The Sexton of Cologne

An Operatic Romance in Two Acts

The Music by George Herbert Buonaparte Rodwell.

The Text by Edward Fitzball

See https://englishromanticopera.org/operas/TheSextonofCologne.htm for more details on the opera.

This libretto is a transcription from two sources. Firstly, the manuscript held in the British Library, Add MS 42938, ff. 136-158. The librettist, Edward Fitzball, wrote the covering letter to the Examiner of Plays, George Colman on June 6, 1836. This was followed up by a further letter signed by a copyist, George Wilson, on June 9 with an additional scene for Nina.

Further to the manuscript, the text for most of the vocal items was published by D'Almaine and Co. and printed by Joseph Mallett in 1836 (British Library dating) and is available at the British Library, System number 000182396. Some songs from that collection were also published individually. The song versions from the printed edition have been used in preference to those in the manuscript as more likely to have been used in actual performance. They are set in bold. Any differences between the two are noted either in the footnotes or in an adjacent column. Similarly, all the stage directions from the printed editions (in bold) have been included as they are almost always fuller than the equivalent directions in the manuscript. Any material differences have been noted.

The handwriting appears to be in one hand and with good legibility, probably the copyist George Wilson. Spellings are as in the manuscript and include such words as "honor" for "honour". The capitalisation of words and the, sometimes, idiosyncratic punctuation has been retained in the main.

{xx} marks the page numbers of the manuscript with **{xxa}** being the leading side and **{xxb}** the reverse**.**

Please send any comments or corrections to englishromanticopera@gmail.com .

R Burdekin, January 2018
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Additional scene for Nina

The main submission to the Examiner was followed up on June 9, 1836, with the script of a further song for Nina, one of the subsidiary characters. It is not clear where it fitted in as Nina sings in all the scenes where she has dialogue and its subject does not obviously fit into the narrative. The song was not included in the printed collection of vocal items although that was not published until after June 13, 1836 so there was enough time to have included it. Nor was it published as a separate song. No review mentioned it as they do Nina's "A Bride! oh, happy title!". Perhaps it was never used.

Scena (Nina)

Star of Pity, brightly beaming,
Where descends thy holy light -
On the ear of guileless childhood,
Softly falls the sweet good night!
Where the billows darkly rolling,
Toss the storm cleft barque on high.
'Tis thy beam, bright star of pity,
Lulls the wave, and gilds the sky.
Watchful spirit! I adore thee,
Ever here thy warmth impart
And, while earth and nature mingle,
Brightly beam o'er every heart!

Note on the censorship of the libretto.

The manuscript is notable in not being signed by the Examiner of Plays (Censor), George Colman, as he invariably seems to have done in other cases prior to sending the necessary licence to the theatre.

It is also interesting that there are two expressions of "Oh! God" in the manuscript, which would normally have been struck out by Colman, who was notoriously sensitive to any religious references (Jeremy F. Bagster-Collins, *George Colman: The Younger.* New York: King's Crown Press, 1946:290-306). The many "Heaven"s would also have been rejected (Richard Brinsley Peake, *Memoirs of the Colman Family*. Vol 2. London: Richard Bentley, 1841: 430). By this time Colman was listing any changes on or with the licence but not marking up the manuscript, see A Note on Censorship in the 19th Century British Theatre, Section 5.

One cannot help but wonder whether this was something of a joke by the librettist Fitzball or the theatre manager, David Osbaldiston, who both knew Colman's foibles well, to see if they could get away with it perhaps because they knew Colman was ill; he was to die four months later. If the songs had been given outside of the theatre then the "Heaven"s that appear in the printed text would not have been struck out as published songs were not censored.

Dramatis Personae

The manuscript **{140a}** just included a list of the characters. The vocal items text included the fuller description below.

The Burgomaster of Cologne……	Mr Thompson
Ephraim (a rich Usurer, a Jew) ……	Mr Morley
Laban (his Son) ……	Mr Collins
Theodore (a young Officer) …….	Mr Manvers
Hans Bolt ……	Mr Vale
Isaac (Ephraim's domestics) …….....	Mr Willing
Reuben	Mr Dubochet
Guido ……...	Mr Collett
Simeon (a Jewish boy) ……	Miss Land
Adelaide (The Burgomaster's Daughter) ……. (some newspapers called her Adelhaide)	Miss Romer
Nina (her Confidante & Foster-sister to the Sexton) …..	Miss Turpin

Nuns, Bridesmaids, Ladies, etc.

The Sexton of Cologne

Act 1st, Scene 1st

A view of the Tower of Cologne

Chorus (*a group of People discovered gazing*)[1]

Behold the Bride! what pomp, what beauty!
Such charms become a soldier's wife!
The best reward for martial duty,
A happy home – a wedded life.
Behold etc.

[*Enter a Chorus of Bridesmen and Maidens, with*[2] *baskets of white roses in their hands. The men are young officers of Theodore's regiment*]

Chorus

Hymen, to thy holy shrine
Thus with joyous feet we move;
Closer, two fond hearts to join,
With the purest bonds of love!

[*Enter, under a canopy of white and silver, decorated with garlands of white roses, and supported by Pages in white, Adelaide and Theodore, as Bride and Bridegroom, followed by the Burgomaster, Nina, Officers, Ladies, Citizens, Soldiers, etc.*]

Duet – Adelaide and Theodore

If there be on earth a transport,
{140b} **Equal that of endless light,**
'Tis the bliss of one dear moment,
When congenial hearts unite!

Chorus

Hymen, hear thy votaries' prayer,
Mildly o'er the rite preside;
With the glory truth should wear
Crown the Bridegroom and the Bride!

[1] Manuscript has "Chorus (of People, Soldiers, etc.)
[2] The manuscript direction is "Enter Bridesmaids with white roses etc.".

Adelaide

Ah! My heart thus palpitating!
At this door I trembling stay.

[*The church doors open, the Priest and Boys*[3] *appear, with crosier and incense*]

Theodore

Lo! the sacred Priest is waiting:
Heaven[4] **records our love to-day!**

[5]

Together

If there be on earth, etc.

Chorus – Priests etc.

Hymen, hear etc.

[6] **[*The Procession enters the church – Bridesmaids strewing flowers on the steps*]** [*The Procession enters the church. Enter Ephraim followed by Simeon*]

Ephr. The Nazarine's daughter uniteth herself with the Nazarine's son – is't not so?

