characterized an elocution teacher’s performance at the Apollo Banjo Club as “highly realistic and diverting.”³⁸ The Order of the Eastern star experienced “no little merriment” when Sister H. Josie Burnham recited it.³⁹

The repeated performances of the comic monologue and their apparent success implies that many in the audience understood the subject the piece spoofed. It remained funny perhaps because audiences remembered the original. If performers only were interested in portraying a comic Irishman or experimenting with Irish dialect, performers had a range of pieces with silly Irishmen and foolish Irish maids to choose from in joke and sketchbooks. The hibernicon remained a common memory and experience for many Americans, Irish Americans, and Catholics, which helped “The Irishman’s Panorama” not only continually be performed, but also kept audiences laughing even after the hibernicon disappeared from American stages. The popularity of “The Irishman’s Panorama” also gives a clue to the hibernicon’s decline. Perhaps it began struggling between 1890 and 1910 in part because some audiences could no longer take the performers seriously.

As a result of the challenges presented by erasure of the hibernicon from theatre history and the archive, this project has only begun to explore the form and its many resonances throughout the theatre world in the United States. Future projects might consider its role in the development of musical theatre in more depth and use it as a launching pad for a conversation about the role of touring variety companies. Although the hibernicon pre-dates the musical farces credited to Nate Salisbury in the 1870s, there is no reason why other companies may not have played with a closer relationship between music and narrative and never made it to New York stages. A study of these traveling companies may contribute new and interesting performances to our history of musical theatre. Placing these companies in a broader history of

variety theatre in America also may illuminate new avenues of research. Tony Pastor and B.F. Keith often are credited with creating vaudeville, but research suggests that they established successful business models for experiments in variety entertainment that occurred in New York and throughout the country. Further scholarly attention to touring variety companies' role in early musical theatre and variety entertainment may challenge the historiography of the field to reconsider its narratives revolving around a lineage of individual innovators and to perhaps put forth a more decentralized history.

The amount of evidence linking the Catholic Church to the hibernicon and popular entertainment suggests various alternate studies on the relationship between the Catholic Church and the theatre. Especially at a time when the church played a critical role in immigrants' lives in terms of reinforcing ethnic identity and encouraging assimilation, further research on performance at church fairs or the development of parish theatre may reveal new arguments about how theatre served or complicated these roles. Exploring these performances provides one way to see into the lives of the church's common parishioners, whose voices the official church record erases all too frequently. The active role of women in these events also presents an exciting opportunity to reassess Catholic women's lives and the role the church played within them.

A transnational or comparative study of the hibernicon might consider its performances in America in dialogue with performances in New Zealand and Australia. This examination might approach the topic more directly from the perspective of the Irish Diaspora and how narratives such as the hibernicon affected the Diaspora's connections. A close study also might highlight key local Irish distinctions and performances of identity through the hibernicon.

Another study might question the hibernicon in dialogue with other images of Atlantic travel and assess their practical as well as symbolic functions within Irish and Irish-American life.

Finally, the hibernicon demonstrates how romanticized images and stage caricatures may have functioned in a way that served the Irish-American community as opposed to denigrated it. Irish and Irish-American working class audiences were not too stupid to realize that stage Irish portrayals mocked them or too powerless to protest their existence on American stages. They showed their enjoyment of these characters by spending their hard-earned money on time viewing them in theatre. Even though questions of audience reception are difficult to pursue because of the lack of evidence, it seems important to continue to question why these audiences patronized performances with stage Irish characters or unrealistic images of Ireland and how these images functioned in Irish-American life.

As conceptions of the stage Irishman narrowed at the turn of the century, the hibernicon no longer comprised part of the Irish and Irish-American working class's usable past. The performances reminded Irish and Irish-Americans of Ireland's past glories and struggles, which seemed increasingly distant and irrelevant to their experiences in America. Even though the hibernicon did not encourage Irish and Irish-Americans to return permanently to Ireland, it constructed the experience of return, either literally or theatrically, as a crucial experience for Irish descendants. As an entertainment that played to certain Irish and Irish-American working class concerns and staked its visual spectacle on reinforcing notions of Irish ethnic identity, the hibernicon performances may not have made sense to a working class defined by different ideas of ethnic identity, politics, community, and daily life. Increasingly committed to and succeeding in establishing identities as Americans, the Irish-American working class may have reached a point where they were more comfortable imagining themselves as Americans than as

descendants of an Irish character like Barney the Tour Guide. For many Irish-Americans, America was home, not Ireland.

