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UMI
ADA REHAN: AMERICAN ACTRESS
(1857-1916)
Volume I

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
The Department of Speech Communication,
Theatre, and Communication Disorders

by
Aileen Hendricks-Wenck
B. A., Texas A&M University, 1971
M. A., Texas A&M University, 1974
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VITA.................................................................................439
Although Ada Rehan (1857-1916) achieved international fame as America's representative actress, rivaling Ellen Terry during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, historians have forgotten her. After beginning in 1872 to perform with her sister, Kate, and brother-in-law, Oliver Doud Byron, in their company and, later, in Mrs. Louisa Lane Drew's Arch Street Theatre Company (1873-75), Ada moved upward to ingenue roles in Barney Macauley's company (1875-76). Then she assumed leading parts with John W. Albaugh's company (1876-79), followed by a few months supporting Fanny Davenport. Finally, she advanced to a position in one of the most prominent theatres in New York under the management of Augustin Daly, known as a "star-maker."

Between 1879 and 1899 Ada earned international stardom as the leading actress in the leading theatre in America. She first gained prominence for her subtle ensemble acting as a member of Daly's "Big Four," consisting of James Lewis, Mrs. Anne Hartley Gilbert, and John Drew. In addition to the young female leads in the quartet's domestic comedies, Daly featured Ada in leading roles in seventeenth and eighteenth-century English comedies, Pinero's contemporary British drama, melodramatic plays of Victorien Sardou and the elder and younger Dumas, and Shakespearean comedy. As she grew in popularity, the ensemble declined until John Drew's resignation from the company in 1892 ended it. The following year her international critical acclaim enabled Daly to build a theatre in London. And in 1894 she became the only performer to tour under Daly's management as a star.

Unrivaled as Katherine in Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew,
Ada performed it as well as Rosalind at Stratford-Upon-Avon and distinguished herself as Lady Teazle, Viola, Peggy Thrift, and Portia. After Daly's death in 1899 Ada continued to perform well in spite of overwhelming personal and professional problems. But by the time George Bernard Shaw convinced her to portray Lady Cicely in his Captain Brassbound's Conversion Ada's broken health forced her to retire in 1905. One of the finest actresses of her day, and perhaps, America's greatest, she died on April 22, 1916.
Introduction

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the American theatre changed in significant ways: combination companies headed by stars replaced resident stock companies; the long-run of a single play replaced a variety of plays in repertory; the Theatrical Syndicate replaced individual artist/managers; and realism replaced romanticism. The study of the acting career of Ada Rehan (1857-1916) amid this dynamic atmosphere of fluid theatrical conditions reveals an accomplished, versatile artist, who by the end of the nineteenth century had become America's representative actress.

The purpose of this study is to describe the acting career of Ada Rehan and assess her contribution to and her position in the theatre of her time. As the leading actress in the premier theatre and last stock company in America, she filled the theatre with audiences for twenty years. Although she achieved international eminence as a versatile comedienne, often being compared to Ellen Terry, historians have overlooked her accomplishments and underestimated her importance.

William Winter's biography, Ada Rehan, contains helpful information about the roles that Ada played. But because Ada's manager Augustin Daly commissioned Winter to write the biography, it lacks objectivity in its extravagant praise of the actress; moreover, it covers her career only until 1898. Since Winter was also the critic for the New York Tribune, his reviews have been excluded as much as possible. Works that provide valuable information concerning the chronology of Ada's roles and her critical reception include Forrest Izard's Heroines of the Modern Stage, Joseph Francis Daly's The Life of
Augustin Daly, T. Allston Brown's *A History of the York Stage*, and Edward A. Dithmar's *Memories of Daly's Theatres* as well as his biographical sketch of Ada in his *Famous American Actors of Today*. Henry P. Phelps' *Addenda to Players of a Century: A Record of the Albany Stage* furnished a firsthand critical assessment of her early career. Richard Harlan Andrew's dissertation, *Augustin Daly's Big Four: John Drew, Ada Rehan, James Lewis and Mrs. G. H. Gilbert*, is the only recent study of Ada Rehan's career. It focuses, however, on the ensemble acting of the "Big Four" and Ada's relationship to the group, confining itself to the years 1888-1892.

This work covers her formative years and theatrical career. Two "Ada Rehan," Portfolios of Clippings in The Players Collection in the Billy Rose Theatre Collection at the New York Public Library at Linclon Center contain newspaper and magazine clippings, articles, letters, and playbills. At the same location, two volumes, devoted entirely to Ada Rehan, in the Robinson Locke Collection of Theatrical Scrapbooks, yielded invaluable information. Chronologically organized and consecutively numbered, they contain newspaper clippings and photographs, chronicling her work and life. They are now available on microfilm. The Robinson Locke Collection of Dramatic Scrapbooks contains "some 900 bound volumes and over 2,300 portfolios of loose clippings, photographs, programs, and holograph letters covering the careers of stage and film figures from about 1870 to 1920, amassed by the publisher of the Toledo (Ohio) *Daily Blade*."

By far the greatest source of information about Ada's career when she worked for Daly is the *Augustin Daly Theatre Scrapbooks*. Daly saved published articles, programs, playbills, and other memorabilia
from his theatre and preserved them in forty-three folio-sized volumes. He seems to have included everything that was negative as well as complimentary. It is unclear who completed the scrapbooks after Daly's death in 1899, but his stage manager, Richard Dorney, or Daly's brother, Joseph, probably did so. Although the Scrapbooks are included in the New York Public Library Theatre Collection, they are not related to the Robinson Locke Collection of Theatrical Scrapbooks; they are also available on microfilm from the University of Illinois Library. While I have endeavored to correctly and consistently identify newspaper names cited, the clippings from the Robinson Locke and Daly Scrapbooks vary newspaper titles. The names of the newspapers are handwritten and often abbreviated differently during different years and in different volumes. Newspapers from cities where Ada performed before joining Daly's company provided most of the information regarding her early career, while magazines and journals from the period featured stories about her career and personal life.

In addition to collections and materials on Ada Rehan in the New York Public Library Theatre Collection, the Harvard University Theatre Collection includes an "Ada Rehan" File of Miscellaneous Clippings. Dora Knowlton Ranous' Diary of a Daly Debutante, Mrs. G. H. Gilbert's The Stage Reminiscences of Mrs. Gilbert, John Drew's My Years on the Stage, and Otis Skinner's Footlights and Spotlights provided insights into Ada's private and public life. Dan Laurence's work, Bernard Shaw: Collected Letters, 1898-1910, Part II, contains correspondence between Ada and Shaw. Additional letters reside in the Davis-Kendall and Hanley Collections, Harry Ransom Humanities and Research Center, The University of Texas. Likewise the Folger Shakespeare Library in

Beginning with her early life and career, chapters one through seven follow her rise to international prominence. The final chapter, eight, summarizes and evaluates Ada's career; compares her to actresses of her time, including Ellen Terry; and attempts to assess her position in theatre history as one of America's greatest actresses.
Notes—Introduction

1. Early Life and Apprenticeship  
(1857-1875)

It was an evening of the wildest excitement, and the actress's Katherina was the cause. She looked as though she had stepped from a canvas by Velasquez. Her first exit, striding across the stage in a storm of fury, and with a superb gesture sweeping both her father and her lover from her path, was followed by a roar of cheering that seemed as though it would never end. That moment made her famous. All that followed was equally memorable, and next day all London knew that a wonderful woman and a wonderful actress was to be seen at the Gaiety Theatre in Shakespeare.

As a member of the audience on the occasion of Ada Rehan's greatest triumph, a London critic described her Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew* on May 29, 1888 at the Gaiety Theatre in London. An American actress already popular in her own country and England for her comic renditions of contemporary and traditional seventeenth and eighteenth-century heroines, Ada added yet another dimension to her art with her Katherine. She inspired such enthusiasm that night "that a number of admirers took the horses from her carriage and dragged it with cheers and bravos to her hotel." Seven years later in 1895 the *Dramatic Chronicle* in New York assessed her professional standing:

France has her Sarah Bernhardt, Italy her Eleanora Duse, England her Ellen Terry and America Ada Rehan, and in their respective countries, as well as the wide world over, they are recognized as the greatest actresses of this generation, each different in her way, and all combining the high attributes that go to make perfect actresses.

In the same year, critic and playwright George Bernard Shaw declared that "when she is at her best the music melts in the caress of the emotion it expresses, and thus completes the conditions necessary for obtaining Shakespeare's effects in Shakespeare's way." Shaw even
considered her superior in vocal delivery to her famous contemporary Sarah Bernhardt. The French actor, Constant Coquelin, expressed the desire to perform with Ada as did the British actress, Ellen Terry. Critics, artists, and audiences alike praised Ada Rehan's acting. In the front rank of American and European actresses during the eighteen-eighties and eighteen-nineties, Ada commanded the respect and admiration of her most prominent contemporaries. Her biographer, William Winter, sometimes identified as Dean of American critics between 1865 and 1909, believed that she helped shape her generation's views as well as establish their convictions by creating an image with which they could identify. She revealed each elemental "impulse and feeling of human nature" in her acting and her experience became their experience. She presented an ideal on stage that young women emulated and young men adored as the perfect female. An actress of great fame and influence during the nineteenth century, Ada Rehan has been forgotten by the twentieth century. Yet a study of her career reveals a record of extraordinary achievement similar to that of Ellen Terry, which has earned her a place of honor in the history of the nineteenth century stage.

Born Bridget Crehan in Limerick, Ireland, April 22, 1857, Ada came with her family to the United States when she was eight years old. Her parents, Thomas and Harriet Crehan, were both natives of Limerick. Her father led an adventuresome life. According to Ada, in about 1834, a storm demasted the ship on which he sailed. The crew drifted for months and finally drew lots to decide who should die to provide food for the others. When her father and the survivors were finally rescued, authorities questioned whether or not they should be tried for
Some time after this incident, Thomas Crehan met his future wife while imprisoned in Limerick jail for a smuggling offense. He fell in love with and married the jail matron's daughter, Harriet Ryan. Soon, their oldest child, William, was born followed by Mary Kate, Harriet, Thomas Jr., Ada, and finally, Arthur. They settled in Limerick where the father became a wealthy shipwright. Like many Irish families, however, the Crehan's came to America when they met with reverses in 1865. The family settled in a two story house at 165 Coffey Street in South Brooklyn, where Crehan found work as a mechanic. Ada attended school but showed no strong interest in her studies; a classmate recalled that "she was a great singer and reciter," as, indeed, were all the Crehan children.

The first members of the family who developed an interest in theatrical careers were Kate and Hattie. Kate had been a choir member in Limerick and continued her singing in Brooklyn. One night in South Brooklyn the conductor of the orchestra at Niblo's Garden Theatre happened to hear Kate sing an Irish song at a musicale. Impressed, he obtained an engagement for her with Kate Bateman in Augustin Daly's Leah the Forsaken at Niblo's Garden. Soon both Kate and Hattie joined the chorus of Lester Wallack's production of John Brougham's opera, Don Caesar de Barzan. The two sisters took the name O'Neil, for the stage until they married and adopted their husbands' names.

When she left Wallack's Theatre, Kate O'Neil worked with the two leading Irish actors, Barney Williams and John Brougham, at the Winter Garden Theatre in New York. In her subsequent engagements with stock companies in Mobile, Montreal, and Pittsburgh she performed with some
of the most prominent stars of the time, such as Edwin Adams, John E. Owens, Edwin Booth, and Maggie Mitchell, associations which would later prove valuable for herself and her sister. Kate met her future husband, Oliver Doud Byron, during an engagement in Mobile, Alabama, in 1868. They married two years later when they both belonged to the stock company at the St. Charles in New Orleans then under the management of Ben de Bar. An experienced stock actor and leading man, Byron formed his own touring company with his new bride. They traveled throughout the country, performing in plays Byron either wrote himself or adapted from other's works.

Ada Rehan's Apprenticeship with Byron

1872-73

Exactly when Ada began accompanying the Byrons is not known, but she traveled through the South with them for one season, playing walking-lady parts in *Across the Continent*. Her stage debut in a speaking role, Clara, in Byron's adaptation of James McCloskey's *Across the Continent*, occurred in 1872 when she substituted for an actress who became ill. She performed so well that her family encouraged her to become an actress.

The vehicle for Ada's debut, *Across the Continent*, was also successful for Oliver Doud Byron who kept the play in his repertory for thirty years. H.P. Phelps of the *Albany Argus* gave the following account of Doud's association with the play:

September 12th [1870] Oliver Doud Byron began an engagement in *Across the Continent*. With the exception of a sort of dress rehearsal in Toronto, this was the first time this play had ever been produced. Byron came to Albany with fifty cents in
his pockets, "put up his own paper," and left with
$600. Since that start he has become wealthy.

A melodrama full of exciting episodes and spectacle, its hero, Joe
Ferris, thwarts the evil schemes of the villain, Jack Adderly. A
business swindler who preys on the poor, Adderly falsely sent Joe
Ferris to prison. Once freed, Joe dedicates himself to bringing
Adderly to justice. The play ends in a sensational train scene and
Indian attack on the railroad office. The female roles, all minor,
depict virtuous young women. The role Ada first portrayed, Clara, was
such an insignificant part that it was omitted in the 1870 version of
the play.

Byron was Ada's first acting teacher, and his published account of
what he considered the necessary requisites and training for actors
provides insight into what he stressed to Ada: first, actors must have
"temperament and personality;" they must study the language; know why
they say a word and line; recognize how to express the playwright's
meaning; understand the script; practice proper diction and emphasis;
and possess a musical intonation. Byron also believed that the verb
that an actor articulated determined the action the character should
perform in the play. If an actor could not deliver a line
satisfactorily, then his fellow actors could help him to remedy the
situation, according to Byron. Additionally, an actor should
continually analyze a character to find new points in the dialogue to
illuminate in his performance. He believed actors needed to serve an
apprenticeship of three years, or more. Probably realizing they
could get a wide range of experience in a good stock company, Kate
Byron secured places for both her sisters, Ada and Hattie, in
Philadelphia's Arch Street Theatre stock company under the management of Mrs. John Drew. There Ada continued the apprenticeship she had begun with Oliver Doud Byron.

Ada Rehan's Continued Apprenticeship with Mrs. John Drew 1873-75

One of the most vigorous managers of the period, Mrs. John Drew (1820-97) developed the Arch Street Theatre and maintained one of the outstanding stock companies during 1861-1879. Born in England in 1820 of a theatrical family, Mrs. Drew had appeared professionally since infancy and had already won acclaim as a comedienne when she took over the management of the Arch Street Theatre Company in 1861. Under her expert guidance, the Arch Street Theatre Company grew into one of the most respected resident stock companies in the country and gained a reputation as an excellent training ground for young artists. The neophyte performer who was fortunate enough to serve a successful apprenticeship with Mrs. Drew found it easier to gain employment with other stock companies.

When Ada joined Mrs. Drew's company in September, 1873, however, the traditional resident stock company system was struggling to survive the debilitating effects of the star system. Oliver Doud Byron's company, similar to many of the touring groups of the time, required resident actors to play some roles in their productions. Stars traveled by themselves or with one or two other artists, enlisting the aid of the stock actors attached to the theatres in which they performed to complete the casts in the plays of the stars' repertoire. The resident stock actors also played in and presented their own productions, but it
was the visiting stars who excited public interest, attracting larger audiences. When the stars arrived, they expected the stock actors to be prepared to play in their chosen repertoire, and conducted only brief rehearsals before performance. But more and more between 1870 and 1880 the stars hired all the actors they needed to travel with them, forming a touring company called a combination company, which eliminated the need for support from resident stock actors. Thus the combination companies forced the resident stock companies to remain idle or tour with their own productions, undermining the system and eventually causing the death of the stock company as well as ending its value as a school of acting for young performers.