Sim. Verily as thou sayst, good master; but thou forgettest, that the fair Bride is mistress Adelaide, the rich Burgomaster's only daughter, and the brave young Bridegroom.

Ephr. Captain Theodore Ankenstein! Was not my son bidden to these nuptials?

Sim. Aye, Sir – twelve days since. He saved lady Adelaide's life you know – 'twas a brave deed!

Ephr. It was. – I shall never forget that! Boy, forget not thou, the heart of a father locketh up the good deeds of his children! But in; and make fast **{141a}** my doors! (*Exit Simeon*) How is it, that my limbs totter thus? Is it that an ill dream last night – Bah! I must bethink me of my monies – But I dreamt that my son, pale and bleeding, appeared before me, wounded by the weapons of some Nazarine; & these Christians here, in Cologne, love not us Sons of Israel: they forget we have feelings like their own and almost forget we are men.

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[3] No equivalent stage direction was included in the manuscript.
[4] "Heaven" would have been rejected by the Examiner, George Colman. See note on page 2.
[5] Included in printed text but not in the manuscript.
[6] Stage directions differ slightly between printed text and manuscript

Song - Ephraim

Have we not feelings like their own,
By mutual care surrounded?
Fashion'd by Him who fashion'd them,
Of equal clay compounded?
Do we not laugh at mirth, as they,
Or weep when woe we scan?
Who shall deny what Heaven affirms –
A Jew hath the heart of a Man?

We love our friends, we hate our foes,
As Christians do, sincerely;
Honor we prize, like beaten gold,
And treasure truth as dearly.
Flows mortal blood not through our veins?
Deny it, ye who can!
And think, believe, what Heaven affirms,
A Jew hath the heart of a Man!

Laban (*appearing in Boat*) Father! Father!

Ephr. My boy! my only one! My Prodigal, returned! welcome! But how is this – so pale, so changed. Now know I why no letter reached me of thy returning home – thou'rt sick! What aileth thee?

{141b}

Laban Not of the body, father, is my malady. 'Tis of the mind" Adelaide Whilnemberg (?) - tell me that she is not yet married.

Ephr. So! thou hast cast aside all cares of merchandize, and, for mere speed, endanger'd thy health, to give away this Bride.

Laban Father, I'd sooner give away existence – nay, my soul's redemption, all! rather than Adelaide! I long have loved her, and without her, existence were a blank!

Ephr. Thou'rt mad! The Burgomaster's daughter never can be thine.

Laban So her father proudly told me. Our laws and yours forbid it, he cried, coldly; and when I laughed at laws for love ordained – Oh, God![7] shall I ever forget the look of disgust with which he ejaculated - remember, Laban, thou art a Jew!

Ephr. Ugh! there spoke the Nazarine!

Laban How different were his sentiments when, 5 years ago, I saved his daughter's life from the deep waters of the Rhine – then he could press the hand of a Jew, and call a Jew his Son!

[7] See note on Page 2

Song- Laban[8]

When the frail bark lay perishing,
And Christians all appalled stood.
By pity moved by courage fired,
I rush'd into the stormy flood.
A Jew, a stripling, a mere boy,
{142a} I laugh'd at peril's wild alarms
I snatch'd from death the drowning maid
To place her in a father's arms
Then wept for joy the Nazarene.
His child unto his breast he drew,
Nor deem'd thereby offence to Heaven,
Tho' he who sav'd her was a Jew!
Yet when I craved that life to share,
Which mine had snatch'd from death's alarms
He gave me what? a broken heart,
To place within my father's arms.

Ephr. But my Laban – this attachment – this refusal – from me concealed.

Laban Father, I wished not to afflict thee! Absence, I thought, had subdued the fire when your letters announced these approaching nuptials. I have imagined that Adelaide loved me & had I been other than I am – but I will, for her sake, if it must be adjure[9], aye, my faith!

Ephr. Turn Christian!

She is a Christian! Curse me, if thou will. I can endure all, rather than lose her.

Oh! misery! must I behold thee an Apostate – outcast to thy race – accursed hour, when first thine eyes beheld her! (*Organ, heard*) Ha! Eternal Power that watchest o'er my tribe, I bless him for this warning – my Laban hath arrived too late – Come in!

{142b}

Laban That sound! unhand me father (*rushes to church door*) Adelaide a bride! and he the Bridegroom! Father, give me thy knife! Even before their high altar (*seizing knife*)

Ephr. Help! Simeon – Reuben! (*Enter Simeon etc.*) Drag him into the house!
[*They detain him*]

[8] This was not included in the printed collection of vocal items nor as a separate song.
[9] Presumably "abjure" was intended

Concerted Piece

Laban

Oh, ~~Heaven~~![10] she is another's!
Another's bride!
'Twere better in yon waters
She had died!
For, by this hand that sav'd her,
Death is borne;
She -all she lov'd- shall perish
In their scorn!

Ephraim

Detain him – he is frantic!
Oh! hear, my boy!
Nor thus, in wild distraction,
Thy soul destroy!
Nor deem, thus single-handed,
Vengeance borne!
[11] ~~**She – all she loves- will mock thee,**~~
~~**In their scorn!**~~

Simeon and Jews

Oh! listen to us, master dear!
Deign, deign thy servants, pray, to hear.

[12]

Within thy chamber seek thou rest,	In gentle slumber seek repose
And calm, oh! calm that troubled breast!	Sweet sleep will soothe thy woes!

~~Ephraim~~[13]

~~**Oh! listen to me, Laban dear!**~~
~~**Deign, deign a father's voice to hear!**~~
~~**In gentle slumber seek repose;**~~
~~**Sweet sleep will soothe thy heavy woes.**~~

[10] The manuscript has "Oh, God!". See note on Page 2.
[11] This couplet is not in the manuscript.
[12] The manuscript has different lines.
[13] This stanza is not in the manuscript.

{143a} **Laban**

In vain each hope to soothe my care;
No power can check my wild despair!
[14] ~~**No sleep, but death, can yield repose,**~~
~~**Or calm, alas! this tide of woes!**~~

Release me! Let me pass!
My rage beware!
My soul distracted is
With wild despair!

[*He breaks away, and, rushing towards the church, is repelled by Soldiers*]

Ephraim

Oh! force – oh, force him hence!
[15] ~~**O'erwhelm'd by care,**~~
~~**His soul distracted is**~~
~~**With wild despair!**~~

Simeon and Servants

Oh! master, young and kind,
Attend our prayer;
And do not thus give way
To deep despair.