Notes

¹ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 16 April 1910, 5.

² *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 16 April 1910, 5. During the late 1900s, the hibernicon was already forgotten by many. When the company performed to help a Catholic pastor raise money to build a parochial school in 1908, the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* referred to the plan as a “novel scheme.” The writer had no recollection of the dozens of hibernicon companies, who pledged, genuinely or not, to help Catholic parishes across the country throughout the previous half century. *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 25 February 1908, 6. For a report of its 1909 performance, see *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 19 January 1909, 6.

³ At the turn of the twentieth century, the former Irish and Irish-American working class audience of the hibernicon was aging and dying. Their American born children stood a good chance of entering the middle class and increasingly witnessed the advantages of identifying as American over Irish. It seems the Catholic Church’s support of the hibernicon may have decreased as it increasingly organized their own amateur entertainments. The New York Church strongly advocated in public against the professional theatre after church leader wrested the Catholic Theatre Movement from Eliza Lummis in the mid-1910s. When the church began transitioning away from its position as an ethnic institution, it also no longer needed the hibernicon to attract its Irish congregation.

⁴ Anna Throop Craig, *Book of the Irish Historical Pageant* (New York: Francis and Loutrel, 1913); Anna Throop Craig, ed., *‘An Dhord Fhiann’: An Irish Historic Pageant* (New York: Francis and Loutrel, 1913); “Irish Historical Pageant,” *New York Irish-American*, 8 March 1913, 5; “Wolfhounds Dramatic Feature of Irish Pageant,” *New York Irish-American*, 17 May 1913, 5; *Cleveland Leader*, 27 April 1913, 53; “Grand Historical Pageant,” *New York Irish-American*, 22 March 1913, 5; Deborah Sugg Ryan, “Performing Irish-American Heritage: the Irish Historic Pageant, New York, 1913,” in *Ireland’s Heritages: Critical Perspectives on Memory and Identity*, ed. Mark McCarthy (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 105-118. Scholar Deborah Ryan argues that the “pageant put on a performance of Irish heritage to show not only the continuation and resistance of Irish culture in the face of upheaval and oppression by the British, but also its superiority. The pageant was therefore intended not only to educate and induce national pride for Ireland’s heritage in its Irish-American audience, but also to show a wider American public Ireland’s civilized past.” Ryan, 106. A product of the Celtic and Gaelic Revivals, the *Irish Historical Pageant* drew on the revivals’ New York and Irish proponents for both its creators and participants. John P. Campbell, a member of the Ulster Literary Theatre, produced the pageant’s art. Members of the Gaelic Societies of New York and Brooklyn, County Societies, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment, and the Irish-American Athletic League volunteered as the pageant’s actors.

⁵ Ryan, 107.

⁶ Ibid., 117.

⁷ “Synopsis of the Music,” in ‘*An Dhord Fhiann*’: *An Irish Historic Pageant*; Ryan, 114. Reports from the *Irish-American* claim Victor Herbert composed the music. “Irish Historical Pageant,” *New York Irish-American*, 8 March 1913, 5.

⁸ Quoted in Ryan, 115. The pageant echoed the hibernicon’s calls that “all Irishmen and Irishwomen who feel a pride in their ancestry” should attend and it also used its performance to raise funds for an Irish cause, in this case the perpetuation of the Irish language in Ireland. “Irish Historical Pageant,” *New York Irish-American*, 8 March 1913, 5. See also “Ireland’s History,” *Irish-American*, 17 May 1913, 1.

⁹ Ryan claims the Armory held about three thousand five hundred people. Ibid., 105.

¹⁰ For Anna Throop Craig’s thoughts on the pageant movement in the United States, see Anna Throop Craig, *The Dramatic Festival: A Consideration of the Lyrical Method as a Factor in Preparatory Education* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1912). For more on pageants in early twentieth century America, see David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

¹¹ Marion Casey, “Ireland, New York, and the Irish Image in American Popular Culture, 1890-1960” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1998), 373.

¹² Fanning, 170. Fanning claims Celticism served both propaganda and literary purposes. He also discusses the negative effects of Celticism, especially for its role in distracting artists and writers from creating work about American life and in influencing Irish-Americans to romanticize the continuing struggles of the Irish. Fanning, 169-172.

¹³ For more on how nickelodeons functioned in working class ethnic communities, see Lizabeth Cohen, *Making the New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge, 1990).