Between 1873-75 when Ada belonged to the Arch Street company, individual stars as well as traveling companies performed there, some of which required the support of Mrs. Drew's resident actors while others were self-sufficient. In addition, the stock company often "rounded out the programs" with curtain raisers and afterpieces, especially for Friday and Saturday evening performances as well as Saturday matinees. Mrs. Drew also toured with part of her company during this period, while some combination companies and attractions (such as Lydia Thompson's Burlesque Troupe) played the Arch Street Theatre.

When Ada joined the company in 1873, it consisted of young, and inexperienced actors and actresses. In order to accommodate her youthful company, Mrs. Drew presented new plays which were less likely to prompt unfavorable comparisons with accomplished actors in traditional comedies such as Sheridan's School for Scandal. One of the benefits Ada enjoyed when she joined Mrs. Drew's company was
establishing a long-lasting friendship with Mrs. Drew's son John, and daughter, Georgie. Part of the twenty-five member company, the brother and sister had appeared on stage for the first time the previous season.  

On September 22, 1873, Ada performed the role of Flora in the first play of the season, Martha Lafitte Johnson's Justice. Although Ada's role was insignificant, Hattie portrayed a more prominent character, Olympe. All but one member of the cast performed for the first time in Mrs. Drew's theatre as well as under her direction. The leading man, R. Fulton Russell, and Ada's sister, Hattie, had good reason to find the occasion of their first meeting memorable, since two years later they married. With the exception of a few comedies and dramas, Justice represented the type of sensational melodramatic plays presented throughout the whole season. The Philadelphia Public Ledger, which published a synopsis of most of the attractions presented at the Arch Street Theatre, reveals the similarity of plots and the emphasis on spectacular scenic effects in this season's bill of plays. Justice included five tableaus, five different scenic locations, especially painted for the play by W. E. Lippencott, "Splendid Music," and an exciting "Duel to the Death" which also added to the exciting effects.  

Reviews criticized Justice so severely that the play ran only one week. Dion Boucicault and prominent members of Wallack's Theatre Company in New York immediately followed in Boucicault's Mimi, beginning September 29. Several resident stock company actors, including Ada, gave support to the production. The opportunity to appear with such well known and seasoned performers as Dion Boucicault,
McKee Rankin, E. Lamb, Katherine Rogers, Fanny Foster, and Kitty Blanchard from one of New York's leading theatre companies must have thrilled the young apprentice actress and afforded her valuable experience. Ada portrayed the minor role of Salope in *Mimi*, which was another French adaptation from Henry Murger's novel *La Vie de Bohème*. Boucicault used spectacle, scenery, and exciting action to draw audiences for the entire run of two weeks.

F. S. Chanfrau's presentation of T. B. DeWalden's *Kit, the Arkansas Traveler*, for one week beginning October 20, scheduled Ada and John Drew together for the first time. Another sensational melodrama, the play featured Chanfrau in the role of Kit Redding, a wronged husband and father seeking the wife and child stolen from him. Melodrama, with its exaggerated emotional expression and excitement, dominated the stage of the eighteen-seventies and the performer capable of expressing heightened emotion found favor with the theatre-going public. In spite of the reluctance of some reviewers to approve sensational melodrama, however, Mrs. Drew continued to succeed financially with her choice of plays and young company.

Beginning in early November Ada learned another new role when she portrayed Ruth Morland in Bartley Campbell's sensational melodrama *Little Sunshine: or, The Working Girl's Oath*. As Ruth Morland Ada acted the daughter of a woman who adored foreign nobility. After she appeared in the minor role, Barbara Benson, in Charles Morton's local melodrama, *The Poor and the Proud of Philadelphia*, in January, the opportunity arose for Ada to perform in a farce for the first time. She acted Grace, the prospective bride who was "innocent to a fault," in Mrs. Martha Lafitte Johnson's *Fun* beginning January 21. The plot
revolved around the absurd but humorous mishaps a bridegroom and his bridal party encountered as he led them in search of a missing bonnet. Although the Inquirer reviewer remarked that the actors performed creditably, he did not praise them as he did the play itself, and he regretted that it did not have a longer run.  

Ada continued to perform in sensational melodramas and with "stars" for the rest of the season. The evening's bill often included songs, dances, specialties and more short comedies, affording her an even broader base of experience from which to learn. For instance, between February 2 and 8, Ada appeared with the Irish comedian Joseph Murphy, who was Mrs. Drew's business agent and treasurer, in the Irish-American melodrama Maum Cré, written especially for him by Fred G. Maeder. The Philadelphia Public Ledger listed five songs as well as dances and specialties included in the play. Similarly, Ada supported a new actress, Bella Golden, who appeared February 9 and 10 in Madelon. Golden concluded the evening with James Pilgrim's comedy called Katy O'Shiel in which she sang "Trust to Luck."

In February Ada had the opportunity to perform with Mrs. Drew whose first appearance with the stock company this season was as Madame Bertha in Charles H. Morton's A Mother's Love. Ada portrayed the role of the Duchess of Portsmouth, which did not draw critical attention. But Mrs. Drew's portrayal reminded the critics of her powers in earlier days, "refined and elevated . . . by the matured intelligence of the highly cultured artist."

The critic's remarks echoed those of other critics in previous years. Over and over again critics had described Mrs. Drew's acting and appearance as "vivacious," "graceful," "versatile," "full of
dramatic fire," and "elevated." An excellent role model for Ada, she possessed a refined beauty, large dark eyes that flashed with expression, a winning smile, and a beautifully feminine, melodious voice. Comparing her with the first great actress to perform in America, Mrs. Anne Brunton Merry, one reviewer considered her representative of Mrs. Merry. Because she was most suited to high comedy, it became Mrs. Drew's forte. By 1873 when Ada joined her company, Mrs. Drew had already won critical acclaim in a number of leading roles: Hypolita in Cibber's *She Would and She Would Not*; Rosalind in *As You Like It*; Lady Teazle in Sheridan's *School for Scandal*; Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*; Viola in *Twelfth Night*; and Naomi Tighe in Tom Robertson's *School*. These became roles in which Ada gained fame in later years.

During the remainder of the season Ada appeared with Mrs. Drew in several other farces; she also continued to appear in comedies and melodramas. Although the traveling "stars" and other actors who played the Arch Street Theatre were not of the same calibre as Mrs. Drew, they were probably equal in quality and popularity to the performers who had already appeared there during the 1873-74 season. Ada did not portray any major characters this season; she played the innocent, virtuous, young woman in most of the plays, roles appropriate to her age. They afforded her the experience and training needed by a seventeen-year-old apprentice actress. By the end of the season she had performed at least thirty different roles under the watchful eye of Mrs. Drew.

Recalling that period of her life, Ada acknowledged Mrs. Drew's tutelage and influence on her later success as a comedienne. She remembered that even though she was almost a beginner, Mrs. Drew always
gave her a speaking role. Ada did not state specifically what she learned from Mrs. Drew, but she did testify that the older actress provided her with valuable personal advice. During the same time she developed a close affectionate relationship with Mrs. Drew's eighteen-year-old daughter, Georgie, and twenty-one-year-old son, John, which continued throughout their lives. The teenage girls sometimes drew reprimands from the manageress for gossiping during rehearsal. Nevertheless, when the season ended, Mrs. Drew invited Ada and Hattie, as well as R. Fulton Russell, to return to the Arch Street Theatre Company for the 1874-75 season. During the summer, Ada and Hattie may have performed with the Byrons or returned home to await the fall season.

Although the Arch Street Theatre season opened on September 21, Ada did not appear until October 19. Mrs. Drew presented a wide variety of plays, attractions, and stars during the 1874-75 season. Ada appeared for the first time as Margarett, an "English waiting-maid," in support of the veteran stock actress Ada Gray in August Pitou's The Adventuress for five performances. In November Ada also had the opportunity to observe the appearance of the respected and gifted British actress, Adelaide Neilson, who portrayed Juliet in Romeo and Juliet, Pauline in Lady of Lyons, Julia in The Hunchback, Rosalind in As You Like It and Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing. The Mercury did not consider her "a very great actress," but it did concede that she possessed ability and popularity. The Inquirer praised her "genius" as well as her "refined and intellectual, yet spirited, tender and womanly" Beatrice. The paper also referred to the grace and sweetness of her Rosalind and Juliet, which won her lasting
popularity and drew a "large and enthusiastic audience." In the same way, she attracted good audiences for her portrayal of Julia and Pauline.

The most valuable training for Ada this season may have resulted from Mrs. Drew's early and frequent appearances with her stock company in the old comedies for which she had become famous. Immediately after Neilson's last performance, Mrs. Drew made her first appearance of the season as Lady Mary Raffle in Mrs. Inchbald's comedy Wives as They Were and Maids as They Are on November 7, supported by her company.

The highlight of the season, and perhaps Ada Rehan's apprenticeship at the Arch Street Theatre, was Mrs. Drew's Lady Teazle in Sheridan's The School for Scandal on December 28 and 30 as well as January 5 and 9. The Inquirer proclaimed Mrs. Drew to be the only actress on the stage "capable of giving so correct and altogether admirable" an interpretation of the role. The praise is especially meaningful because it compares Mrs. Drew's company most favorably with others performing the same play this season. One of the other leading theatres of Philadelphia, the Walnut Street Theatre, had presented the well known actress Mrs. Jean Davenport Landers, earlier in the season. The previous week, Fanny Davenport portrayed Lady Teazle, also at the Walnut Street Theatre, with the famous Augustin Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre Company from New York. The Mercury credited Mrs. Drew's company with giving "the best performance of The School for Scandal in this city during the season." Ada had a highly lauded role model in the part of Lady Teazle.

Ada not only had the opportunity to learn about specific roles from Mrs. Drew, but also about discipline. Mrs. Drew demanded that her
actors learn and be able to perform their parts perfectly. Sitting centre stage beside the prompter's box directing the action, she began the rehearsals promptly and insisted on good manners. John Drew explained that a typical day began with a four hour rehearsal at ten in the morning. At times they had to rehearse more than one play, but they usually had the afternoon to themselves for study. Performances commenced at eight in the evening, and at two in the afternoon for Saturday matinees.

Mrs. Drew actively supervised financial and business matters also, personally paying the company salaries on Saturday night. Not only did she keep every nook and cranny of her theatre immaculate but all members of the production crew attached felt on their shoes to minimize noise while the play was being performed. For one production Mrs. Drew had employed two hundred people to prepare for the gala Christmas night opening of Love's Labour's Lost, providing lavish but appropriate scenery, costumes, machinery, and music for the play. The Inquirer reported that the paint alone for the set cost over one hundred dollars. The results of such careful supervision were performances that won high praise from reviewers.

The many different experiences of the season added to Ada's knowledge and acting skills. Mrs. Drew may have noticed some improvement in her acting because the manageress assigned her the secondary role of Cornelia in Women of the Day, for the January 8 performance. A satire that succeeded in attracting good audiences, the plot of this comedy concerned "the rivalries, jealousies and scandals" of some fashionable widows who arranged intrigues among people of their social set. John Drew, in the light comedy role of
Major Albert Steele, so impressed Augustin Daly that the manager persuaded young Drew to join his Fifth Avenue Theatre Company. Daly also bought the rights to the play from Mrs. Drew and later produced it in New York.97

For the remainder of the season Ada continued to perform with Mrs. Drew as well as with such successful character actors as William Florence and John Brougham. Primarily comedians, both Florence and Brougham had been playing stage Irishmen for more than twenty years.98 Their Gaelic humor must have struck a familiar note with Ada. Although she is not specifically mentioned as part of the support for W. J. Florence, she at least had the opportunity to observe the famous performer when he presented the two Brougham adaptations of Dickens' Dombey and Sons and No Thoroughfare the week of January 18.99 The following week Ada had a rare chance to see Mrs. Drew perform the role of Lady Gay Spanker in support of John Brougham as Harcourt Courtly in Boucicault's comedy of manners, London Assurance.100 The next night Ada acted for the first time the role of Emily Summers with Brougham in his comedy, Lottery of Life, which concluded his week's run at the Arch Street Theatre.101

When Oliver Doud Byron performed for the next four weeks beginning February 1, he included a new play, The Thoroughbred, by Frank Rogers, in his repertory. It is unclear whether or not Ada supported him in Philadelphia, but at the end of the season she made her New York debut in the play. Unfortunately, the new play did not meet with the same success as the other plays in Byron's repertory, each of which held the boards for one week.102 Advertised as "A Political Society Drama in Six Acts, replete with Sensational Effects," Thoroughbred seems to have
been another sensational melodrama. The Sunday Mercury remarked that "Mr. Byron has attained a certain degree of notoriety which may be mistaken for fame" and expressed its confidence in his ability "to do full justice to all the "blood and thunder" episodes in the play.

Following Byron's appearance Ada performed in a new play the week of March 1, Chandos Fulton and Fred G. Maeder's adaptation, Nobody's Daughter, from the romantic novel Diavola. On Thursday, Ada appeared in a benefit performance of the comedy Simpson & Co. for the Philadelphia Post-Office Relief Association in which both she and Mrs. Drew took part.

The week of March 8, Ada, in the role of Emma Torrens, supported Mrs. Drew and John Brougham in his comedy The Serious Family in seven benefit performances for The Police Centennial Fund. During the rest of Brougham's three week appearance Ada continued to perform minor roles with Mrs. Drew and with Brougham.

Although Ada Rehan's name does not appear in newspaper advertisements for the month of April, she probably remained with the company until the middle of the month when the season ended. During that time she could have either witnessed or participated in eleven different productions new to her.

Not quite eighteen by the end of the 1874-75 season, Ada had performed at least seventeen new roles and acted with Mrs. Drew at least twenty-one times in eight different plays. She had seen at least sixty different plays and six successful stars for the first time; and she had experienced Shakespearean performances. The stars that Ada acted with were primarily comedians; the programs at the Arch Street
Theatre that year included few tragic actors or plays. Financially Mrs. Drew was discovering that she could run her theatre without continuing to patronize the "star system," and by allowing the Arch Street Theatre to be a combination house.

Performing with Mrs. Drew and observing her so frequently enabled Ada to learn the acting techniques and traditions of some of the classic comedies. Although the young women Ada portrayed during the 1874-75 season were still minor personages whom the critics failed to notice, she managed not to elicit any negative criticism.

Two seasons with Mrs. Drew convinced Ada's family to arrange a New York debut for her. Although she made her first appearance on the New York stage on April 26, 1875 in a small role in Thoroughbred at Wood's Museum with Byron's company, a week later her name appeared in large letters for the first time when she performed in Across the Continent, at the Bowery Theatre. The following week she played the role of Gertrude in Ben McCullough at the same theatre with her sister and brother-in-law. Having gained valuable experience from Mrs. Drew and her brother-in-law, Ada seems to have definitely decided to be an actress.
Notes—Chapter 1


2 Ada Rehan's family name was Crehan. While she was at the Arch Street Theatre it was printed on a program Ada C. Rehan. Because she was so successful that night Mrs. Drew convinced her to keep Ada Rehan as her stage name, according to John Drew, My Years on the Stage (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1922) 35.

3 "Memories of Ada Rehan."