Soldiers

[16] ~~**You pass not, sir, this way!**~~
~~**Our spears beware!**~~
To interrupt the rites
No one shall dare!

Chorus (*in the Church*)

Benediction! Peace abide
With the Bridegroom and the Bride!
[17] ~~**Benediction!**~~

[14] This couplet is omitted in the manuscript.
[15] These three lines are not included in the manuscript
[16] This couplet is omitted in the manuscript.
[17] Not included in manuscript

[18] ~~**Laban**~~

~~**Release, etc.**~~

~~**Ephraim**~~

~~**Oh! force, etc.**~~

[*He attempts to stab himself; the knife is wrung from him, and he is dragged into the house. The music takes a lively turn, the Procession re-enters and crosses the stage*]

Chorus

Behold the happy bride, etc.

[*Exeunt*]

{143b}

Scene 2nd

Ephraim's Apartment

Enter Ephraim and Hans

Ephr. I tell thee, twere easier for thee to move the dome of St. Peter, than me; I'll lend no more monies – get thee gone!

Hans I can't – I haven't strength to stir without money to lighten my heels and whither should I go? Not a coin in my pouch – not to my sickly wife and seven starving children! Amiable Jew, lend me only a trifle more on that venerable silver watch, which I pledged with thee, last Wednesday – a heavy watch it is; large as the Church dial, there - Why, the catgut in it cost more than the bell ropes of St Peter's – My poor wife shall pray for thy conversion, as she beholdeth her babes feeding on the fruits of the bounty – listen I beseech thee (*seizes his robe*).

Ephr. Take thy filthy hands off, varlet! – thou'dst rob me, I'll warrant!

Hans I! thou vilifier of honest Christian men's characters! – my pickaxe hath more humanity – out on thee, thou flinty hearted Usurer!

Ephr. Hound of a sexton! get to thy proud Prelates; bid them give thee money to pay the Jew with! for, by my Father's faith, and thou payest not all thou ow'st me, 'ere daybreak, laid by the **{144a}** heels I'll have thee.

[18] Next four lines not included in manuscript

Hans (*aside*) I've gone too far! – Indulgent Hebrew
Ephr. What ho! my servants! (enter Servants) Rid me of that viper!

Hans Do lend me a trifle

Ephr. Away with him!

Hans Oh! that I had my bell rope around thy neck, extortionating [sic] Jew!

[*They force him off*]

Ephr. Ha! my son! (*Enter Laban*) Thou'rt (?) calmer now

Laban Father, I'm meditating how to die!

Ephr. Banish this deep despair; I'll find thee, amongst our tribe, a Bride so beautiful – Laban, a thought cometh o'er me, how I may assist thee: I'll tell thee of a thing so wonderful – 'tis of a ring, so curiously wrought – an anodine[19] so fraught with magic, that its wearer, being fevered by excess of exercise, will presently fall, and seem as dead!

Laban Seem as dead!

Ephr. Yet dead be not: draw from the finger but again the ring – the heart will pulsate & the eye rekindle of him, or her, who breath[e] (?)[20] its torpid influence, hath worn the chilling aspect of the grave: as a bridal present, that ring shalt thou to Adelaide convey – she'll not refuse the gift from one, who saved her life; and when the dance hath excited the inmost currents of her **{144b}** blood, then shall the opiate, taking its secret hold, chill every pulse, and she seem suddenly bereft of life.

Laban And they would convey her, as is the custom here, with persons dying by such visitation, ere sunset, to the tomb.

Ephr. Even so; clad in her bridal garments, her jewels' & her rings. In the Sepulchre, ere midnight, thou couldst bear her to some distant spot – there, with new life endowed, a captive to remain, till gratitude, if not love, shall make her thine.

Laban Oh happy thought!

Ephr. Behold the ring! a Jewish relic of resinous compounds, as some think, from the deadly Upas tree; we date it from the mysterious Pyramids, when cunning Priestcraft, for licentious purposes, needed such subtle art. Once, in folly's sport, I own I tried it; terror and remorse had moved me to destroy the fatal charm, but 'twas prophecied, [sic] when this ring should be crushed or broken be, so crushed

[19] An anodine at that time was a term for a prophylactic to ward off illness, e.g. see Francis Doherty, "The Anodyne Necklace: A Quack Remedy and its Promotion", *Medical History*. 34 (1990): 268-293.
[20] The first two letters are indistinct

and broken should our house become.

Laban Give me the ring!

Ephr. 'Tis thine! But remember, as Solomon in his wisdom built the Temple, so prudently must thou build up thy happiness; one particle neglected, **{145a}** the whole will fall, and crush both thee and me. I have done this, but to save thy life, my son, and arm it 'gainst thyself. But if thou startst when the deed is done, or, by a tear, a word, betray the secret, these Nazarenes will heap on thee revenge, more burning than the hate I bear them!

Duet – Ephraim and Laban

Ephraim

Not a look, not a sigh, must thou give,
When in death she appeareth to lie;
Thy lip may not tremble with fear,
Nor a beam of despair light thine eye.

Laban

Not a tear, not a sigh, shall escape;
My woe or my joy I'll control.
I'll wear the dark coldness of night,
For the sunshine that waiteth my soul!

Both

Not a word, not a look, must betray
The deep hidden gem of the mine;
Or the prize, too imprudently lost,
On the brow of another may shine.

[*Exeunt*]

Scene 3rd

Gothic Hall

Enter Adelaide and Nina

Nina My lady Adelaide! – Madame Ankenstein! – Ah! you'll **{145b}** reply to that name, I warrant.

Adel. Are we not proudest of our silks, good Nina, while we wear them in their newest lustres?

Nina Marry, are we! You're a wife – think of that! – a bride! Heigho!

Song - Nina

A Bride! oh, happy title!
How beautiful to wear!
To know the heart you prize the most,
Is only yours to share!
There's nought so blest in nature,
Though the world be vast and wide,
With the gold ring on her finger,
As a fair young bride!

The veil around her falling,
The chaplet o'er her brow,
The rose betraying on her cheek
The bosom's tender glow;
Though in her eye a tear-drop,
'Tis sorrow's latest tide;
There's nought so blest in nature
As a fair young Bride!

Adel. I shall marvel and(?)[21] thou be not soon a happy bride thyself!