¹⁴ Mari Kathleen Fielder, “Chauncey Olcott: Irish-American Mother-Love, Romance, and Nationalism,” *Éire-Ireland* 22, no. 2 (Summer 1987): 20-1.

¹⁵ Casey, 8; Fielder, 9-10, 14-21.

¹⁶ David Brundage, “‘In Time of Peace, Prepare for War’: Key Themes in the Social Thought of New York’s Irish Nationalists, 1890-1916,” in *The New York Irish*, eds. Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 321-334; Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 541-44; Kevin Kenny, “American-Irish Nationalism,” in *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of*

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¹⁷ *Oregonian*, 19 June 1917, 18; "New York Irish Americans are Loyal to the US in War," *Riverside (California) Independent Enterprise*, 5 May 1917, 1; "Irish-American Societies are Loyal," *Times-Picayune*, 11 May 1917, 29. For more on the Irish-American community's support of the war, see McNickle, 352-3; Lawrence McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1992), 40.

¹⁸ "New York Irish American are Loyal to the US in War," *Riverside (California) Independent Enterprise*, 5 May 1917, 1. One article in the *Macon (Georgia) Telegraph* questioned Irish-American loyalty. It criticized the existence of any pro-Irish sentiment among Irish immigrants and Irish-Americans, but the writer acknowledged that the majority of Irish-Americans' loyalties lay first with America. *Macon (Georgia) Telegraph*, 12 October 1917, 4.

¹⁹ According to historian Lawrence McCaffrey, "By the close of World War I, Irish America was a familiar and generally likeable segment of the American ethnic landscape." McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, 40.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 154.

²¹ J.P. Dolan, *The Irish-Americans: A History* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008), 134.

²² Casey, 373; McNickle, 337-356; McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, 152-155.

²³ Charles Musser, *The Emergence of Cinema: The American Screen to 1907 Volume 1* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 30.

²⁴ *Pawtucket (Rhode Island) Times*, 16 March 1912, 9. In the late 1890s, the first hints of the stereopticon replacing the moving panorama in hibernicon performances surfaced with a "Tour Through Ireland." A "Tour Through Ireland" displayed "300 Rare Stereopticon Views of the Emerald Isle" along with vocal and instrumental music. It is unclear how many other hibernicon companies may or may not have switched to the stereopticon. *Oregonian*, 1 November 1898, 5.

²⁵ "In Dear Old Ireland," *Anaconda (Montana) Standard*, 9 October 1898, 5.

²⁶ *Elkhart (Indiana) Daily Review*, 19 March 1904, 5.

²⁷ "Tears and Smiles Tribute to Erin," *Detroit Free Press*, 18 March 1916, 3.

²⁸ "In Dear Old Ireland," *Anaconda (Montana) Standard*, 9 October 1898, 5.

²⁹ The stereopticon performances benefited from these trends not only because they seemed to increase demand for travel imagery, but also because the stereopticon allowed visitors to take their pictures, transform them into slides, and then present them to audiences. Although transforming the pictures still cost money, there was less time investment than the panorama painters who often traveled to Ireland for their paintings and had to recreate in detail sketches on massive canvas.

³⁰ "Tour Ireland in Afternoon," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 February 1913, II8.

³¹ *Pawtucket (Rhode Island) Times*, 16 March 1912, 9. For more on the stereopticon lectures, see Seumas MacManus: of Donegal, brochure, (191?), *Traveling Culture: Circuit Chautauqua in the Twentieth Century*, Special Collections, University of Iowa Libraries, <http://sdrdata.lib.uiowa.edu/libsdrc/details.jsp?id=/macmanus/2> (accessed March 5, 2011); "Bits of Local News," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 15 February 1890, 5; "Tour through Ireland," *Omaha World Herald*, 14 April 1891, 5; *Boston Herald*, 3 February 1895, 2; *New Haven Register*, 19 March 1895, 1; "Eloquent Father Coyle," *New York Irish World*, 21 March 1896, 8; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 30 January 1897, 2; "Marquette Club Entertainment," *Cleveland Leader*, 30 December 1897, 6; "In Dear Old Ireland," *Anaconda (Montana) Standard*, 9 October 1898, 5; "Father Boylan's Lecture To-night," *Jersey Journal*, 15 November 1898, 3; *Denver Post*, 30 March 1899, 3; *Elkhart (Indiana) Daily Review*, 19 March, 1904, 5; *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 2 May 1906, 10; *Morning Star (Illinois)*, 17 March 1907, 9; *Pawtucket (Rhode Island) Times*, 16 March 1912, 9; "Tour Ireland in Afternoon," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 February 1913, II8; "Famous Irish Author Will Lecture Here," *Atlanta Constitution*, 23 March 1913, D16; *Springfield Union*, 16 February 1915, 9; "Noted Irish Wit to Lecture Here," *Star and Sentinel* (Gettysburg, PA), 9 March 1916, 1; "Tears and Smiles Tribute to Erin," *Detroit Free Press*, 18 March 1916, 3; "Seumas MacManus Tonight," *Gettysburg Star and Sentinel*, 21 March 1916, 1; *East Lansing (Michigan) Mac Record*, 25 April 1916, 8; "Hibernian Auxiliary Gives Benefit Tonight" *Pittsburgh Press*, 25 April 1917, 12.