4 London Daily News 30 May 1888, in Daly's Theatre Scrapbooks 20. There are 43 volumes of newspaper clippings compiled by Augustin Daly, chronicling his theatrical career. Most volumes of the Augustin Daly Scrapbooks have no page numbers and the pagination that does exist is erratic and unreliable. However, each volume is arranged chronologically and each article can be found in this manner if the volume number is known. The Scrapbooks are part of the New York Public Library Theatre Collection and are available on film from the University of Illinois as well. Hereafter cited as DTS.

5 Adelaide Louise Samsom, "Ada Rehan and Her Roles," Metropolitan Magazine Aug. 1897, DTS.

8 Shaw 93-94.
14 Unidentified clipping dated 15 Nov. 1899 in "Ada Rehan" Scrapbook 498: 8. Although this article and others have the year of her birth as 1860, her death certificate, available from Department of Records and Information Services, Municipal Archives, 31 Chambers St., New York, NY 10007, Registered No. 983, gives the year as 1857. Similarly, her mother's maiden name is recorded as Ryan on the death certificate but as O'Neill in Newspaper articles.
17 Unidentified clipping dated 28 Feb. 1909, in "Ada Rehan" Portfolios. According to this article and others, Ada's mother's maiden name was O'Neill. But on Ada's death certificate, cited in the
previous note, Mrs. Crehan's maiden name is recorded as Ryan.


22 Izard 205, 209.

23 Clapp 48.

24 Clapp 48.

25 Izard 205.

26 Izard 204-206.

27 Clapp 49.


29 Grey.

30 Unidentified clipping in "Ada Rehan" Portfolios.

31 Most accounts, including William Winter's biography, Ada Rehan, identify the year 1873 and Newark, New Jersey as the correct date and place of her debut. However, I could not find any announcement of the play in the Newark Daily Advertiser that year. But a program from an 1872 performance in New York at the Park Theatre (in the Players Collection, New York Public Library Theatre Collection) lists an Addie Crehan in the part of Clara and that is probably the correct date of
her debut. The 1873 date was given to and published by Winter about thirteen years after the fact when no one could remember the exact date. Ada Rehan herself admitted to having a bad memory for dates in an unidentified newspaper clipping in the same collection. Most of Ada Rehan's biographical accounts were probably copied from Winter's original since they all follow his wording. Ada Rehan received little publicity before joining Augustin Daly's company in 1879; and, then, all publicity was filtered through Daly who did not allow personal interviews. It seems likely that everyone accepted the 1873 debut date without checking its validity. In a letter to John H. James, dated 29 June 1923, in the same collection, Ada Rehan's nephew, Arthur Byron, states that she was first billed as Delia Crehan. But because it was an Irish name and, for some reason he does not state, the Irish were very unpopular at that time, she billed herself as Ada instead of Delia. To further complicate matters, an old classmate of Ada's, quoted in another unidentified newspaper clipping from the Players Collection, said she called herself Bridget in school. The Addie Crehan listed on the aforementioned program was probably another variation of Ada Rehan.

32 Winter 3.

33 H. P. Phelps, Players of a Century (Albany: Joseph McDonough, 1880) 382.


Byron.
Izard 205-06.


Stolp 439.
Stolp 441.

The Sunday Mercury (Philadelphia) 14 Sept. 1875: 3.
Stolp 441.

Public Ledger and Daily Transcript (Philadelphia) 22 Sept. 1873: 1.


The Sunday Mercury (Philadelphia) 28 Sept. 1873: 3.
Public Ledger and Daily Transcript (Philadelphia) 30 Sept. 1873: 1.


The Philadelphia Inquirer 22 Oct. 1873: 3.


The Sunday Mercury (Philadelphia) 19 Oct. 1873: 3.
Moses 174-75.

The Sunday Mercury (Philadelphia) 2 Nov. 1873: 3.

Public Ledger and Daily Transcript (Philadelphia) 19 Jan. 1874:

2. Public Ledger and Daily Transcript (Philadelphia) 3 Feb. 1873:


7. Stolp 177.

8. Stolp 177-86.


10. Stolp 176.


5. Stolp 103.

6. Stolp 205-06.

7. Stolp 241-42.

8. Stolp 373.


10. Stolp 390.


83 *The Philadelphia Inquirer* 7 Nov. 1874: 3.
84 *The Philadelphia Inquirer* 6 Nov. 1874: 3.
85 *The Philadelphia Inquirer* 7 Nov. 1874: 3.
90 Gilder 315.
91 Drew 35.
92 Stull 374.
95 *Public Ledger and Daily Transcript* (Philadelphia) 8 Jan. 1875:
1.  


97 Stolp 446.


103 The Sunday Mercury (Philadelphia) 14 Feb. 1875 3.

104 The Sunday Mercury (Philadelphia) 7 Feb. 1875 2.

105 The Sunday Mercury (Philadelphia) 14 Feb. 1875 3.


107 Public Ledger and Daily Transcript (Philadelphia) 4 Mar. 1875 1.


112 Ode 11 10: 45-46.
2. Early Background and Training
(1875-1879)

After two years learning the workings of theatre production and gaining experience with Mrs. Drew and Oliver Doud Byron, Ada Rehan was probably a desirable acquisition for other resident stock companies. Having performed in many theatres, the Byrons knew most of the stock company managers, who could help the young actress gain engagements. After Ada appeared with the Byrons in Martha La Fitte Johnson's farce, Bank Stocks, at Wood's Theater in Cincinnati, Ohio, for the first time in early September 1875, the manager, Barney Macauley, hired her to perform in his stock company during the 1875-76 season.¹ Because Macauley also managed the Academy of Music Theatre in Indianapolis, Indiana, and Macauley's Theatre in Louisville, Kentucky, Ada played all three theatres. She supported stars and performed in Macauley's productions as a member of his company. When a combination was playing one theatre, most of the stock would perform in one of its own productions at another theatre, and the rest of the stock might support a star at the third theatre. Although Ada's sister, Hattie Russell, and her new husband, R. Fulton Russell, also belonged to the company, she did not act with them in the same productions very often.²

Not as well known as Mrs. Drew, but a stock player of reputation, Barney Macauley had begun his acting career at the age of sixteen in 1853. He portrayed leading men in both comedy and tragedy,³ though at least one critic considered him primarily a comedian.⁴ He did not become a manager until the Civil War broke out when he assumed the management of a theatre in Indianapolis with his brother.⁵ In 1864 he
met his wife, Rachel, an actress then 19, while he was co-managing two theatres in Cincinnati. They married the following year in Rachel's home city of Louisville, Kentucky where Macauley built a theatre in 1873. Like many other groups around the country in the 1870's, however, the resident company at that theatre could not survive very long and disbanded in 1879.

In addition to walking ladies, Ada undertook the larger juvenile parts, a welcome promotion for the neophyte. Since Ada was mature enough at eighteen to play ingenue roles, the juvenile line of business suited her well. A nightly change of play bills, however, allowed little time for rehearsals. Ada joined the actors and actresses who often portrayed seven or eight different characters a week; Macauley hired performers according to "lines of business:" leads played the hero and heroine; heavies portrayed the villain and villainess; juveniles and light comedians performed as young lovers; walking ladies and gentlemen acted the small speaking parts; and utility people served as extras and in non-speaking roles. Actors adhered to the system rigidly in Macauley's company, with some refusing to perform a part not in their "line" of acting.

Performing with Barney Macauley's resident stock company offered Ada new acting opportunities, but she did not have the firm guidance she had experienced at Mrs. Drew's theatre. "Even though the number of self-sufficient traveling companies appearing at Macauley's theatre allowed the stock company time to plan and rehearse their own plays," the actors received little or no direction and resented any that was given for stock pieces, something Mrs. Drew would not have tolerated. Often visiting stars directed the stock actors, giving them business
that focused attention on the star's performance. If the supporting actor performed the star's cue correctly and appeared in the right place at the right time, the star was satisfied.13

Ada's three performances in Bank Stocks drew the attention of one Cincinnati critic who included her among "several of the new and fair faces which appeared."14 Although her name does not appear in newspaper advertisements for Across the Continent, (which completed the rest of the week and Byron's run on September 18) Ada probably portrayed a supporting role in that production as well.15

Ada appeared for the first time at Macauley's Theatre in Louisville on September 27 as Pearl Courtland in Augustin Daly's Under the Gaslight.16 As Pearl, Ada portrayed a young socialite whose cousin and the heroine of the play, Laura, leaves home when a villain named Byke reveals her lowly background. The action of the play focuses on Laura's self-sacrificing and heroic behavior. The reversal occurs near the end of the play when Pearl learns that it is she who comes from the lowly background, not her cousin. Throughout the play Pearl remains loyal to and supportive of the heroine, even when she must relinquish her husband-to-be to her at the end of the play. The heroine in turn asks Pearl to live with her as a "sister."17 The demands of the role of the innocent young woman, Pearl, were well within Ada's training and experience. Her own beauty, which had caught the eye of at least one critic, only enhanced her appeal.

In the following month, Ada's portrayal of the innocent, Little Mother, in George F. Rowe's The Geneva Cross,18 prompted a critic to single her out for comment: "Miss Rehan's Little Mother was a very pretty piece of acting indeed, the starving mother with her babe,
making a picture which won the audience by its remarkable faithfulness.\textsuperscript{19}

Ada played another new role in November, with guest star Lawrence Barrett in Edward Bulwer Lytton's \textit{Richelieu},\textsuperscript{20} a political intrigue concerning a plot to overthrow Cardinal Richelieu. As Francois, Ada had to portray a brave and loyal young man determined to fulfill his mission by retrieving a document stolen from him that incriminated his master, Richelieu. A departure from the innocent young women Ada was used to playing, the character was still close in age to the young actress;\textsuperscript{21} and probably she was better able to effect the appearance of a young boy than other company members. One critic praised her "deserving impersonation" as a "handsome-looking boy."\textsuperscript{22}

The following night Ada again supported Barrett in another new play and role when she portrayed the minor character, Maria, in Charles Selby's melodramatic tragedy \textit{The Marble Heart}. Ada "rendered the part of Maria in a very creditable manner and [was] entitled to praise,"\textsuperscript{23} and the following evening when Barrett presented W. G. Wills' \textit{The Man O'Airlie}, Ada again earned praise for her "careful and conscientious" performance. The star himself was said to be at his best "in these melodramatic characters."\textsuperscript{24}

After having performed in the popular melodramas, Ada returned to Cincinnati in late November to support Charlotte Crabtree in Fred Marsden's comedy, \textit{Musette} in eight performances. "Lotta," as she was called, received a glowing review, but Ada's Maud was declared "amateurish." The critic excused "the attractive" young lady because of her inexperience, and took note of her evident "talent and ambition." Perhaps Ada's performance was weak because of the
difficulty of learning four new roles in four new plays in two different cities in the space of one week. Written to display Lotta's singing, dancing, and comic talents, the play exhibited her personal charm, vivacity, spontaneity, and a clear delineation of character. The enchanting comedienne probably provided lessons for Ada in the power of vitality and personality in the theatre.

While Ada appeared with Lotta in Cincinnati, another young actress about the same age as Ada who was also destined for fame performed in Louisville. Mary Anderson made her debut as a star at Macauley's Theatre as Juliet in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, supported by the company on November 27. An actor who was a member of the company at the time commented on the temperamental differences in the two young actresses. Although the tall, slim, fair complexioned Mary Anderson appeared somewhat attractive, "she was awkward to the point of being gawky, and she had acquired some amateurish mannerisms that made her performance stilted and unnatural." However to the wonder and chagrin of the older members of the company, Mary was "perfectly at ease upon the stage." In contrast Ada was "a bundle of nerves... She trembled in the wings before her entrance on the stage and implored the comedian not to disconcert her by an untoward grimace or undertone remark."

Returning to Louisville the week of December 13 both Ada and Hattie gave "especially good" support to the star, Lillie Wilkerson, in four performances of Bartley Campbell's Little Sunshine. Since Ada had performed in this play two years earlier at Mrs. Drew's theatre, her familiarity with it may have contributed to her success in it. The same reasoning may explain why she earned her most extensive notice to
date the following week when she played Gertrude on December 22 and 23 in Ben McCullough. Ada acted the role of Gertrude, "a loving daughter, full of all the finer sympathies and higher attributes of nature."\(^{31}\)

As she spoke kindly and tenderly to her cold and tattered father, she wrapped a scarf around his neck.\(^{32}\) In the last act, "she listened to his wrongs with deep emotion, and the almost mutual recognition of father and daughter [was] natural and beautiful."\(^{33}\) Likewise her Artine in Byron's Donald McKay the following night won special mention.\(^{34}\) And again her Maria in support of the prominent star Edwin Adams in The Marble Heart on Jan. 11 earned praise from two reviewers in spite of the fact that one of them thought the role absurd because the poor orphan Maria was "innocent to the point of idiocy."\(^{35}\)

One critic noticed that Ada had steadily improved during the year, giving her best and most significant performance of the season as Libby Ray, a vivacious, headstrong but charming young woman, in B. E. Wolfe's The Mighty Dollar.\(^{36}\) The production featured comedian William J. Florence, who was of Irish descent. He had toured with his wife for over twenty-five years, first in Irish plays and later as native American characters.\(^{37}\) A farce that ridicules the absurdities of the speculator,\(^{38}\) The Mighty Dollar was a vehicle for Florence who created the role of the speculator, Bardwell Slote, and performed it more than 2,500 times before he died.\(^{39}\) Both Louisville critics lavished praise on the production and players. But while the one reviewer declared that "Miss Rehan acted better than we have seen her," he criticized her voice (which many people later praised as her best attribute) saying that it "might be more naturally managed with good effects."\(^{40}\) The other critic found nothing wanting in her performance, describing Libby
as "young, lively, and beautiful, with a heart full of sunshine" and proclaimed the picture "complete in Miss Rehan." He admired "her for her charming simplicity" and loved "her for her beauty." The "underplot" of the play, in which Libby attempts to make Charley Broad confess his love for her despite his bashfulness, brought a hearty response from the audience.

Perhaps the most significant compliment Ada received came from the Florences who asked her to tour the country with them in The Mighty Dollar. However, Ada decided to stay in Macauley's company with her sister.

On February 10 Ada, as Audrey, supported the star Agnes Booth in the role of Rosalind in As You Like It. Acknowledged to be "really good," Ada "did not succeed in making [herself] ugly under [her] frowsy accoutrements." Two nights later when she portrayed a lady in King John in support of Mrs. Booth again, she received criticism for reading her lines indifferently as did most of the minor characters. The wife of Junius Brutus Booth Jr., Agnes Booth had been on the stage since 1857. She was not only popular in New York but also in many other cities as well. The opportunity to appear with the experienced actress provided Ada yet another opportunity to learn from a seasoned performer.

When the season at Macauley's Theatre in Louisville ended on February 26, 1876, Ada resumed touring with the Byrons. Although the exact number of new plays and roles she acted while a member of Macauley's company is not known, she performed in at least ten productions and parts with ten stars for the first time. Like her experience with Mrs. Drew, Ada appeared in primarily melodramas and
comedies at Macauley's, but she was now playing larger speaking roles and drawing sufficient attention to receive more and better reviews. Critics frequently commented on her good looks, ability to communicate tender and loving emotions, and to project youthful innocence, simplicity, and charm. These assets combined with her three years of experience placed her in a position to advance her career by performing in a higher line of business, a leading lady.