Nina Heaven grant it! But I am here to announce the arrival of your well deserved favorite, the handsome young Jew!

Adel. Laban! I hoped – that is I thought he was at Munich.

{146a}

Nina But Laban tarries and he has for you a bridal gift.

Adel. Ha! What is it?

Nina That will he reveal to no one, save yourself! I'll warrant 'tis some costly bauble! If ever I wed, give me a rich Jew to make me bridal presents!

Adel. I'll not accept these presents.

Nina No! Laban will be greatly chagrined.

Adel. True! I wish he had not come today; he is apt to take offence at trifle; and you know I cannot be the laughing, childish thing I was with him, now that I'm married.

Nina Ha! ha! (*curtseys*) I do your ladyship reverence – grave Matron of two hours! Will Capt[n] Theodore your husband, think you, so suddenly assume the tyrant and frown, because you throw a few smiles on the preserver of your life.

[21] The last letter is largely obscured. "if" would make more sense here.

Adel. Thou do'st well to remind me of that obligation, my faithful Nina – Bid him enter

Nina That will I! for I am impatient to see his gift!

[*Exit*]

Adel. Why should I tremble? I've done no wrong! He said he loved me; but how could I wed a Jew? – my father told him so – He's here – how pale, and changed! – Laban

[*Enter Laban, richly clad*]

Laban I am here, Adel – that is Madame Anken –

Adel. Nay, I will still be Adelaide with thee; and thou still Laban.

{146b}

Laban Adelaide, then; there's music in the sound of that sweet word, altho' it be, to me, but an echo of the past.

Adel. Shall I conduct you to Theodore –

Laban Thy husband – no! Canst thou not spare me, Adelaide, a few last moments? For him, thou hast a life of blessedness – for me, the companion of thy earlier, if not happier days, a moment is too much!

Duet – Laban and Adelaide

Laban

Think not I can forget thou art another's!
Oh, Adelaide! Where e'er thy bosom move,
'Mid sunny joys, remember that poor heart,
Forsaken, lost, in one dark night of love!

Adelaide

Oh, Laban! unto thee my life I owe,
A life too short its gratitude to prove;
Through woe, or weal, devoted still, this heart
Shall truly beat with all a sister's love.

Laban

A sister's love! The snow upon the hill
Will seem to wear the sunlight's golden glow,
In rosy tint, in purity attir'd
'Tis beautiful! yet, still, it is but snow!

Adelaide

We cannot change the current of the heart;
Still nature's laws to nature must apply;
The opening flower, though foster'd by the sun,
{147a} Too near his beams, will close again and die.

Both

Where'er we rove,
Still potent love
Defies each power of art!
Yes, nature still
Maintains its will,
And naught can change the heart.

[*Exit Adelaide*]

Laban Do not leave me Adelaide! – With what a joyful step she flies, perchance to greet her husband! For him (*feeling for his dagger, he finds the casket*) no! – I do forget – Ha! the happy weapon – the ring! – Welcome, dear talisman! whose magic touch shall, like the Patriarch's rod, bid comfort from despair's dark rock gush forth to slake the fever of this thirsty heart – they come!

[*Enter Adelaide, Theodore, Burgomaster, Nina and Guests*]

Burgo. Welcome, my brave young friend! This is well and noble of thee to be our Guest, today! *(pointedly*)

Theod. I first should thank thee for thy presence, Laban, since, but for thee, this hand (taking Adelaide's hand) had ne'er been mine. Teach me how best I may requite thy valor.

Laban The deed hath paid itself.

Burgo. My son, thou art too modest.

Theod. He called thee, son; I would thy brother be.

{147b}
Adel. And I thy sister!

Nina But this bridal present- where is it?

Laban Here it is! (*shewing casket*)

Nina Are they diamonds – pearls –

Laban No; a plain and gemless ring.

Adel. A ring!

Nina Is that a ring proper for a bridal gift? Adelaide, I'd not wear it! Out upon such presents!

Laban Thou dost mistake its merits: this ring I purchased from a Bohemian, on my travels – she said it held a charm, whereby to conserve unto the giver, the wearer's love.

Theod. I pray thee, give it me; I'll place it on my Adelaide's finger – she will then love me-

Laban Till death!

Theod. Wilt wear it, Adelaide?

Adel. Willingly!

Finale

Laban

So! from the deed, at least, he spares my hand.

Theodore (*to Adelaide*)

Till death thou'lt love me, by this token rare!

[*Placing the ring on her finger*]

Laban

Remorse! thy pang I scarcely can withstand!

Adelaide

My Theodore, alone, my heart shall share!

[~~*Theodore kisses her*~~][22]

Laban

That kiss confirms my purpose!
{148a} The conflict now is past;
Ah! Little thinks my rival
That kiss may prove his last!

[22] Not in the manuscript

~~[*A dance*]~~[23]

Adelaide, Theodore, Nina and Burgomaster

Oh! happy, happy moment!
May every care be past;
And transport, thus unclouded,
[24] **Prove brighter than the last!** For ever, ever last.

[*Enter Guests – Ephraim, amongst them, richly clad, attended by Simeon, etc*]
[*they sing*]

Oh! happy, happy nuptials!
May care's dark cloud be past!
And each revolving moment
Prove brighter than the last!

[*They drink, from goblets, etc. The Burgomaster shakes Ephraim's hand,etc*.]

Laban (*aside to Ephraim*)

The ring is on her finger
I almost fear to stay!

Ephraim (*aside*)

The soldier, void of courage,
Can never win the day!

Nina, Simeon, Adelaide, Theodore,
Guests and Burgomaster

The music, sweetly sounding,
The nuptial dance invites;
Each heart with joy is bounding,
Each eye with transport lights!

[*A dance*]

Chorus

Lightly trip, gaily step, in the merry, merry, round,
'Tis the hour fresh of bliss as the sunny banks of spring

[23] Not in the manuscript

[24] Line differs between printed text and manuscript

Laughing joy floats above, smiling on the happy pair;
Friends, rejoice! Drink and laugh! Gaily drink and laugh and sing![25]

~~Burgomaster~~[26]

~~Lightly trip etc.~~

{148b}

Laban

[27] **Wildly beats now my heart, with a fearful, fearful pang;**
'Tis the hour fill'd with hope, yet I scarcely, scarcely breathe,
Lest that brow, now as bright, 'neath its bridal, bridal flow'rs,
Demon like, in the tomb, I with deadly cypress wreath.