³² *Choice Dialect and Vaudeville Stage Jokes* (Chicago: Frederick J. Drake and Company, 1902), 10.

³³ Laurence Senelick, "Variety into Vaudeville, The Process Observed in Two Manuscript Gagbooks," *Theatre Survey* 19, no. 1 (May 1978): 1-2.

³⁴ *A Collection of Humorous, Dramatic, and Dialect Selections*, ed. Alfred P. Burbank (New York: Dick and Fitzgerald, 1878), 44-6; *Common School Elocutionary Selections*, ed. Isaac Hinton Brown (St. Louis: 1882), 98-99; *Wit and Humor of the Age*, ed. Melville D. Landon (Chicago: Star Publishing Company, 1883), 489-490; *The Speaker's Favorite or Best Things for Entertainments*, ed. Frank H. Fenno (Philadelphia: John E. Potter and Company, 1893), 207-8; *The American Star Speaker and Elocutionist*, ed. Charles Walter Brown (Chicago: Frederick J. Drake and Company, 1901), 127-8; *Hot Stuff by Famous Funny Men* (Chicago: Reilly and Lee, Co., 1901), 489-490; *Comic Recitations and Readings*, ed. Charles Walter Brown (Chicago:

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³⁵ "Musical Entertainments," *Werner's Readings and Recitations*, Issue 26 (New York: Edgar S. Werner and Company, 1902), 186.

³⁶ George R. Bishop, "'Exact Phonography' Department," *The Stenographer* 8, no. 6 (December 1895): 191.

³⁷ "Saratoga Excursion," *Boston Evening Transcript*, 16 August 1882.

³⁸ "Last Night's Society," *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 11 February 1882, 4.

³⁹ *Eastern Star* 4, no. 1 (June 1891): 11. For other instances of its performance, see "St. Paul's Church Social," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 24 April 1880, 8; *Jersey Journal*, 23 February 1881; "Boys' Entertainment," *Bangor (Maine) Daily Whig and Courier*, 5 October 1882; "Burdette, the Humorist," *Greenpoint Daily Star (New York)*, 31 March 1883, 1; "First M.E. Church Social," *Syracuse Standard*, 6 June 1884, 4; *Rockford (Illinois) Gazette*, 10 June 1884; "Soldier's Temperance Meeting," *Washington D.C. Evening Critic*, 27 September 1884, 3; "A Church Entertainment," *Cleveland Leader and Herald*, 16 February 1888, 5; *Reports of Trustees of the De Veaux College* (Albany: Troy Press Company, 1889), 143; "A Benefit Entertainment," *Sunday Inter Ocean*, 27 January 1889, 6; "A Unique Entertainment," *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, 28 February 1891, 6; "St. Johnsbury Centre," *St. Johnsbury Caledonian*, 3 September 1891, 5; *Huntington Long Islander*, 30 April 1892; "The First of Six Musicales," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 13 January 1893, 5; *Sault Ste. (Michigan) Marie*, 6 June 1896, 1; James Hedley, *Twenty Years on the Lecture Platform: An Autobiography* (Cleveland: Mary Hedley, 1901), 78; *Watertown Daily Times*, 14 November 1908, 4; "Recital at Nelson Hall This Evening," *Wilkes-Barre (Pennsylvania) Times*, 4 February 1910, 16; *Springfield Daily News*, 7 February 1911, 5; *Rockford (Illinois) Register-Gazette*, 23 May 1914, 6; "Social Union," *Denver Post*, 4 April 1915, 2; *Niagara Falls Gazette*, 14 March 1935.

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