A Leading Lady with John W. Albaugh
1876-79

The opportunity soon came in early March 1876 when Ada performed with the Byrons in Albany, New York, and John W. Albaugh "immediately engaged her for leading business." Ada was nervous about accepting the position, but having her brother-in-law, R. Fulton Russell, performing opposite her as leading man, and her sister, Hattie Russell, playing the soubrette roles in the same company undoubtedly provided the necessary support. Ada performed under Albaugh's management for three years, until the end of March 1879. The company regularly appeared in Albany and Troy, New York, Providence, and Baltimore.

Albaugh had began acting in small parts; he started as a second walking gentleman in 1855 at Baltimore's Holliday Street Theatre and by 1865 he had supported the British actor, Charles Kean, for a full season in New York. In 1866 he married Mary Mitchell, a sister of the famous actress Maggie Mitchell, and they toured in starring roles throughout the country. Like Ada's previous mentors, Mrs. Drew and Barney Macauley, Albaugh did not confine himself to acting. Since November of 1873, he had been managing the Leland Opera House in
Albany, New York, and in the fall of 1875 had undertaken the management of the Griswold Opera House in Troy. When combination companies performed at the theatre in Albany, Albaugh could move the company to his theatre in Troy. He may have been especially hopeful about his company for 1876-77 because he paid them more than his companies of previous seasons, and he expressed his optimism concerning the forthcoming productions in an opening night speech to the audience.

For the first time Ada played a heroine, Lady Florence May, in Lester Wallack's melodramatic romance *Rosedale*, adapted from a novel. It opened Albaugh's 1876-77 season on August 28, 1876, in Albany and continued for nine performances. Ada's brother-in-law, R. Fulton Russell, appeared as the hero, Elliot Grey, and her sister Hattie, as the soubrette, Rosa Leigh. The complicated action concerns Elliot Grey, who rescues Lady May's kidnapped son, exposing the villain and thus resolving the conflict. One of the most popular "thrillers" of the time, it required Ada behave in an emotional but subdued and refined manner in the role of a social matron.

At the end of September 1876, Ada first appeared with Maggie Mitchell, Albaugh's sister-in-law, in the minor role of Madelon in Mitchell's most popular vehicle, *Fanchon the Cricket*, based on George Sand's story *La Petite Fadette*. As Fanchon, Maggie's feminine charm won the hearts of audiences across the country. She always drew an audience, making a profit for Albaugh where he lost money with others or barely managed to break even. Like most of her characters, Fanchon was peculiarly Maggie Mitchell's own personation, suited to her wholesome vivacity and charm. After supporting Maggie Mitchell for two
weeks in Albany in her repertory of plays, Ada and the rest of the company toured with the star for another two weeks.\textsuperscript{62}

Looking back in 1898 at that period in her life, Ada recalled that performing in Albaugh's company was "really hard work [because she played] big and little parts, and lots of them."\textsuperscript{63} The company performed six days a week, presenting matinees on Wednesdays and Saturdays with only Sundays off.\textsuperscript{64} Ada spent her days rehearsing, evenings performing, and every spare minute studying lines. She attributed later success to the long and laborious work she performed while learning her art in this stock company school of acting. With a season that ran from September to May, the company usually performed each of the plays in its repertory for one week or eight performances, then changed the bill for the next week. Sometimes, however, they would present two or three different pieces in one week and, on occasion, perform part or all of a play after the main attraction. The company also supported stars who presented from three to six plays on alternate days of the week; and the company often went on tour in support of stars who had played a week's run in Albany.

Upon returning to Albany in mid-October, Ada made her first appearance as Ethel Grainger in H. J. Byron's comedy-drama \textit{Married in Haste}.\textsuperscript{65} Filled with melodramatic incidents and comic scenes, the play deals with the hasty marriage of a young artist, Augustus Vere, to his pupil Ethel Grainger.\textsuperscript{66} Disinherited by his uncle and unable to support his wife, Augustus refuses, out of pride, to allow Ethel to sell her paintings but neglects her and rides about town with a lady of title. As a result, Ethel returns to her parents who have met with reverses and whom she must now support by selling her paintings. In
the end, the two artists reconcile after Ethel discovers that Augustus' involvement with the titled lady was innocent and had gained him an important commission. As Ethel, Ada successfully communicated independence and self-reliance. Although one critic considered the play pleasing but weak and the company's performance less than the play deserved, he characterized Ada's role as "the most interesting [one] in the drama" and credited her with "making it so." In the role of Augustus, Ada's brother-in-law, R. Fulton Russell, "also did well, although appearing, like the others under the disadvantage of playing a new character for the first time." In the four years since her debut almost every change of program had challenged the neophyte with a new character and a new play to perform for the first time.

At the end of the same week the Albaughs made their first appearance with Ada and the other stock actors when they presented three performances of an adaptation of Delavigne's *Louis XI* at the Leland Opera House in Albany. The famous British actor Charles Kean had featured the play in his repertory when Albaugh had performed with him in 1865. The reviewer noted Albaugh's obvious imitation of Kean's Louis but found that it did not detract from the performance which was a great success. A steady, reliable, competent actor/manager who never attained great fame, Albaugh worked with, and even trained, many who did succeed like Ada Rehan.

In *Louis XI*, Ada portrayed another heroine for the first time, Marie de Commine, daughter of the king's prime minister. Marie's father had saved the hero, Duke de Nemours from being murdered in childhood by the king. King Louis had not only murdered his own father and brother but Nemours' father as well, forcing the victim's young son
to watch the deed. Nemours vowed to avenge his father's death by killing the king.\textsuperscript{73} The Albany paper complained that the episode dealing with the love of Nemours and Marie was insufficiently developed, leaving the audience with "a feeling of incompleteness."\textsuperscript{74} But both Russell and Ada succeeded in winning the audience's approval.\textsuperscript{75} Noting that Marie was only a "slight part," the critic said that Ada played it "very prettily."\textsuperscript{76} Marie inadvertently reveals her beloved's identity to Louis in the play and twice begs for Nemour's life, once offering her own in order to save him.\textsuperscript{77} Similar to many of the melodramatic plays in which Ada Rehan performed, this one differed from others in that the thrills were less important than the serious atmosphere of the drama, and her character more complex.\textsuperscript{78}

During the last week of October, Ada was fortunate to play the leading role of Laura Hawkins opposite the popular comedian John T. Raymond, when he appeared as Colonel Sellers in Mark Twain's adaptation of his own novel, \textit{The Gilded Age}.\textsuperscript{79} Raymond infused the character of the ever enthusiastic frontier speculator into Sellers\textsuperscript{80} and the audiences flocked to see him.\textsuperscript{81} One critic reported that Ada acted unevenly, performing "remarkably well" in some passages, "but in others seeming to lose the spirit of the text entirely."\textsuperscript{82} One reporter attributed Ada's inconsistency to lack of proper rehearsal.\textsuperscript{83} After seven performances in Albany, Ada joined the rest of the company supporting Raymond on tour in Utica, Syracuse, Binghamton, Oswego, Springfield, Troy, and Cohoes, New York.\textsuperscript{84}

Upon returning to Albany, Ada and the rest of the company supported the well known star Mrs. J. H. Hackett in Whittaker's historical comedy/melodrama, \textit{The Charter Oak}, for four performances
beginning November 6. Based on colonial history at the end of the reign of James II and the accession of William of Orange to the English throne, the play concerns the preservation of the charter of the colony of Connecticut hidden in an oak tree. As Mary Clark, Ada portrayed a young woman in love with a heroic captain. The paper praised the production and players, singling out Ada as well as Hattie (who played the spinster Miss Charity Crabtree) as "being especially deserving of mention." Ada and Hattie also appeared with Mrs. Hackett on November 10 in Macbeth. The reviewer, however, declared them both "absolute failures, [as witches] being both much too good looking for that character, in fact altogether too bewitching." But the following week, when Ada portrayed Maud again for four performances in support of Lotta in Mussette, the critic found her "acceptable."

During the first week of December the young actress portrayed the title role in George F. Rowe's Little Emily, an adaptation based on Dickens' David Copperfield. The play focuses on Emily's infatuation with the handsome and charming but false Steerforth, which leads her to desert her family, fiancé, and friends. After Steerforth abandons her, she departs for Australia. The Albany critic praised the play and gave Ada the most extensive notice she had received thus far this season. Although the play obviously needed more rehearsal, the reviewer believed Ada "succeeded admirably." But he regretted that she could not perfect herself in this role, which he thought "she would render better than anything she [had] undertaken this season." Unfortunately, the production was not a financial success and when it closed the company went on tour for a week, presenting eight performances of Albaugh's star vehicle, Louis XI.
On December 11 Ada appeared as Donna Jovita in support of the experienced comedian Stuart Robson who portrayed Colonel Starbottle in Bret Harte's *Two Men of Sandy Bar*. A compilation of Harte's California sketches, the plot lacked continuity and clarity, confusing audience and reviewer alike. Ada's role was insignificant, but the reviewer deferred comment on all of the support because the opening night performance showed a lack of rehearsal. Later in the week the reviewer noted the performance improved with each of the eight shows.

The entire company seems to have suffered frequently from lack of rehearsal due to the rigorous schedule. The following week Ada portrayed her first Shakespearean tragic heroine, Cordelia, in support of George Edgar's Lear in *King Lear* for two evenings. The paper reported that the support was very good, "Miss Rehan being particularly worthy of commendation." Beginning Christmas day Ada appeared as Lurline, Queen of the Naiads, for thirteen performances of J. S. Dalrymple's burlesque, *The Naiad Queen*. Already familiar with the play, Ada had portrayed Lady Una in the same play at Macauley's Theatre in Louisville. An extravagant production with underwater divinities, music, dance, and spectacular scenery, the play drew large audiences, and Ada gained critical attention for her beauty.

A few weeks later, in January 1877, Ada acted another new role when she portrayed Celia to the beautiful British actress Adelaide Neilson's Rosalind in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. As the loyal friend, companion, and cousin to Rosalind, Ada portrayed feminine playfulness and sisterly love appropriate to the character. The paper reported that in spite of dressing and looking well, neither Ada
nor the rest of the company did justice to the poetry in the play. 98

Fortunately, when she appeared for the first time as the heroine, Nora Drew, for seven performances of Fred Marsden's Irish drama Kerry Gow the week of January 15, she pleased the reviewer. The fact that she was Irish probably made it a comfortable role for Ada. The introduction of trained carrier pigeons and a realistic scene in a blacksmith's shop were two appealing effects that earned high praise for the entire production. 99

The following week Ada presented yet another new role. She supported the star Anna Dickinson in her own drama, A Crown of Thorns, for three days in Utica and Syracuse, New York, and for three days in Albany. 100 She portrayed Lady Jane Grey in the drama about Anne Boleyn. 101 And the week of February 5, she appeared with the popular star, Rose Eytinge, for the first time in a drama translated from the French, Miss Sarah Multon. 102 As Mathilde de LaTour, Ada portrayed the second wife of the hero. Thinking his first wife dead, de LaTour marries Mathilde. But the first wife returns after a seven year absence disguised as Miss Multon and becomes governess to her own children. Although the reviewer criticized the play, he described Miss Eytinge as almost perfect. Because Ada pronounced the governess' name Moulton instead of Multon, the critic chastized her: "Such stumbling as the actress has made for two nights is simply distressing, and the more so because it seems utterly needless. She can play the part if she will study it." 103

When another visiting star, Lawrence Barrett, appeared in the role of Hamlet in March, Ada had the opportunity for a major challenge in the role of Ophelia. Succeeding beyond the expectations of her
friends, the local reviewer described her personation as "tender rather than forcible." She played one other new Shakespearean role two days later, Desdemona, in Othello, while her last new role of the season was Grace Rosebury, a young woman in an adaptation of Wilkie Collins' melodramatic novel, The New Magdalen.

Ada's first season with Albaugh, allowed her to add extensively to her repertoire. She portrayed thirty-eight new roles in thirty-eight new plays, making over one hundred and seventy-eight appearances. The demanding year also enabled her to perform a leading role for the first time, and broadened her repertory to include classic roles such as Cordelia, Ophelia, and Desdemona, three of Shakespeare's most appealing young women. In addition, she had the opportunity to perform with some of the most popular artists of the day such as Maggie Mitchell, Mrs. J. H. Hackett, George F. Rowe, Stuart Robson, and Rose Eytinge. Although most of the plays she appeared in were comedies or melodramas, she also acted in tragedy for the first time.

After such a demanding and challenging year, no doubt she was ready to rest when the season ended on May 2, 1877. Like the Albaughs, she, Hattie, and Russell went to Long Branch, New Jersey, for the summer where the Bryons had a home and a colony of actors lived during the summer.

1877-78 Season

Before opening the 1877-78 season in Albany, Ada and the company performed in Montreal for several weeks to an enthusiastic press and public. Upon returning to Albany, they opened the season with a new play, The Victor of Rhe, on September 17. Ada portrayed the young
woman, Annine, in the historical romance concerning the young Cardinal Richelieu, played by Russell. Albaugh appeared as Victor, a poor young man in love with Annine and in adverse circumstances until he saves Richelieu's life and the cardinal befriends him. In spite of the new play, the "acknowledged superiority of the company," and the "prestige of opening night," without "star attractions stock companies had ceased to have drawing power;" the house was not even half full. Although the play ran smoothly and was done with care, the audience did not significantly improve for the remaining seven performances, leaving Albaugh with a loss. Ada faced another loss as well, since Hattie was not announced as part of the company this season.

Ada received a warm reception the following week when the audience applauded her appearance as Aouda in a version of Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Commenting on her charm, the local critic also noted that "she was very beautiful." But after only three performances, the manager replaced it with Stanley McKenna's new comedy, *Our Oddities*. This play afforded Ada the opportunity to originate a role for the first time and to show her versatility. Never performed before, the play involves the impersonation of a doctor by three different men, and the fun that arises out of the deception of three women who wish to see the doctor. As Adelaide Clyton Bonds, Ada portrayed a strong-minded young woman determined "to emancipate [her] sex from the thralldom of inconvenient dress." A departure from her usual innocent, young ingenues, this role allowed Ada to portray a more forceful female in opposition to the accepted feminine ideal. In addition to her handsome appearance, Ada pleased the reviewer with her admirable performance in a role unlike any he had seen her perform thus
After four performances in Albany, the company left to support the actor Charlie Parsloe for two weeks in Troy. What play or plays he featured in his repertory is unclear; but Ada appeared at least once more in Our Oddities in Albany when Albaugh presented it for the benefit of the destitute actor, Edwin Adams, on October 12. Adams, who had taken special pains to play for Albaugh when the theatre in Albany was doing poorly, died only sixteen days after the benefit.

When Ada supported Maggie Mitchell again the following week, the critic emphasized the "added grace and strength" she and some other members of the company had acquired. Perhaps because she was Albaugh's sister-in-law, Mitchell had performed twice during the previous season, and Ada, with the rest of the stock company, had supported her on tour as well. At the end of the week the company left to support Maggie on tour, playing Troy at the end of the next week.

Upon returning to Albany, Ada had the opportunity to portray Celia once again in support of Louise Pomeroy as Rosalind on October 29 in As You Like It. A reviewer noticed her lack of preparation and missed cues. A few days later she performed her first major Shakespearean heroine when she appeared as Olivia in Twelfth Night. On November 12 she portrayed another new role, Louise, in Augustin Daly's Frou Frou in support of the star, Maud Granger. As the sister of the frivolous Frou Frou, Ada portrayed a responsible young woman who took over her sister's motherly and house-wifely duties at her sister's request. Frou Frou reproaches Louise when she discovers that her sister has unintentionally supplanted her. Frou Frou leaves but
eventually returns only to die in her husband's arms. After the confrontation scene between the two sisters, Ada received enthusiastic applause from the audience. The local critic acknowledged the enormous demands made upon such a young leading lady and assured her of "the sympathy and good wishes of the theatre-going community." While the twenty-year-old seemed at times to be pushed beyond her abilities, the reviewer predicted that she would eventually succeed in her profession with patient and laborious study.