Ephraim

Courage, boy! from thy cheek chase that pallid, pallid hue![28]
'Tis the hour of success – soon thy triumph is complete!
And the Bride, now so vain, of the proud Nazarine,
In her charms, in those arms, shall thy fondest wishes greet!

[*A scream among the women; the dancers, suddenly dividing, shew that the Bride faints*]

General Chorus

Nina etc.

Consternation! The Bride is fainting!

Theodore

My love!-

Burgomaster

My daughter! – a chair - a chair!

[25] Manuscript has "Friends, rejoice, drink & laugh, gaily drink, laugh & sing!"
[26] Not included in manuscript
[27] Manuscript has "Wildly beats my heart, with a fearful pang; /'Tis the hour fill'd with hope, yet I scarcely breathe"
[28] Manuscript has "Courage, boy, from thy cheek chase that pallid hue!"

Laban

Oh! agitation!

Ephraim

My son, be careful!

Nina and Burgomaster

Unclose the lattice – let in the air!

[*They place Adelaide in a chair*]

Adelaide

Where am I? – in what thrilling region?
What fearful spectres do these eyes behold?
{149a} My heart is frozen! – oh! cruel, cruel winter!
My every pulse of life is deadly cold!

Chorus

Eternal power!
Avert the hour!

Laban

What tortures tear!

Ephraim

Take heed – beware!

Air - Adelaide

I'm dying – this darkness, terrible!
Oh! bless me, father dear, ere life be fled!
29 ~~**My husband, kiss me –**~~

~~**[*Theodore is about to kiss her, when her head drops on her bosom*]**~~

~~**My strength deserts me!**~~

~~**Remember…this…last…word**~~ **–**

[*She appears to die*]

[29] The next three lines and stage direction do not appear in the manuscript

All

Alas! she's dead!
Yes, life hath fled!
Alas, she's dead!

Laban

Yes, life hath fled! So pale – so still
Alas, she's dead! New horrors thrill

Ephraim

Each fear resign,
And she is thine!

Chorus

Each hope hath fled!
She's dead! – she's dead!

[The Burgomaster sinks in attendants arms etc. Picture – Drop descends]

End of the First Act

[30] This couplet differs between printed text and manuscript.

Act 2nd, Scene 1st

Interior of St. Peter's Church.
Enter Hans

Song - Hans

All Fate frowns on,
All she smiles on,
Kings with crowns on,
Women with wiles on,
Ugly, handsome, young, and old,
Pretty well favor'd. or pretty so, so –
The maid that won't speak, or the wife that will scold –
[31] ~~**As the sun rolleth,**~~
~~**As the bell tolleth,**~~
~~**Heighho! – oh! ding dong, all must go!**~~
Lawyers quirking
Doctors scheming,
Old maids smirking,
Poets dreaming,
Sad , or merry, rich or poor -
[32] ~~**Such as have money, or money that owe,**~~
The hard-hearted dun, or your friend that's a bore.
~~**As the sun etc.**~~

Hans Yes, this is the key of the Burgomaster's vault. If I were a Doctor, it wouldn't be more necessary for me to examine the wards of the hospital than the wards of yonder lock (*goes to vault and appears to unlock a small door*)

[*Enter Ephraim and Laban as Pilgrims*]

Laban Good Sexton – is this the Burgomaster's tomb?

Hans Thou'rt a stranger in Cologne?

Ephr. By what sign so reckon'st thou?

Hans By thy questions! Every body hereabouts knoweth this tomb by its cunning handiwork. By turning this screw, the Bier being placed on the tomb, the whole will descend into the vault. For a trifling recompence [sic], I'll let you down in an instant!

{150a}

Ephr. Thank ye, friend, I'm well enough where I am!

[31] These three lines are not in the manuscript
[32] This line and the line below but one not included in manuscript

Hans These Monks, notwithstanding their preaching, are as soon frightened as other folks.

Laban On what occasion was this tomb thus constructed?

Hans The death of the last Burgomaster, who being unwieldy in his dimensions, couldn't have descended with magisterial dignity, but for your levers and pullies [sic]. Oh! 'tis a shame your rich Cormorants should have the advantage of eating and drinking to the end of life, & then sink down, in this fashion, as if 'twere a goose feather bed, while your starving Sexton becomes so lank and light that a whiff of the Organ bellows might blow him over the steeple. But the procession must be near – Nicholas, toll the bell, lustily!

[*Bell tolls – Hans begins to unbolt the doors*]

Ephr. There's a solemnity in this Christian temple, which chills me – Methinks I see thee, boy, apprehended – a Hebrew and subject to the cruel laws – the consuming flames – oh! horror! – desist we from our purpose – give Adelaide back to life and fly!

Laban We will from Cologne – not as felons fly; but like conquerors, bearing home rich spoils! Recover thyself –

Ephr. I am old –

[*Hans throws open doors and goes off to look for procession*]

{150b}

They come! (*supports himself against confessional*)

Trio – Hans, Ephraim, and Laban

Sadly and slow they come,
Led by the solemn knell;
Hark! 'tis the distant dirge!
Hark! 'tis the passing bell!

Ephraim

Fearfully beats my heart,
Chill'd by the dismal knell;
Hark! 'tis the Christian dirge!
Hark! 'tis the passing bell!

Laban

Joyously glows my heart!
Hopes fill'd with raptures swell;
Hark! 'tis my bridal song!
Hark! 'tis my nuptial bell!

[33] ~~**[*Enter procession of monks*]**~~

~~**Chorus – Ephraim, Laban, Hans, & Monks**~~

~~**Sadly and slow we/they come etc.**~~

~~**Grand Chorus**~~

~~**Sadly and slow etc.**~~

Theod. One moment stay! a parting kiss! (*kisses Adelaide*)

Laban (*apart*) My jealous soul denies him even that! But 'tis his last.

Theod. (*to Friar*[34]) Beseech thee, grant me, off this icy finger, a ring –

Laban A ring! What would'st thou?

Theod. Here next my heart, I'd wear it relique [sic] of her, all I loved on earth!

{151a}

Ephr. Horror! Should he take that ring!

Laban The law – the Church, forbids it! – "despoil not the dead"!

Ephr. So decreed the Senate of Cologne!

Trio

Laban

The sun is setting! and our laws
Decree that all who sudden die
Must to the silent tomb be given,
Ere yet day's beams forsake the sky.