Less than a week later on November 14, when Ada portrayed Laura Hawkins in *The Gilded Age*, she was called before the curtain at the end of the fourth act. Having portrayed the character for two weeks during the previous season, the role was not a new one. A week and a half later she gave a "really excellent personation" of Virginia in support of John McCullough as Virginius in John Sheridan Knowles' play of the same name. As the daughter of the Roman centurian, Ada portrayed a beautiful young girl whom one of the corrupt Roman leaders, Appius, desires in spite of the fact that she is betrothed to Icilius. In order to save her from the wicked Appius, her father, Virginius, kills her. One newspaper reported that the description of Virginia as a creature between girlhood and womanhood painted a portrait of the actress. She played the role "gracefully, and with smoothness and intelligence." On the following night as Desdemona, she "seemed a little overweighted and nervous, but was received with the usual favor."

In December the most significant event during the time with Albaugh occurred for Ada when the renowned American tragedian, Edwin Booth, performed in Albany. Although the reviewer made no mention
of her Desdemona, he praised her portrayal of Ophelia, and of Lady Anne, which she performed for the first time in Richard III on December 20 and repeated on December 22. But for the entire week Booth frightened the young actress by making no comment about her portrayals. On the concluding night of his appearance one unverified report indicates he expressed his approval of her work when he said to her briefly: "You have done very well indeed, my dear young lady, and you have a career before you. I shall talk with you again." The account suggests that Booth "was so charmed with her naive performance of Ophelia" that he approached Albaugh, requesting him to release Ada from her contract so that she could be his leading lady. When Albaugh refused the matter was dropped. The same source indicates that years later Ada's sister, Kate, heard about the offer from Booth himself; but at the time he made it, supposedly no one but Booth and Albaugh knew about it. Ada remained with Albaugh and was soon recognized by the well known actor John Brougham, who had been observing her progress. He told her that she was wasting her time and talent in the provinces and she should go to New York as fast as possible.

Brougham's advice was well worth considering. Albaugh's company struggled to cover expenses because more and more stars brought their own supporting companies with them, eliminating the need for the stock actors' services. Ada also endured a grueling schedule with little or no time off, including holidays. For instance, when Albaugh presented J. B. Buckstone's fantastic spectacle, The Ice Witch, with Ada as the main character, for fifteen performances in December and January, the company earned over half of their receipts for the run on Christmas and
New Year's days. The following week they gave eight more performances of the same play in Troy. There they experienced unexpected problems, which represent the trials and tribulations of touring. During freezing weather a pipe burst, interfering with the heat in the theatre. In the same week, the man who arranged the trap through which Ada descended was hit on the head by the lever, losing control of the trap and causing Ada to make a swift and potentially dangerous descent below stage level. Fortunately, she was not hurt.

In addition to suffering the discomforts of touring, the company seldom made much money on the road, so that any profit made in Albany had to compensate for tour losses. The stock company performed many times for less than one hundred dollars and frequently for half that sum of money, at home as well as on tour. Poor attendance and a deficit of $577 forced Albaugh to end the 1877-78 season the week of March 28 rather than in May. The company then went on tour in support of the star John T. Raymond in Bartley Campbell's Risks. Clearly, acting with the stock company was physically demanding and financially hazardous.

Nevertheless, during her second season with Albaugh, Ada added at least twenty-three new roles to her repertory, fifteen less than the previous season; and she performed at least one hundred and forty times, thirty-eight fewer times than during the previous season. She may have appeared even more frequently, but she is not mentioned as part of the cast in more productions. For instance, when Charles Fechter appeared in Albany for two weeks and then the company supported him on tour for another week, Ada was not included in any reviews. And
Fechter's leading lady, Lizzie Harold, traveled with him performing the roles Ada usually portrayed. If she made up part of the support, her role must have been small. Ada also repeated more roles during this season, performed fewer comic parts, and broadened her range by portraying more melodramatic and tragic heroines than during the previous season.

By the end of this season Ada had gained the approval of critics and Albany audiences. But the pressure of touring and constantly changing roles caused her to appear "careless and indifferent." Yet she had learned how to win the hearts of many audience members in Albany and attract "a coterie of young male admirers." Perhaps the greatest recognition she achieved was from the most eminent American actor of the day, Edwin Booth.

1878-79 Season

With the opening of the 1878-79 season Ada might have anticipated a less rigorous year having expanded her repertoire so extensively over the past two seasons. Although the theatre opened on August 28, 1878, in Albany, Albaugh's regular stock company did not appear until September 30 because some members were still in Baltimore, including Ada. Albaugh took over the management of the Holliday Street Theatre in Baltimore, and Ada, with other members of the stock company, was to perform at his theatres in Albany and Baltimore this season. Their mode of transportation between cities is unclear, but they probably traveled by railroad.

Ada opened the Holliday Street Theatre season in Baltimore on August 31, 1878, in the role of Blanche D'Nevers in John Brougham's The
Duke's Motto. Continuing for nine performances, Ada portrayed the heroine in this "charming melodrama;" her brother-in-law, R. Fulton Russell, sustained the role of Captain Lagardere, the hero, and Hattie took the part of the gypsy Zillah. The involved plot concerns the restoration of the princess Blanche to her rightful royal position. Rescued from assassins as an infant, she was reared with gypsies and ignorant of her true identity. The action moves from Spain to Paris with elaborate indoor and outdoor settings, two of which the critic for the Baltimore American considered "marvels of the scenic-painters' art" as well as the best Baltimore had ever seen. The critic praised the production in general and the two leading players in particular, who divided the honors for the evening. Unlike the Albany critic, the Baltimore reviewer pointed out the "grace and ease" as well as "self-possession in [Ada's] acting" that carried "with it a charm of freshness seldom seen on the modern stage." However, he considered her "rather spirituelle" and feared that she might lack the physical power a leading lady needed at times. As Blanche, Ada portrayed the naïveté and innocence of a young woman willing to sacrifice anything for the man she loves. Supplying her own costumes at this time, she evidenced the polish of a professional in both attire and delivery. She impressed the critic as a "beautiful young lady" who "dressed the part with finished taste and read with correct understanding."

The reviewer for the Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser had no reservations about Ada's acting ability. While praising Russell, Hattie, and Ada's performance, he also provided a descriptive picture of the twenty-one-year-old leading lady:

Although quite young, Miss Rehan's accomplished grace
of action shows a thorough stage training. Tall, beautiful in face and figure, with a voice thoroughly in control and clearly resonant under whatever stress that may be laid upon it, and dressing with great elegance, she is admirably qualified for the position of leading lady, and will at once take the position of a popular favorite.\[57\]

Not only was Ada's beauty attracting attention, but she had learned to execute action gracefully, to use her voice, and to wear flattering costumes.

The following week Ada portrayed Eliza for the first time in one of the many adaptations of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, \textit{Uncle Tom's Cabin}, the most popular nineteenth century melodrama. As the wife of the fugiture slave, George Harris, Ada had to portray Eliza's desperation and fear as she fled with her baby across the ice to freedom and safety. Much of the appeal of the play was the elaborate scenery and spectacle, enhanced by Albaugh to include a band of jubilee singers.\[158\] The \textit{Baltimore Gazette} approved of the acting and production in general but suggested that the plantation scene could benefit from more elaborately embellished scenery.\[159\] The production proved to be so successful that an extra matinee was added on Thursday to the other eight performances during the week.\[160\] The \textit{Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser} declared the production the best ever played of the drama, lavishing praise on the acting and scenery. The reviewer noted that Ada had "added to the good impression her beauty and talents [had] already produced."\[161\] Once again he pointed out the charm of "her rich melodious voice" as well as "her action," which he declared "in all situations . . . intelligent in conception, graceful in execution, and thoroughly pleasing in effect."\[162\] The reviewer expressed his "strong desire to see her in emotional parts of greater
After two successful weeks of stock productions, the Albaughss appeared on September 16 in *Louis XI* and the last three acts of Boucicault's comedy of manners, *London Assurance*; the performance benefitted the yellow fever sufferers. Ada repeated the role of Marie in *Louis XI* and portrayed Grace Harkaway in *London Assurance*, a character she may have carried over from the end of the previous season. They sold every seat in the house as well as standing room because Ada's "presence and acting produced a legitimate sensation." Critics praised Albaugh's performance, and Ada's Marie, which was "another brilliant feature of the evening." Her portrayal of "Grace was inimitably piquant and captivating." The audience assured the artists of their success with repeated curtain calls at the end of the evening. During the rest of the week, they repeated *Louis XI* twice, *London Assurance* three times, and six different plays, sometimes two in one night. Congratulating the company on the successful completion of a very demanding week of both comedy and tragedy, one reviewer complimented Ada for her "fine stage presence, rich, full voice and excellent style," which had "made her many friends."

The company returned to Albany to support John McCullough and Maude Granger for the first week in October. Once again Ada played Celia in *As You Like It* in support of the star Ada Cavendish as Rosalind on October 7, in Albany and back in Baltimore on October 17, 18, and 23. Both the *Baltimore Gazette* and *The Baltimore American* and *Commercial Advertiser* called her a charming Celia, and one of the critics stressed Ada's suitability for the role and her talent for
by-play, which kept the character involved in the action in those scenes where Celia "is more a figure than a participant." In contrast to her charming Celia, Ada portrayed Grace Roseberry again in support of Ada Cavendish's Mercy Merrick in an adaptation of Wilkie Collins' The New Magdalen a few days later. The Baltimore Gazette emphasized the "power and feeling" in Ada's acting, while The Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser admired her "cold and disdainful mien of the selfish narrow-minded woman.

When Ada appeared for the first time in the role of Georgina in support of Maggie Mitchell in the title role of Clifton W. Tayleure's adaptation of Jane Eyre, she portrayed an unlikable character once again. But "she looked, acted and dressed her part with finished taste, and in spite of her role, was warmly received by the audience." After four performances as Georgina, Ada "generously assumed the role of Madelon" again in August Waldauer's Fanchon, with Maggie Mitchell in the title role, for another four performances and "made a decided success." Although Madelon was only a small role, Ada's "piquant beauty and admirable style added greatly to the enjoyment of the audience." The week of Thanksgiving the company returned to Albany to support the star again and the following week performed with her in Troy. But for the next two and one half weeks they either toured again or remained idle. Evidently neither the Leland Opera House in Albany, nor the Holliday Street Theatre in Baltimore could support a resident stock company. Performing fewer roles and often in smaller parts than the ones she had enacted in previous seasons probably caused Ada to think seriously about Brougham's advice to go to New York.
In January of 1879 the resident company only appeared in Albany for one week and in Baltimore for two weeks. Ada performed two new roles in support of the star, Mrs. D. P. Bowers, for two weeks beginning January 5, first in Albany and then in Baltimore. She portrayed Virginia in an adaptation of D'Ennery's Mirah, the Woman of the People for at least four performances. Although Ada's role was a very small one and not very exacting, "she acted with much grace and daintiness, the effect of which was heightened by her attractive appearance." 

Because the resident stock company in Albany could not draw audiences to the theatre as well as the stars who brought their own combination companies with them, the company ceased to perform altogether the week of February 3, 1879, ending Albaugh's stock appearances in that city. Although Ada Rehan and Albaugh's stock company continued to perform at the Holliday Street theatre in Baltimore, she did not perform a role of any consequence until the end of February. Any reservations the Baltimore Gazette critic had voiced earlier concerning her lack of physical power had been laid to rest. He praised her Hebe in Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operetta Pinafore, commenting on her "dash and spirit," while pinpointing her appeal to audiences:

Miss Ada Rehan as cousin Hebe looks like an old-time picture from the early spelling books, regilded and touched. Her face is as fresh and as pure as a violet. Her vivacity and chic fairly illuminate the stage when she is present and almost dispel the scowl of the cynical and saturnine Dick Deadeye.

He also believed her vivacity and ability to communicate an intriguing naivete' especially suited comedy. The Baltimore American and
Commercial Advertiser admired Ada's "charming" Hebe: her portrayal "could not have been better in either costume or acting." The Sun also complimented the "lovely cousin Hebe," and declared the resident company and the star, Effie Ellsler, the "best acting cast in the country." Another company performing the play at Ford's Opera House in Baltimore at the same time Albaugh's company was appearing in it provided a comparison for the local reviewers. Critics agreed that the Holliday Street Theatre production outdid the one at Ford's Opera House in acting but not in music because of a problem with the orchestra at Albaugh's theatre. Nevertheless, the operetta was so successful that Albaugh held it over for another week, bringing the total number of performances to fourteen.

The following week of March 10, Ada played a new role with the charming, vivacious comedienne Fanny Davenport in Baltimore. While Davenport played "the more pathetic role of Fanny" in Augustin Daly's *Divorce*, Ada "brightened up the otherwise sad scenes with very pretty touches of comedy" in the role of Lu Ten Eyck. Similarly, when she supported Davenport the following day in Daly's *Pique*, Ada "looked unusually pretty and piquant and acted with the rare grace which [belonged] only to her" in the role of Mary Standish. She also portrayed Celia in *As You Like It* for one night opposite Davenport as Rosalind. As Celia, Ada "divided the honors with the star [and] in the first act the twain made such a bouquet of loveliness as [was] seldom seen on this stage, in one critic's opinion."

Duly impressed, Fanny Davenport invited Ada to support her in *Pique* in New York. After three years with Albaugh, Ada faced a difficult decision. With the decline of the stock company, her future
as a resident actress in any company outside New York was bleak. Starring was an alternative but she was not well enough established to make it a viable choice. Joining Fanny Davenport's company offered her, at least, the opportunity to further her career. Ada chose to end her association with Albaugh and she joined Fanny Davenport's company for a month and a half.  

Ada could look back on her three years with Albaugh as a period of substantial growth. By the end of her third season with Albaugh, she had portrayed at least eighteen new roles in eighteen new plays, five less than the previous season and many of them quite small. She made about one hundred and thirty-seven appearances on stage, about three fewer than the previous season. Although neither the theatre in Albany nor Baltimore could support a resident stock company for a full season of weekly engagements, Ada gained experience in leading roles in both comedy and tragedy. She ended the season with the image of a lovely, graceful, tall young woman with a melodious voice and vivacious charm imprinted on the audience's mind. She earned the most extensive critical praise this season that she had received thus far, emerging as a self-confident actress who showed a talent for by-play and a strong stage presence acquired through a thorough stage training.  

Ada's three seasons as leading lady in John W. Albaugh's company, portraying more than eighty different roles, gave her experience in sensational melodramas, comedies, and Shakespearean tragedy. Yet, very few tragic actresses whom she could emulate as role models appeared at Albaugh's theatre. She learned the value of personal charm and vivacity from the comedienne Maggie Mitchell, who served as a role model for the younger actress more often than any other star. With the
experience of creating well developed characters and acting with "well seasoned stage veterans," Ada's performances showed decided improvement. She attracted her own group of admirers. Her invitation to join Edwin Booth was one of the most encouraging outcomes of her provincial career.

Just as Mrs. Drew had provided Ada with basic instruction in the rudiments of her profession and Barney Macauley enlarged upon that groundwork, so John Albaugh added to the development of her talent. In three of the last resident stock companies in the country, Ada gained a thorough grounding in her profession. As her acting technique and ability improved she gradually rose from playing minor roles to juvenile supporting parts and, finally, to leading ladies. Her final performances as a member of Albaugh's company in support of Fanny Davenport gave ample testimony of her potential to compete favorably with actresses of a high caliber. In view of the dying condition of the stock company system, joining Fanny Davenport's Company offered Ada a means of learning the requirements of stardom.
Notes—Chapter 2


3 Hill 3-5.


5 Hill 4.

6 Hill 7.

7 Hill 9.


9 Letter from Kate Byron to Mr. E. J. Wendell dated 26 Sept. 1899 and written from North Long Branch, in the "Ada Rehan" File of Miscellaneous Clippings in the Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University. Hereafter cited as Harvard Theatre Collection.

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13 Hill 64-65.


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18 Hill 388.
23 The Daily Louisville Commercial 18 Nov. 1875: 4.
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29 Grey.
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84 The Albany Daily Evening Times 26 Oct. 1876: 3.
85 The Albany Daily Evening Times 7 Nov. 1876: 3.
86 The Albany Daily Evening Times 13 Nov. 1876: 3.
87 The Albany Daily Evening Times 14 Nov. 1876: 3.
88 The Albany Daily Evening Times 2 Dec. 1876: 3.
89 The Albany Daily Evening Times 24 Nov. 1876: 3 and Addenda 29-30.
90 The Albany Daily Evening Times 12 Dec. 1876: 3.
95 The Albany Daily Evening Times 26 Dec. 1876: 3.
96 Phelps, Addenda 31, 44.
97 H. S. Keller, "Ada Rehan at Albany."
103 The Albany Daily Evening Times 7 Feb. 1877: 3.
Phelps, Addenda 33.


Phelps, Addenda 13, 16.


Phelps, Addenda 33-34.


Phelps, Addenda 34.


Phelps, Addenda 13.


The Albany Daily Evening Times 3 Nov. 1877: 3.

The Albany Daily Evening Times 12 Nov. 1877: 3.


The Albany Daily Evening Times 12 Nov. 1877: 3.

The Albany Daily Evening Times 12 Nov. 1877: 3.

The Albany Daily Evening Times 15 Nov. 1877: 3.

131 The Albany Daily Evening Times 27 Nov. 1877: 3.
133 Phelps, Addenda 36.
134 The Albany Daily Evening Times 18, 19, 21 and 22 Dec. 1877: 3.

Portfolios.
137 Unidentified handwritten biography of Ada Rehan, Harvard Theatre Collection.
138 Unidentified handwritten biography of Ada Rehan.
139 Unidentified handwritten biography of Ada Rehan.
140 Phelps, Addenda 37.
141 The Troy Daily Times 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 Jan. 1878: 3.
142 The Troy Daily Times 8 Jan. 1878: 3.
143 The Troy Daily Times 12 Jan. 1878: 3.
144 Phelps, Addenda 33.
145 Phelps, Addenda 43.
146 Phelps, Addenda 38.
147 The Albany Daily Evening Times 27 Mar. 1878: 3.
148 The Albany Daily Evening Times 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 22, and 23 Feb. 1878: 1 and 3.
149 Phelps, Addenda 26.
151 Phelps, Addenda 39.
152 Baltimore Gazette 2 Sept. 1878: 2.
The stock company appeared in *Louis XI* in Holyoke, Massachusetts on 26 Mar. and in *London Assurance* on 27 Mar. Returning to Albany, they repeated the performances on 29 and 30 Mar. in the same order. The newspapers do not list the casts, but Ada probably performed in both plays. See *The Albany Daily Evening Times* 26 and 29 Mar. 1878: 3 and 30 Mar. 1878: 1.
1878: 4.
169 The Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser 17 Sept.

1878: 4.
170 The Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser 17 Sept.

1878: 4.
171 The Baltimore Sun 18 and 20 Sept. 1878: 1.

1878: 4.
173 Phelps, Addenda: 39.

1878: 4.
177 The Baltimore Sun 17, 21, 22 Oct. 1878: 1.

1878: 4.
181 Baltimore Gazette 12 Nov. 1878: 2.

1878: 4.
183 Phelps, Addenda 40.
184 The Troy Daily Times 2 Dec. 1878: 3.
185 Phelps, Addenda 41.
4. The Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser 14 Jan. 1879:

190 Baltimore Gazette 1 Mar. 1879: 2.
192 The Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser 28 Feb. 1879

3.

194 The Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser 9 Mar 1879:


199 Augustin Daly, *Pique*, ed. Catherine Sturtevant.

Ada Rehan's apprenticeship with Mrs. John Drew and Barney Macauley, as well as her experience as a leading lady with John W. Albaugh, prepared her for an easy transition to Fanny Davenport's touring company. When she repeated the role of Mary Standish in Daly's *Pique* at the Grand Opera House in New York on April 14, 1879, the play proved so successful that Davenport retained it for a second week. As Mary Standish, Ada portrayed a sweet young woman in love with her cousin, Captain Arthur Standish, who marries Mabel Renfrew and brings his new bride to the family home where Mary also lives. Mary befriends Mabel even though the new bride married out of pique after the man she loved spurned her for the wealth of her young stepmother. The action of the play focuses on Mabel's distress, her husband's departure, and her child's kidnapping. Mary remains kind and loving throughout, finally winning the love of Thorsby Gill after the other conflicts in the play are resolved to complete the happy ending.

By the time she appeared as Mary Standish in New York, Ada had performed the role often enough to know it well. More importantly, it provided her with a role large enough for the New York opening she and her family so anxiously desired for her. Before Ada appeared in New York, theatrical manager Augustin Daly had been advised to see the "tall," "beautiful," and "splendid" Ada Rehan, who would be playing with Fanny Davenport. In addition, Ada's sister, Kate Byron, arranged a meeting at Daly's house between the manager and the young actress at which Daly agreed to see Ada perform in *Pique*.5
Daly admired Ada's "intelligence and adaptability" in Pique, and engaged her for the small role of Big Clemence in L'Assommoir, a play based on Zola's novel of the same name. The production opened at the Olympic Theatre in New York on April 30, 1879, but received less than enthusiastic reviews. A melodrama of low life in nine acts, L'Assommoir detailed the degradation and death by starvation of a woman whose husband becomes a lazy drunkard; he eventually dies with delirium tremens. With much sermonizing and many scenes of drunken debauchery, the play features a water fight in a laundry between the main character, Gervaise, and the woman, Virginie, for whom the heroine's lover, Lantier, deserted her. Not only did the realistic spectacle of the two jealous women drenching each other with laundry water appeal to the audience, but the rumored professional jealousy between the two actresses, Maud Granger and Emily Rigl, added to the attraction of the play. Perhaps the adverse publicity and situation led Emily Rigl to withdraw from the cast on May 7. Immediately, the New York Herald announced that "Miss Ada Rehan, a rising young actress, who recently played with Miss Fanny Davenport at the Grand Opera House with much success, will tonight and hereafter take the part of Virginie in The Assommoir." Although the play closed on May 17, Ada had achieved another New York appearance and gained Augustin Daly's attention.

Born nearly twenty years before Ada on July 20, 1838, Augustin Daly did not grow up in the theatre. He began his theatrical career as a playwright and critic in 1860. He adapted most of his plays from the French and German and closely collaborated with his brother, Joseph, in the writing of them. By 1867 Daly held the position of dramatic critic on five different New York newspapers and had written his most famous
original play, *Under the Gaslight*. Two years later he opened his first theatre in New York on August 16, 1869. Included in the company were two unknown actresses, Fanny Davenport and Agnes Ethel, the first of many whom Daly made prominent. Mrs. Gilbert, James Lewis, and George Clark, whom Ada later acted with, also belonged to the troupe. Through unceasing labor and in spite of the destruction by fire of his theatre in 1873, Daly earned recognition as a superior manager, concluding 1873 as manager of three theatres. Marvin Felheim provides a summary of Daly's managerial practices before 1879:

The years from 1869 to 1877 could be called the first period of Daly's career as a manager. During this time, he established those general patterns of management which eventually brought him fame and fortune. First in importance, he set the highest standards of 'natural' acting by the whole company, and complimentary to this, a strict discipline applicable alike to all members of his theatrical family. He established as a principle the presentation of a varied repertoire including Shakespeare, Old English comedies, his 'own' plays—originals, dramatizations, adaptations and the best of contemporary English and American drama. And always, the most careful attention to staging, including setting, costuming, and music.

Daly emphasized ensemble acting and wanted no stars in his company. The "natural" style of acting he advocated was in contrast to the exaggerated "thunder and lightening school" then popular. Daly's style was more subdued in its expression, using smaller gestures, less obvious facial expression, and a softer voice. While Daly's became known as one of the foremost acting companies in America, several of his leading ladies left him to star between 1872 and 1875, including Agnes Ethel, Clara Morris, Fanny Morant, and Ada Dyas; Henrietta Crosman did likewise in 1877.

Clara Morris and Fanny Davenport were probably the most famous
actresses Daly promoted. Fanny Davenport already belonged to the company when Clara Morris (1848-1925) joined it in 1870. Daly gave the newcomer the role of Anne Silvester in his adaptation Man and Wife from Wilkie Collins' tragic novel of the same name. Daly had originally allotted the role to Davenport but she preferred to portray Blanche Lundy and he acceded to her wishes. With her strong expression of passion, Morris triumphed in the role. She left Daly in 1873 to act at the Union Square Theatre under the management of A. M. Palmer. For the remainder of her career she excelled in such roles as Camille that called for the expression of powerful conflicting human passions. Clara Morris's "genius," in the critic J. Rankin Towse's opinion, was unmistakable, but restricted. "It was not manifested in romance, in high comedy, or in heroic emotions, whether good or evil, but shone out resplendently in the intensification of the commoner passions of ordinary human nature." 

Fanny Davenport (1850-1898) had acted at the Arch Street Theatre like Ada before joining Daly's in 1869. She remained with Daly until 1877 when he lost his theatre as a result of financial problems. Although she portrayed a variety of roles while in Daly's company that included seventeenth-century English comedy as well as Shakespearian comedy and tragedy, she later turned to Sardou's melodramatic plays in the 1880's. She achieved her greatest success in his plays that were "big spectacular dramas full of passion and violence, for which ... [she was] well fitted." 

When Ada made the acquaintance of Augustin Daly in 1879, he had been in theatre for twenty years and had a reputation for promoting his actors. He had just returned from Europe where he had travelled to
study continental theatre practices after having lost the lease on his Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York in 1877. Following the failure of L'Assommoir, Daly acquired the run down Broadway Theatre, which he set about remodeling for a fall opening. Daly faced competition from two important theatres that housed stock companies in 1879, Wallack's and the Union Square. The actor/manager Lester Wallack produced a variety of English comedy, including some Shakespeare and tended to use British actors and actresses as well. At the Union Square, A. M. Palmer excelled at the presentation of melodrama and it was to him that several of Daly's actresses defected. Influenced by the popularity of light comic operetta in London, Daly sought performers with musical abilities for "a permanent musical troupe as well as a dramatic company." Hearing of his plans to open the theatre in the fall with a stock company, Ada wrote to him specifically requesting to act under his management in "'juvenile and light comedy'" roles "'or in fact in such parts as [she might] be suited for.'" She assured her prospective employer that she had "a very handsome and abundant wardrobe" to which she was constantly adding. Although she had a job offer from the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia as well as several others, two of which offered her fifty dollars a week, Ada accepted Daly's offer of thirty-five dollars a week with the understanding that he would increase her salary when she became more valuable to him. Ada turned down at least one other leading position and a higher salary to accept the engagement with Daly because she wished to remain in New York with a company where her future had greater promise. She spent the summer of 1879 at the Byrons' secluded summer house "on the Jersey coast between Long Branch and
1879-80 Season

Ada must have been pleased to find that her old friend John Drew was one of the other young performers Daly had engaged for his new company. Rehearsals for the 1879-80 season's opening playbill, a one act comedietta, Love's Young Dream, and Olive Logan Sykes' three act comic musical, Newport, began on September 5 and continued every day until the first performance on September 17. Ada portrayed Nelly Beers in the comedietta, singing "a cute little duet, 'The Men Will Deceive,'" with May Fielding. Although the critic Brander Matthews, described the young actress as "a lank and gawky girl" who did not "attract any attention," another reviewer found her "queenly in face and form . . . with magnetic force and fire." One other critic declared her "a clever actress with a fair contralto voice," but both plays failed and Daly replaced them with his Divorce after fourteen performances.

At first Daly chose another actress, Mabel Jordan, to portray Lu Ten Eyck in Divorce; but most likely he changed his mind and cast Ada in the role because she had successfully performed it during the spring with Fanny Davenport who had originally created it under Daly's direction. Like the Baltimore critics, the New York reviewers approved of the new young actress, reporting that she imparted "to the character of Lu Ten Eyck a dash, sparkle, and brilliancy." While they agreed that "she did some excellent acting," one newsman commented on her "excellent spirit and a degree of vivacity that was at times a little superabundant and led her into explosions of speech and
gesture that made of Miss Ten Eyck an even louder young woman than she was designed to be." Perhaps "opening night nerves" caused some of Ada's over-exuberance since the reviewers that covered the following twenty-three performances commented favorably on her acting.

Ada may have feared that John Drew, as the Reverend Harry Duncan, would make her laugh during performance. Drew delighted in cleverly disguised pranks designed to "break up" the young actress. And she laughed "very easily, in a nervous, hysterical way." An exacting taskmaster, Daly was unaware of Drew's antics. At rehearsals Daly sat on the stage directing the scene, physically moving actors about and demonstrating the action for them. When trouble arose during a performance, he tore "about like a madman, and as for his language, well I've heard enough now to become quite hardened to it," recorded Dora Knowlton. A young woman in the company who played minor parts, Knowlton kept a diary during this first season with Daly, in which she expressed her admiration for Ada. Ada had an odd, "yet musical voice and accent;" she was very pleasant as well, "with no silly airs or affectations. She [was] not exactly pretty, but [had] the sweetest smile and a dear, deep dimple in her cheek." Tall and graceful with fluffy reddish hair and many freckles, Ada fascinated Dora who appreciated her kindness and admired her as "the best actress in the whole company." Drew also admired Ada, describing her as "handsome and attractive" as well as "big, whole-hearted, good-natured and one of the most lovable of women."

Ada began rehearsals for her third ingenue role of the season, Isabelle, in Bronson Howard's Wives on September 29 while Divorce was still playing. To Howard's combining of Molière's two comedies, The
School for Husbands and The School for Wives, Daly added music. As "Isabelle de Nesle, the deep one," Ada portrayed one of three young women whose guardians plan to marry them. She outwits her guardian, Sganarelle, making him the instrument of her union with her young lover, Captain Fieremonte. The play received a successful run of forty-eight performances and Ada received admiring notices. One paper referred to her "splendid interpretation of the artful and winsome Isabelle, a role exactly fitted to her grace and beauty." Another reviewer described her as "exceedingly good in the rapid transitions of feeling and expression required by her role," but most of the attention went to Catherine Lewis who had the best singing voice. In accordance with his desire for a musical troupe, Daly hired performers with good singing voices, and the "light comic operetta" then in vogue, "held a prominent place in his programmes." The manager engaged Catherine Lewis "primarily for singing parts, a position which earned her the superior salary of forty-five dollars per week plus all her costumes." The manager refused to call her a "Prima Donna," substituting the term "chief singing business" for it instead. Ada was decidedly at a disadvantage in musical plays in which Catherine Lewis sang.