Ephraim, Nina, Chorus

The sun is setting! like its beams,
So youth, so life, must fade away;
Still, but to hail a bright tomorrow,
Another and a better day!

[35] ~~**The sun is setting etc.**~~

[33] Manuscript has "Procession enters – Chorus – Sadly & slow etc. the Bier is placed on tomb" in place of these 5 lines
[34] Presumably means to Laban in his disguise as a friar
[35] Not included in manuscript

Grand Mass

Life fadeth like a flower,
In an hour!
Peace to the dead!
Things wrought of earthly clay
Must all decay!
Peace to dead!

[*The People fall on their knees as the body descends. Picture*]

Scene 2nd

Cloistered walk in the Churchyard.
Enter Laban

Laban She is alone! – they are departing from the Church. **{151b}** I'll tarry 'neath these Cloisters till midnight, then, Adelaide, I will be at thy side! – we'll away to a distant land! Gladly would I have won thee, as, in the olden time, the brave ever won beauty's smile! but we, then, that privilege would have been denied by Christians to the branded Jew!

Song - Laban

Oh! for the days of tournament!
At trumpets' thrilling sound!
When rival hearts 'neath glitt'ring steel,
Met in the tended[36] round!
When ladies smile to the brave alone
Was guerdon sure to prove,
Where the vanquish'd died, and the conqueror
Was the Rose-crown'd Knight of Love!

But not for me is beauty's smile,
The tear for Hero low;
A name proscrib'd my fathers bear,
The brand is on my brow!
Oh! for the days of the tournament!
The gauntlet and the glove!
And the banner'd list, where the prowest knight
Was the Rose-crown'd Knight of Love!

[*Exit*]

[36] Manuscript has "tented" not "tended"

[*Enter Hans*]

Hans I'm a miserable undone Sexton! – at my own door & afraid to knock! The verger has stopped my **{152a}** fee for an outstanding debt! I'm quitting the Church in despair. I tumbled over my foster sister, Nina, kneeling at the shrine – I told her of my sick wife & starving children; she wept and told me of mistress Adelaide – called me a Barbarian for speaking of the necessities of the quick because the dead had no necessities to speak about. I'll go and hang myself in a quiet respectable Sexton-like manner. (*Enter Nina*) No, I'll not hang myself till she's gone.

Nina Your wife – your children, want food, perhaps – I am but a poor servant with little to give – but will willingly share it amongst them. (*Enters house*)

Hans Bless thee! I'm a happy Sexton! No, I'm not – there'll be bread for them tonight – but what tomorrow and the next day? I can't forget what my poor wife said, when I told her of the lady Adelaide buried in her wedding clothes – how happy would those trinkets render us, sighed she! The sale of a single gem would purchase food for our family for a year to come! (*a key drops from his girdle*) How naturally that key dropped from the bunch! the key, too, of her vault! – all is silent, and if I slip a ring from Adelaide's cold finger or a chain from her neck, she'd never mention it, sweet lady! – I'll go! – begging and bells to Belzebub [sic] !

[*Exit*]

{152b}

[*Enter Nina*]

Nina Hans! – not here? – Ha! who seeks the Sexton's house – let me avoid observations (*goes behind pillar*)

[*Enter Laban in a mantle with lantern and Ephraim*]

Ephr. Here's gold! – go in, and procure the key of the vault; should the ring of opiate dissolve, Adelaide might recover from her swoon and be lost suffocated!

Laban Fearful thought!

[*Enters house*]

Nina (*apart*) Merciful Providence! – opiate – ring! – my lady not dead!

[*Re-enter Laban*]

Trio

Ephraim

Delay not! all is ready! Boy, good speed!

Laban

What if some watchful eye our deed should see;
The Sexton, he is absent; but within there
I of the church have found – behold! – the key!

[37] The manuscript has "I, of the church, have found, behold, the key!"

Night, my/our steps o'ershadow
In thy dark profound;
Of my/our secret purpose
Echo, breathe no sound!

Ephraim

But, Laban, by what effort shall we, say,
{153a} Unlock the vault where slumbers Adelaide?

Nina (*listening*)

Great heaven!

Laban

Strength, assist me! See, this crow-bar!
I seek the tomb – too long we have delay'd.

Ephraim

I, on the river, will thy purpose aid.

Nina

Ha! what dark purpose have their words betray'd?

[38] **~~All~~**

~~Night, my/our steps o'ershadow~~
~~In thy dark profound;~~
~~Of my/our secret purpose~~
~~Echo, breathe no sound!~~

[*Exeunt O.P. & P.S.*][39]

[*Enter Simeon*]

Sim. What was it my master ordained me to perform? To bid Reuben see conducted on board the vessel all the coffers – that's done! To conduct a boat to the corner of the Chancel – that's to do! Where can we be going? Well, where e'er my benefactor wanders, there also will be the footstep of the Hebrew boy!

[38] This verse is not included in the manuscript.
[39] Opposite prompt and prompt side, i.e. stage right and stage left.

Song - Simeon

The sunny waves, the gurgling waves,
Around our barque will shine,
Or gem with crystal drops the flowers
Along the banks of Rhine;
And, as those leafy banks I trace,
Or catch some note of joy,
With new delight this heart will beat –
Oh! happy Hebrew boy!

The summer wind, the gentle wind,
{153b} **Will waft us light and fast,**
And ev'ry op'ning scene appear
More lovely than the lst!
And so, through life, as fancy paints,
May beam each future joy;
Nor leave one sad regret behind -
Oh! happy Hebrew boy!

[*Exit*]

Scene 3rd

Adelaide's tomb (She is discovered on the Bier)
Enter Hans

Hans Oh! for a drop of brandy to keep up my spirits! Spirits! why did I utter that fearful word! Oh! what's that? – it was only a cobweb, which tickled my nose! (*seeing Adelaide*) How pale – no, she isn't – there's a smile, as much as to say – take my adornments, honest Sexton! I'll ask her the question – shall I take thy jewels, generous lady, with which to buy my Children bread! – No reply, silence gives consent! (*takes off the opiate ring*) What an ugly ironish hoop! (*attempts to get another ring*) Murder! she grasps my hand!

Adel. (*sitting up*) I am ready!

Hans She speaks! Oh! (*struggles*)

Adel. Give me the Chaplet – now the veil – yes, you are to be my husband! – we will descend together!