For her fourth part this season, Ada portrayed the supporting role, Georgette, in a revival of Victorien Sardou's Fernande for two matinees on November 5 and 12. Although she earned good reviews in the comic role for infusing some life into the conventional character through her "natural humor," the play proved unsuccessful. However, Daly's adaptation (from the German of Gustav Von Moser), An Arabian Night, which opened November 29, was a success and provided Ada
with the opportunity to create the character Kate Sprinkle for the first time. For the small role she received almost unanimous approval, with critics praising her "naturalness of manner," her earnestness, "sprightliness," "winning spirit and cheerful dash."

Another reviewer praised her for maintaining an unconsciousness of the absurdity of the characters and situation, which was a necessity in farce, and for not allowing the comic exaggeration to slip over into buffoonery. The critic predicted that "Miss Rehan, with her sweetly modulated voice, her delicate and true enunciation, her unstudied grace, her fine intuition of the truth of nature, her variété of expression, [was] destined to win a high place in her profession."

The play continued for seventy-six performances before Daly replaced it on January 28, 1880 with a musical comedy, The Royal Middy, adapted from Der Seecadet of Richard Genée. Once again Ada portrayed a young wife, Donna Antonia, married to an elderly husband and Catherine Lewis portrayed the main character, Fanchette, who disguises herself as a midshipman in order not to arouse the queen's jealousy; but unfortunately, the queen falls in love with her. Lewis attracted the most attention, receiving credit for the success of the piece which played eighty-six times.

While The Royal Middy was still running, Ada performed the main role, Ruth Tredgett, in W. S. Gilbert's Charity for the February 18 matinee. Seeing her for the first time in a serious role, the Daily Tribune reported that while she gave occasion for much praise, she "proved deficient in force, at the climax of her part of the Tramp; but in the passages of sullen defiance and tearful despair and contrition, she was true to a just ideal of nature, and equally artless and tender
On April 10 Ada appeared with John Drew for the first time in the type of comedy roles they later made famous, in *The Way We Live*, based on the German of Adolph L'Arronge. As Cherry Monogram, Ada portrayed a frivolous wife who was too busy with her charitable endeavors to care for her husband, child, and home. Drew portrayed the neglected husband to whom Cherry finally turned her attention when she became jealous of another woman. Both the young performers and the play earned good reviews, and *The New York Dramatic News* predicted that "another season, at the present rate of growth, [would] place her [Ada] among the best leading ladies in the profession." One critic declared Ada to be "the leading lady of Daly's Theatre." Other critics commented on her power and her popularity with the audience as well as the elegance of her costumes for which Daly allowed her to choose the shade of color and material. After twenty-one performances the play closed the season and Daly formed two touring companies. The group with which Ada performed produced *An Arabian Night*, while the other group offered *The Royal Middy*.

Ada could congratulate herself not only for achieving the New York opening she had sought, but for successfully acting in the center of theatrical activity in America for a full season. She gave two-hundred-seventy-one performances of eight new roles, gradually worked herself up to main roles in the company, and most importantly, gained the attention of the most prominent critics in the country to whom she had been previously unknown. When she was not performing, she was usually rehearsing six days a week with only Sunday off. Most of the roles she portrayed were not very prominent or different from many
previous roles she had performed. But portraying fewer roles for longer runs than she had ever experienced before, and receiving personal direction at intensive rehearsals enabled Ada to develop her talents while performing at her best.

Catherine Lewis, who carried the majority of the leading roles, reportedly pretended illness at the end of the season in order to force Daly to raise her salary. Lewis' demands caused a rift between the manager and actress which resulted in her inclusion in the summer tour but not in the company for the fall season. Her departure created the opportunity for Ada to advance even further in the company.

1880-81 Season

During the summer, Ada toured from Philadelphia to New England and then Chicago. She repeated only two roles, Kate Sprinkle from An Arabian Night and Isabelle deNesle from Wives. With the rest of the company, she began rehearsals on August 2, 1880 for the preseason production of Daly's melodrama, Tiote; or, A Young Girl's Heart (from A. Poitevin's La Petiote). The critics disliked the play but they praised Ada's performance as Issopel, the gypsy queen. The theatre then closed for eight days in preparation for the opening of the regular 1880-81 season on September 23 with Edgar Fawcett's comedy, Our First Families. Ada portrayed a wealthy young girl, Eva Manhattan, who falls in love with her disinherited vocal teacher. The "broad, bustling farce," drew sufficient praise for the acting in general to sustain the play for a six-week run. Joseph Daly attributed the lack of "patronage" to Catherine Lewis's absence. According to him, the actress "turned into a star and took her attractive personality to a
theatre down the street" after succeeding in Augustin Daly's productions.91

Ada soon presented another ingenue, Selena Vandusen, in Daly's comedy, Needles and Pins (adapted from Julius Rosen), which opened on November 9 and became the first hit of the season.92 Noting a similarity between Eva in Our First Families and Selena in Needles and Pins, The New York Dramatic News warned Ada of the danger in repetitive portrayals. But the critic added that "she did so well that for this impersonation we can award her nothing but praise."93 The Daily Graphic reviewer concurred, designating Ada "the hit of the evening" as the "innocent though precocious girl of 18 who [is] anxious to love but [does] not know how."94 Perhaps the most significant aspect of Ada's experience in Needles and Pins was the opportunity to work, for the first time, with Mrs. Anne Hartley Gilbert, who portrayed Aunt Dosie Heffron, and James Lewis, as Nicholas Geagle. Her appearance with this combination of players helped bring Ada into prominence. With Gilbert and Lewis, Ada and Drew distinguished themselves for their ensemble acting, eventually becoming known as "The Big Four."95 Ada and Drew took the roles of young lovers, while Gilbert and Lewis usually played Ada's quarrelsome parents or guardians. The first decided hit of the season, Needles and Pins ran one hundred nights.96

On February 14, Ada resumed the role of Selena Vandusen in Needles and Pins until March 5 when Woolson Morse's musical comedy, Cinderella at School, opened.97 Once again Ada appeared in a small role, Psyche Persimmon, in the musical comedy based on Robertson's School.98 However, her portrayal denoted "a careful study of the New York school girl of the period."99 The piece did not play to full or large houses,
but ran for sixty-five performances, closing the season on April 30.\textsuperscript{100}

Ada's second season at Daly's Theatre proved to be a turning point in her career. With Catherine Lewis gone from the company, Ada gained more prominence and critical attention even though she performed only two new major roles and three minor new ones in five plays. Never before had she performed one role for one hundred nights. The fact that the musical productions fared poorly, while the comedies, in which she shone, succeeded, further advanced and secured her position in the company. Daly's doubling of her salary (as well as Drew's) at the end of the season indicates her greater value to him.\textsuperscript{101} The addition of James Lewis and Mrs. Gilbert to the company permitted Ada to work with seasoned veterans,\textsuperscript{102} and to develop her skills in ensemble performances.

After the closing of the New York season, Ada again toured during the summer with Daly's company. The length of the tour and the cities included in it are unknown, except for St. Louis where the company suffered from hot weather and poor business, and Ada, the loss of money in a hotel robbery.\textsuperscript{103} When Daly presented Cinderella at School again, beginning August 9, 1881, in New York, Ada's performance in the small but comic role of sleepy Psyche Persimmon\textsuperscript{104} prompted the Boston Gazette to call attention to her gradual development from Big Clemence in L'Assommoir "to the most promising of the new generation of actresses."\textsuperscript{105}

She is an artist, and has the art to conceal art. She is very tall and slender, and very pretty in a peculiar style of her own, and she knows just how to dress to show off her good looks to the best advantage. The great thing in Miss Rehan's favor is that she seems perfectly unconscious of her audience, and although she is a great favorite you never catch
her making eyes across the footlights. She has the best sense of humor I ever knew in an American actress so that her comedy is simply delicious. It is of that quiet, unaggressive sort that is very refreshing after the broad comedy that delights the average audience.

As a member of Daly's company, Ada was acquiring self-confidence and a more subdued style of acting for which Daly's troupe was noted. At the same time, her comic powers emerged, themselves, distinguishing her from other American actresses.

1881-82

Ada opened the 1881-82 season in the role of Thisbe Mestic on September 7 in Daly's Quits, adapted from a German play by Julius Rosen. As the daughter of an ambitious and shrewd mother, portrayed by Mrs. Gilbert, Ada played opposite John Drew as her romantic lead. The play lasted only four weeks after which Ada and Drew again appeared as the young lovers on October 5 in Edgar Fawcett's Americans Abroad. The elder and younger Dumas' Royal Youth followed, opening October 22 and closing one week later. In the Royal Youth, Drew portrayed the young King Louis XIV who gives up his love for Marie de Mancini, played by Ada, in order to create a political alliance with Spain through marriage to Marie Therese, Infanta of Spain. The New York Times declared the love scene between Drew and Ada the most charming incident in the play, while The New York Evening Mail credited Ada with making the scene successful. Because his musical productions did not succeed, Daly abandoned the idea of having a musical as well as dramatic company, concentrating all his efforts on the dramatic company. The casting of the first three shows of the
season, as well as the next two that followed, indicate that both Ada
and Drew assumed the leading positions in the company.

Beginning November 10 Ada appeared in Daly's adaptation of The
Passing Regiment, as a Russian heiress, Telka Essoff. As lieutenant
Paul Dexter, John Drew falls in love with Telka. The action
revolves around the escapades of a regiment of national guardsmen who
are invited to stay at the resort area, Naragansett Pier, on their way
to Newport for summer camp. A multitude of situations arise out of the
romantic affairs of the soldiers at every rank. With the role of
Telka, Ada won the unanimous approval of the critics and secured her
position as leading comedy woman of Daly's company. More than one
reviewer declared her "the hit of the evening," describing her
portrayal as "charmingly ingenuous and graceful," and her dance in the
fourth act "the personification of grace." Her "impulsive
excitability" contrasted with Drew's coolness and her love-making,
declared The Daily Graphic, "is the best and most 'dulcet' piece of
acting she has done for many a day. She gushes with the ardor of a
gypsy, dances with the witchery of Fanny Ellsler and pouts with all the
artlessness of a boarding school miss." The Critic called her "the
best soubrette on the American stage," while another reviewer
designated her "the best comedienne on our stage." The fact that
she performed the role one-hundred times before Daly replaced the play
February 6 with his adaptation of Victorien Sardou's Odette, further
reinforced her new prominence.

In the title role and her last one of the season, Ada portrayed a
tragic heroine, a "part, which demanded feeling, power, and
passion-governed by reserve." A countess, whose husband turns her
out of his house when he finds her with a lover, Odette does not see or hear about her baby daughter again until fifteen years later when the count asks her to cease using his name. The daughter's future mother-in-law will consent to her son's marriage to Odette's daughter only on this condition. Odette, who is now a gambler's mistress, insists on seeing her daughter who believes her mother to have been a virtuous woman who drowned years before. She sees the daughter with the intent of revealing her identity but cannot disillusion her and chooses to enter a convent instead. The critical reception was mixed, but most critics agreed that the role did not suit Ada due to a lack of force on her part. Several critics alluded to her lack of vocal power, commenting that what the lines demanded utterly dwarfed her voice; that her voice was unpliable and monotonous in inflection; and that it was weak and thin. Some papers defended her, saying she was "always good," never "uninteresting," and prejudged by some reviewers. One paper claimed that because of "the strain of eight performances a week [which were] too utterly much [for] her delicate constitution," Ada had "begged to be relieved" of the part by her understudy. But whether or not she was relieved is unclear. In spite of the controversy, Odette continued to draw excellent houses, including the Saturday and Wednesday matinees, for seventy-seven performances. Beginning April 13 Daly replaced Odette with a musical, which ended the season on May 20. Ada did not perform in it. She went on the "customary tour of the Daly company east and west" for the summer, performing Psyche, Telka, and Odette. She performed Telka again in New York, beginning August 9, for the preliminary 1882-83 season at Daly's Theatre.
Ada continued her consistent pattern of improvement during the 1881-82 season, establishing herself as the leading comedy woman of Daly's company with Drew as her leading man. Earning good reviews for her first three roles of the season in unpopular plays, she proved her superiority as a comic ingenue. But it was in her fourth role of the Russian heiress, Telka Essoff, that she triumphed, giving one-hundred consecutive performances and confirming her popularity. Vivacity, charm, and grace characterized her style and endeared her to the audience. Her liveliness supplied the perfect contrast to Drew's nonchalant manner. When she portrayed Odette, however, many critics found that she lacked the physical and vocal power to communicate the emotional depth of the character. Yet even this unpopular play ran seventy-seven performances with Ada in the title role. Her improved status can be seen in her portrayal of the leading role in five productions this season as opposed to two major and three minor roles the previous season. She also appeared about eighteen more times this year than the previous one. She had now fulfilled her promise to Daly to be worth her salary to him.

1882-83

Ada must have been happy to have her sister, Hattie, join the company for the 1882-83 season. Although the season opened September 5, Ada did not appear until October 10 when she portrayed the title character in Arthur Wing Pinero's The Squire. As Lieutenant Eric Thorndyke, John Drew portrayed her lover to whom she was secretly married. The role of Kate Verity differed significantly from the light comedy roles the twenty-five-year-old actress had
Kate Verity attends to all the affairs of her estate: "she directs her baliffs, keeps her books, oversees her lands, receives her tenants' rents, pays her farmers' wages, and is, in more than name, the Squire of the parish." Because her husband's mother objected to the young couple's marriage, Kate and Eric married secretly. However, when Kate becomes pregnant they decide to announce their union publicly until the wife who disgraced the Lieutenant and whom he believed dead returns. But the wife dies and the couple remarry to complete the happy ending.

Although a few critics had reservations concerning the forcefulness of Ada's emotional expression at times, most critics responded to her acting enthusiastically, praising her versatility and development as an actress. Many critics considered this portrayal her best work thus far. Surprised that she succeeded "so well in a character deemed unsuited to her," The New York Times asserted the unmistakable artistic value of her performance. While Ada triumphed, John Drew was less successful; he did not rise to the requirements of the part, according to one reviewer. The Commercial Advertiser observed that Ada had become "a conscientious actress" who dropped the "conventional infantile tone" and "allegedly naive stammer" that she had used to impersonate young women for several years. The New York Dramatic News described one of her expressions of grief when she heard the news that her husband was married to another woman:

Her deep grief was eloquently and forcibly expressed by her drooping form, her nervous gestures and low anguished moans. She was so tender and loving, so light-hearted and happy in her affection for Eric, that this terrible news stunned her, seemed to turn her heart to stone at one fell blow. The knowledge of her husband's treachery... took the color from her
cheeks, the radiance from her eyes, and left her pale and trembling. 

In spite of its success and popularity, Daly replaced The Squire with another of his German adaptations from Gustav Moser, Our English Friend, on November 25.

Perhaps because Ada succeeded so well as Kate Verity, Daly made her part, Barbee Vaughn, in the social comedy, Our English Friend, more prominent. But the plot still revolved around the title character, played by James Lewis, who won the love of the young heroine, Barbee Vaughn. One critic noted Ada's constant improvement, stating that she had no equal on the American stage in ingenue roles. Another one claimed that she had no rival in such parts on the whole English speaking stage. The critics all seemed to agree that "Miss Rehan was charming in one of those ingenue roles she does so well."