Hans Descend! I'm booked! – her husband! – perhaps **{154a}** I'm dead and buried and don't know it!

Adel. (*slipping off as he struggles to escape*) I will wed none save thyself, thy solemn pledge!

Hans Pledge! – has that old Jew told of my pledging Grandfather's watch!

Adel. That ring which renders me thine for ever!

Hans Oh! accursed ring (*dashing it down*)

Adel. I tell thee, Laban, 'tis too late – I am another's – we must part – farewell for ever!

Hans Or longer, if you please!

Adel. But you, my only love – Oh! I'll never forsake thee!

Hans She's as changeable as the weather cock!

[*Clock strikes*]

Adel. They wait for us in the church – come! (*awakes*) Where am I? (*screams*)

Hans I'm a dead and buried Sexton! (*falls behind the Bier*)

Scena - Adelaide

This dim light! this dismal chamber!
Where am I? - (*taking a lamp*) Scene appalling!
Why, confused, thus flows my reason?
Thoughts of life – of death – recalling!
Frightful ensigns! dread conviction!
From day to night untimely hurried,
My bridal bower a frightful hearse!
Great Powers on high! – alive I'm buried!

~~[*Falls on her knees*]~~[40]

Cold, cold! ~~frozen~~[41], my limbs fail me!
Horrible solitude! unhappy grave!
{154b} My nuptial garland my funeral wreath is!

[*Tears it off*]

Oh, Theodore! Where art thou, thy bride to save?

Prayer

My trembling lips refuse, almost, to pray;
My waking soul seems stifled with dismay!
Oh, Mother! in thy shroud, if slumb'ring near,
Thy lost, distracted, wretched daughter hear!
Send me some sign, to ease this load of care!
No hope, no hope! – I perish in despair!

[42] ~~[*Falls*]~~

~~[*The faint echo of the midnight Mass is heard from the church*]~~

[40] Not included in manuscript
[41] "frozen" not included in manuscript
[42] Next 5 lines not included in manuscript

~~**Oh, blessed sound! – what hear I? the midnight mass!**~~
~~**But how, which way, through these dark walls to pass?**~~

[*Hastily taking the lamp, it goes out*]

Misery! the light expires! So I - so I,
Unseen, unheard, alas! alas! must die!

[43] **[*She sinks against the bier. Nina, with a light in her hand, appears at the door*]** [*Nina appears on stairs*]

Nina

Ah! fearful place! what terror fills my soul!
Courage, my heart! – oh, be not thus afraid!

Adelaide

[44] ~~**Hark! – thrilling sound! – what phantom hovers near?**~~
Spirit! sweet Spirit! lend thy gentle aid!

Both

Art thou some ghost, that, 'mid this silent gloom,
Chid'st my invasion of thy lonely tomb?
[45] ~~**Courage, my heart! oh, be not thus afraid!**~~
~~**Spirit! sweet Spirit! lend thy gentle aid!**~~

Adelaide

Ha! that angel-voice! – 'tis Nina! ~~(*Starts up*)~~[46]
Desert me not again! – Descend – this way!

Nina

[47] ~~**Ha! that form! So pale! I tremble!**~~
A spirit should'st thou prove- I dare not stay!

[*Disappears, leaving the light*]

[43] Stage directions differ between printed text and manuscript
[44] Line not included in manuscript
[45] Next two lines not included in manuscript
[46] Stage direction not included in manuscript
[47] Line not included in manuscript

Adelaide

With joyfulness I'll follow thee,
[48] ~~**And quit this cave of night;**~~
Thy parting step my guide shall be,
~~**You flame my beacon-light!**~~
~~**Bright star of hope, oh! set me free!**~~
~~**With joyfulness I follow thee.**~~

~~**With joyfulness, etc.**~~
{155a} [*She ascends with the light. Scene closes*]

Scene 4th

Theodore's apartment
Enter Theodore

Theod. Thrice methought I heard Adelaide calling to me, to draw aside the bolts of her tomb and conduct her back to life.

Song – Theodore

In fancy still, her voice I hear,
And, dreaming, ~~yet~~[49] her coming wait;
Then wake to know myself forlorn
Alas! how very desolate!
My hopes are blighted in their bud,
Life's joys forsake my heart;
Like Echo's notes, at distance sweet,
Scarce heard ere they depart.

I seek her at the lattice-bow'r
Where last we met, unseen, alone;
The rose I gave is blooming there,
But she that wore it - she is gone!
And is it frailer than a flow'r?
~~**Love, - life**~~[50] **forsakes the heart,**
Like Echo's notes that thrill of bliss,
Scarce heard ere they depart.

Nina (*entering, followed by Servants*) My mistress lives! I've seen her in the church – Heaven is my witness, I speak the truth! **{155b}** Near to the house of the Sexton, unperceived, I overheard the Jew, and Laban his son, conversing of conveying my lady away from the vaults, as one under the influence of a ring of opiate!

[48] Next six lines bar the second one are not included in manuscript
[49] The manuscript has "still"
[50] The manuscript has "Love's life"

Theod. Thou ravest! – yet, have I heard of such rings – conclude thy story

Duet and Chorus

Nina

Amaz'd, bewilder'd, like one distracted,
I sought alone yon cloisters old,
And there, in sullen gloom retir'd,
Beheld what now these lips unfold.
[51] ~~**Pale shone the moon, and by its light,**~~
~~**While toll'd the bell – oh! fearful tone!**~~
A figure sought my lady's tomb!

Theodore and Servants

A figure sought our/your lady's tomb

Nina

It was the Sexton of Cologne!

All

The Sexton of Cologne!

Nina

So he is call'd. A thought came o'er me;
That man is poor – be famine led,
[52] ~~**And tempted by my lady's jewels,**~~
His desp'rate hand would rob the dead!
Oh! then within that dreary vault,
I heard, methought, a stifled groan!
I gaz'd – beheld my lady's self!
And not the Sexton of Cologne!

[51] Line not included in manuscript
[52] Line not included in manuscript while the final line of the verse is only in the manuscript.

[53] ~~**Theodore and Servants**~~

~~**You/she gaz'd, and saw our lady's self!**~~

~~**Nina**~~

~~**And not the Sexton of Cologne!**~~

~~**All**~~

~~**And not, etc.**~~

~~**Theodore**~~

~~**It was a fiend that, in the night,**~~
~~**Strange forms assum'd, thy soul to awe.**~~

~~**Nina**~~

~~**No! no! it was my lady dear,**~~
~~**If e'er these eyes her image saw.**~~

All

Quick! let us hasten to the church!
The story wears of truth a tone.

~~**Nina**~~

~~**My story will I not disown!**~~
~~**Disturb the watch, and seek, with speed,**~~
~~**Seek all, the Sexton of Cologne!**~~

[*Exeunt***]**

Scene Last

Interior of Chancel
Enter Adelaide from tomb

Adel. Strength forsakes me – Hark! – a footstep! – blessed saints!

[*Enter Laban*]

Laban Ha! Adelaide!

[53] Only the two line chorus is included in the manuscript.

Adel. Laban! Oh! quickly convey me hence!

Laban Yes! Yes! – Father, speed! The boat!

Adel. Take me to my father – my husband!

Laban Thy husband is before thee! Tremble not, but listen!

Song - Laban

I lov'd thee in the spring-time,
As the sunlight loves the rose,
And still must love thee fondly,
Till life's last sigh shall close;
Oh! think not I will harm thee
Nor believe this heart the worst,
That madly thus it love thee,
As it lov'd thee from the first!

I feel thy lip will chide me,
And thy scorn I'd rather brave
Than know that hand another's,
Though I clasp it in the grave!
Nor time nor age can change me:
With despair this heart may burst,
But unto death 'twill love thee
As it lov'd thee from the first!

Adel. No more – I am another's!
{156b}
Laban Another's no longer! Mine at a fearful price thou art! – Ha! my father!

[*Enter Ephraim & Servants in boat*]

Ephr. The City is astir – footsteps bend this way

Laban To the boat!

Adel. Another's in the sight of Heaven, Heaven for that other will defend me! Ha! Theodore!

[*Enter Theodore*]

Theod. It is she! (*approaching – Laban detains Adelaide*) Let go thy impious hold!

Laban Mine or death!

[*They fight – Laban's sword is struck down – the Servants seize Theodore*]

Into the boat with her! drag him into yonder tomb!

Theod. I warn thee, if thou would'st escape the consuming flame

Ephr. Down with the Nazarine!

[*A struggle – Adelaide is dragged from Theodore's arms – his is struck down – they are about to stab him – Hans suddenly enters from tomb, with his pickaxe, and protects Theodore*]

Ephr. Dog of a Sexton!

Hans Oh! never wag your beard at me, old Abednigo! I've no watch to pledge now, but I've still strength enough to defend an unarmed man!

Laban Into the tomb with them!

Hans Disarmed! a rope shall end their career, one way **{157a}** or other!

[*while they force Theodore into the tomb, Hans disappears thro' a panel – Adelaide is seen at the end of the gallery. Bell tolls*]

Laban Where's Adelaide?

Adel. Here! On the edge of this mouldering Gallery; frail footing but pursue me and tho' death in yon deep waves again encircle me, I –

Laban Hear me – (*advancing*)

Adel. One step, and I dash myself into the rolling waters.

[*The Bell rings violently*]

Laban Accursed Sexton! – not an instant must be lost!

[*Adelaide rushes across the Gallery, from which fragments fall, pursued by Laban – the whole gives way and he tumbles into the river. Enter Burgomaster, Soldiers etc. etc*.]

Finale

Chorus

Ah! what fearful sight! Behold! Oh, horror!

Sexton, Ephraim, Nina, Burgomaster, *Chorus*

The Jew is / My son is / Our master is wounded, wounded unto death!
Spare him, mighty Heaven! yet, yet a little space,
In penitence to yield his parting breath.

[*They bring forward Laban, wounded*]

Laban

[54] **Spare me, mighty Heaven! yet, yet an instant!**
In penitence to yield my parting breath!
~~**Where's Adelaide?**~~

{157b} **[*The Sexton liberates Theodore, who takes Adelaide's hand as she enters*]**

~~**Adelaide**~~

~~**Laban, here am I.**~~

~~**Theodore (*harshly*)**~~

~~**What wouldst thou?**~~

Laban

~~**Pardon, ere I die!**~~
(To Ad.) A wild and wayward life I've led,
That could not brook control:
The shaft hath fallen on my head,
And strikes my guilty soul!

[55] ~~**Chorus**~~

~~**A wild and wayward life he's led etc.**~~

Ephraim

Revive, revive, my wretched boy,
Nor drive me to despair:
'Tis I alone am culpable,
The vengeance I should bear.

Laban

Oh! Adelaide, pray pardon!
I lov'd but only thee!

[54] The manuscript has "Spare me, mighty Heaven etc." here and does not include the next seven lines nor the first line of Laban's verse. The stage directions are also a little different: "*The Sexton liberates Theodore – Enter Adelaide"*.
[55] Not included in manuscript

Adelaide

I hope thy crime, as I forgive,
So Heaven will pardon me!

Laban

My star of life is setting,
My sand is waning fast;
One deed of sad redemption,
Thus, thus, must be my last!

[56] **[*He joins their hands*]** [*He joins the hands of Adelaide and Theodore. Enter Simeon, in a vessel, at back*]

Simeon

Now, master, all ready!
The wind sets in our sail.

Ephraim

A moment! we are coming.
{158a} **My son, look not so pale!**

[*Laban, supported by Ephraim and Simeon, has reached the plank at the side of the vessel*]

Laban

The favoring wind sets in our sail,
The billows round us swell,
One last, last look, one only word,
To Adelaide – farewell!

[57] ~~**Ephraim and crew**~~

~~**The favoring wind sets in our sail,**~~
~~**The billows round us swell,**~~
~~**The canvass spread – abroad! abroad!**~~
~~**Cologne, Cologne, farewell!**~~

[56] Difference in stage directions between printed text and manuscript
[57] This stanza not included in the manuscript

Adelaide

May favoring winds pursue thy sail!
And mercy with the[e] dwell!
As thou to penitence adhere,
I pardon thee – farewell!

Sexton, Theodore, Nina, Burgomaster, and Chorus

The favoring wind sets in thy sail,
The billows round thee swell,
The canvass spread – abroad! abroad!
Away, away, farewell!

58 ~~**All (*in different voices*)**~~

~~**Farewell! farewell! farewell!**~~

[*Laban is on the deck – the vessel begins to sail –*
Adelaide is in Theodore's arms – Laban falls.
Picture. Curtain descends]

THE END

[58] Not included in the manuscript. Instead there is a detailed stage direction.