On January 15, 1883, Ada opened in New York in Daly's revival of Colley Cibber's eighteenth-century comedy, She Would and She Would Not. As Hypolita, Ada portrayed a young woman who masquerades as her own lover, Don Philip, played by John Drew, in order to sabotage his wedding plans. Daly had waited fourteen years to find the right actress to portray Hypolita, and it was not until he hired Ada that he had anyone capable of playing the role. Just as Daly had enlarged the part of Barbee Vaughn, he likewise enhanced the role of Hypolita for Ada. Once again she portrayed a "merry, saucy, mischievous, bright-eyed" girl, but this time, she dressed as a cavalier. The reviews of the production itself were mixed, but the critics agreed that Ada was bewitching. At least two critics thought that Drew
looked more like a cowboy or Texan than like a cavalier, and in spite of being a charming and vivacious Hypolita, Ada showed signs of nervousness. Margaret Hall recalled that Daly often commented that Ada wept at rehearsals over new roles because "in spite of her endeavor to realize his interpretation of each new role, it always seemed to the actress that she was incapable of reaching his ideals." 

Ada continued to play small roles as well as leading ones, and in February participated in the production that marked the turning point in Daly's fortunes. Daly's New York production of his adaptation from Franz Von Schonthan, Seven-Twenty-Eight, on February 24, 1883, began a period of prosperity and success for him and his entire company. More successful than any play since Pins and Needles, Seven-Twenty-Eight made Daly's the most popular theatre in New York City for the next few years, if not in America. Undoubtedly part of the success of this production can be attributed to the play itself. The plot revolved around a portrait painted of a young woman and exhibited as number 7-20-8, which leads to her pursuit by a lover. In addition, her mother has some poems printed that her father sent to the mother while they were courting. The mother does not realize that the true author is Shakespeare. But the critics overwhelmingly focused on the characters rather than the content of the domestic comedy, praising the actors and actresses for the success of the play. In The Boston Herald's opinion, the play suited "Daly's company exactly," and next to James Lewis "in point of favor with the audience was Miss Ada Rehan." As Floss Bargiss, Ada portrayed the young daughter of Launcelot and Hypatia Bargiss, played by Mrs. Glibert, with John Drew cast as her suitor, Courtney Corliss. Her Floss combined "the
hoysden, the coquette and the ingenue, and her crisp execution and mischievous piquancy of speech, movement, and temperment were exceedingly effective so that she was recalled upon the scene with copious applause. Reviewers claimed that because Ada distinguished herself as an ingenue, she never appeared to better advantage; and because she was exceedingly funny, she made another comedy hit. They echoed praise Ada had earned for similar characterizations. For instance, The New York Star described her as "fitted with one of those ingenue characters she [played] so effectively," and The Truth echoed this assessment, describing the role as "capitally acted by Miss Ada Rehan, who displayed all those admirable qualities as an interpreter of ingenue parts which have made her distinguished in this line of acting." Seven-Twenty-Eight continued to draw good houses even at the Wednesday matinees until it closed the season on April 7.

As she had done the previous year when the season ended, Ada began her summer tour with Daly's company in Philadelphia on April 16, presenting her Kate Verity and Floss Bargiss for one week each. Continuing on to Boston, she repeated her Floss in that city and alternated performances of Floss and Kate Verity in other New England cities the following week. On May 14, she commenced a week's run in Brooklyn as Barbee Vaughn, dividing the following week between Albany and Buffalo where she presented her Floss again. Everywhere she went critics praised her acting. Of her Kate Verity a Philadelphia critic said, "Her acting is refined, dignified and subdued. There is no gush, no rant, no wild hysterics. She is thoroughly natural, and her performance is forcible by reason of its fidelity to nature."
Another Philadelphia critic raved about her Floss, comparing her to the famous eighteenth century comedienne, Dora Jordan, and claiming that Ada's predecessor could not have been more natural than Ada. Because she created a "compact perfect character," Ada offered no opportunity to criticize. Likewise, explaining her public appeal, the Boston Courier reviewer described her as "pretty, arch, coquettish and intelligent. The English roundness and soft fulness of her voice [were] very pleasant. . . . She [possessed] the art of being extravagant and of yet seeming entirely natural." Traveling west to Cincinnatti, Ohio, she presented her Floss to enthusiastic audiences the week of May 28; and, beginning June 4, she delighted Chicago audiences for nearly four weeks as Floss again. Her last three days in Chicago she portrayed Hypolita and Telka Essoff, ending her stay on July 1 and prompting The Chicago Times to pronounce her "in many respects, the most promising actress on our stage, bright, active, versatile, with a keen understanding of character and a remarkable ability of adapting herself to her character." Milwaukee, Omaha, and Denver theatregoers flocked to see her Floss for the next week and a half, and the following three days Denver enjoyed her Telka Essoff.

On July 16, Ada opened for the first time in San Francisco as Floss Bargiss; the following week she appeared as Telka Essoff, the third week as Kate Verity, and, finally, she divided her fourth week in San Francisco between Hypolita, Selena Vandusen (Needles and Pins), and Telka Essoff. Just as impressed with her as the rest of the country, San Francisco critics showered her with compliments as well. As Floss, she was a "lovely, fresh, ingenuous girl, affectionate but
coquettish, bright but unsophisticated ... one of the most charming stage heroines ever seen." Ada portrayed Floss with "all the affectation of pretty young girlhood, [but] the personation [was] so natural that it [seemed] like a portrait." Because she "dashed into unexpected favor with her ... forward, spoiled, imperious Telka," as well, Ada surprised audiences with her "highly finished sketch of a cultivated, sympathetic and thoroughly self-controlled woman" in the role of Kate Verity. After seeing her Squire no one else could satisfy in the role, reported The Argonaut:

Squire Verity is a young girl, but of responsible position with nothing of the frivolity of Floss Bargiss or the caprice of Telka Essoff. Miss Rehan always carries the tip of her chin in mid-air. In Floss it looks pert, in Telka imperious, but in Kate Verity it seems only the natural carriage of one so accustomed to command that there is no thought of it.

The Argonaut also printed a poem by an ardent admirer of Ada's who signed himself Amadis. Praising of her beauty, the last line called her a "goddess alone of men." After closing in San Francisco on August 12, Ada presented Floss, Telka, and Selena Vandusen in Salt Lake City the following week. After a two-week break, Ada went to Boston with the rest of the company, where she appeared as Floss and Telka. The Boston Budget judged her "the best impersonator of the young lady in her teens now on the boards." For the next two weeks, she repeated Floss as well as Hypolita before returning to New York to open the fall season at Daly's. Her summer tour served to reinforce her popularity and versatility since she succeeded in an eighteenth-century English comedy role, as a leading lady, and in comic ingenue parts. Floss proved to
be her most successful role with over one hundred and ten performances out of a total of over one hundred and sixty in cities from the east to the west coast of the United States. At the same time, critics praised the whole company, especially the ensemble acting achieved in productions with Ada, John Drew, James Lewis, and Mrs. Gilbert forming a harmoniously integrated quartet of actors. The Press (Philadelphia) voiced the typical critical judgement when it commended the company for its "high art," which it attributed to the actors' "common pursuit" and "common training."\footnote{198}

1883-84

The warm applause and laughter of an enthusiastic audience greeted Ada and the rest of the Daly Company when they opened the 1883-84 season in New York with Daly's adaptation from Adolph L'Arronge, Dollars and Sense, on October 2.\footnote{199} Although not as appealing as Seven-Twenty-Eight, Dollars and Sense proved successful. The great popularity of Needles and Pins, The Passing Regiment, and, especially, Seven-Twenty-Eight convinced Daly "that success lay with German farce in which John Drew and Ada Rehan played young lovers and James Lewis and Mrs. Gilbert played comic old people."\footnote{200} As Phronie Tremont, Ada portrayed another ingenue pursued by Drew in the role of Harry Latimer.\footnote{201} The plot consists of a series of comical situations satirizing Washington D.C. society. A pair of confidence people, posing as husband and wife, attempt to swindle several families by sponging off them, borrowing money, and seducing one young husband. Harry Latimer exposes the pair with the help of Phronie and her aunt, Saphira Lamb, played by Mrs. Gilbert, whose husband, Eliphalet Lamb,
played by Lewis, seeks a little fun away from home. Although reviewers praised Ada's acting and costumes, several critics declared the role "not equal to her merits," calling it "but a shadow of other similar ones played by her." One newspaper reported that she played the weak but charming character with "naturalness, simplicity and girlish grace." But her "peculiarly winning personality, [was] manifesting itself less fully, perhaps, in the part of Phronie Tremont than in some others in which she [had] been seen."

Her growing popularity and prominence in the company evidenced itself again in the published announcement that Ada found Pinero's comedy, Boys and Girls, so charming "that she [had] consented to play a secondary part in it." In spite of the fact that Dollars and Sense continued to draw full houses and had earned the steadiest receipts he had known in that theatre, Daly decided to replace it. In order to maintain and please a regular clientele, he would abandon the long run in favor of a more frequent change of bill. Accordingly, Boys and Girls opened at Daly's Theatre on December 5 with Ada in the small role of Peggy Kibble. Although the critics praised the acting, they panned the play, and The Evening Telegram deplored the fact that "Miss Ada Rehan was cast in a role positively unworthy of her." Daly had reserved a revival of Seven-Twenty-Eight for just such a failure; he opened it on December 12. While it played to full houses he rehearsed his next production, his adaptation of David Garrick's eighteenth-century comedy, The Country Girl. Ada's strong hold "on the affections of the theatre-going public," is reflected in one critic's report that at least a dozen people, male and female, asked him if Ada had a good part in the new play when he spoke of it.
Of the new productions during the season, the most significant for Ada was Daly's adaptation of Garrick's *The Country Girl*, which he had taken from William Wycherly's seventeenth-century comedy, *The Country Wife*. Acknowledging her popularity, The *Sunday Mercury* explained that Daly's object in reviving and adapting the comedy was "to supply Ada Rehan with a character. Indeed, he could hardly have made a happier selection than Peggy Thrift." The action revolved around the title character whose guardian, Squire Moody, played by Charles Fisher, had kept her isolated, innocent, and ignorant in the country in order that he might control and marry her. Soon after he took her to the city, however, she acquired all the artful ways of the town belles, managing to attract a young suitor, Dick Belville, played by John Drew.

The critics praised Ada's ability to portray the innocence of a simple, country girl, noting that few actresses had attempted the role since Dora Jordan had triumphed in it nearly one hundred years before. One reviewer asserted that Ada had inherited all the charms of the legendary eighteenth-century actress and could not be outdone in the part. The *New York Dramatic News* could recall no actress on the stage who could have played the role as she did. "It was a will o' the-wisp of girlish beauty and youthful audacity." Ada's appearance in breeches, worn to conceal her character's femininity, captivated her audience. The *New York World* concurred:

A more absolutely charming recklessness of innocence has never been played in our time. Miss Rehan seems to know exactly what the beaus of 200 years ago wanted in an ingenue. Her appearance in boys clothes may be taken as the first exemplification of that strange, delightful thing that Shakespeare called a 'coddling'—a something wholly indeterminate in our
time. The delicious waywardness and wantonness of her legs, which are as weakly lawless as boneless innocence can make them, gave a ceaseless flutter to the play. They flitted like moths' wings everywhere.

The reviewer concluded that the only actress capable of making such a mad romp of this role was Ellen Terry but her limbs were too mature for it. Dressed as a boy Ada "fell into a very abandonment of mad romping." Women crowded the theatre at every matinee to see her Peggy, which she played "quite near to perfection." Even those who judged her acting "a trifle overdrawn" found it "extremely clever" and enjoyable. After three weeks, Daly withdrew the play to present another German adaptation.

Although Ada portrayed another ingenue role in the last production of the season, some critics noticed a modification in her method of acting. She opened as Tony Poswog in Daly's adaptation from the German of Jacobson's Red Letter Nights, on March 12, 1884. Ada played the daughter of a retired pork manufacturer, Cornelius Poswog, who arranges a marriage between her and an English lord's nephew. However, Tony loves a young artist, played by Drew, and manages to outsmart her father.ruining his matrimonial plans for her. In an attempt to discourage a meeting with her lover, Poswog makes Tony dress in an old morning gown, wear unbecoming shoes, and dishevel her hair. When the English lord arrives to insure her suitability for his nephew, she convinces the lord that she is semi-idiotic by playing Jenny O'Jones in dance and song. No matter what their opinion of the play, the critics and audience alike loved Ada. Two critics commented on her greater vivacity of manner and directness of address as well as her ingenue drawl and pout. Hillary Bell gave a detailed picture of the way Ada
pouted and used her voice to create the character Tony Poswog:

There is a cold stare, then a toss of the fairy head, a dropping of the eyes, a rising of the shoulders, a curling of the mobile lip and there is your most bewitching scorn. And then comes the softening, the little curved lip quivers and the eyelids tremble and the April cloud melts into the sunshine of a kiss. There is, moreover, something infinitely charming about Miss Rehan's voice. It is soft and low and rounded and musical. It does not enunciate words the way other voices do, but floats sweetly forth and bewitches your ears as though it were harmonious sounds from fairy-land. To listen to it gives you the same grateful soothing as to be wrapped in velvet...

As Joseph Daly explained, Ada exaggerated her actions in depicting Tony as a hoyden without alienating her audience:

This impersonation following so close upon her Peggy, disclosed new phases of her gift for depicting the hoyden. What had been demure now became boisterous, and all the delicately guarded limitations of feminine wilfulness in Peggy were airily overstepped by the insolent Tony, and yet all was done without striking a single jarring note.

Ada's success up to this point may also have given her the confidence to express her natural instincts more freely in this role. The New York World's description of her behavior in the part as that of a "hoyden of the barn-yard" bears out Joseph Daly's contention. She instantly transformed herself "in attire, in demeanor, in age, in capacity. For five minutes [her] every limb [revealed] in the looseness of the brainless but frolicsome yokel, and she [put] her whole soul without a bit of effort, into the childishness of singing 'Miss Jenny O'Jones'." Unlike her portrayal of Peggy Thrift, no one censured her for her exaggeration of Tony even in the Jenny O'Jones scene in which she showed "surprising discretion." Her exaggeration was so controlled that it appeared to be the natural exuberance of Tony. The
New York World reported that even when she had performed in the chorus of Cinderella at School, she had stood out among the other young actresses because of her earnestness; and if something had been done "a thousand times before," it caught "a little new glory by her doing it."\textsuperscript{236}

The Albany Evening Journal summed up her methods: "she apparently leaves Ada Rehan back in her dressing-room when she comes on the stage and seeks with all her skill and art to put and keep before us the presence and peculiarities of the character she is portraying."\textsuperscript{237}

According to the Albany critic, the secret to Ada's success was naturalness because she expressed emotions and actions on stage just the way anyone would express herself off stage. In the Albany Evening Journal reviewer's opinion, she possessed "a wonderful natural aptitude and a perfect mastery of art" in her "fidelity to nature." As a result, he believed New York had crowned Ada "its comedy Queen."\textsuperscript{238}

Ada had widened her range of comic roles, establishing her ability to portray hoydens. But, ironically, her favorite role was Kate Verity, the Squire, not one of the numerous comic roles to her credit. She preferred the Squire because she believed the character was feminine yet strong and Pinero's dialogue contained "a great deal of humanity and feeling."\textsuperscript{239} Perhaps because it was a popular role with audiences as well, Kate Verity became an active character in her repertoire. She attributed her success in all her roles thus far to hard work; she believed Restoration and eighteenth-century comedies required "considerable study;" and she expressed her desire to play Viola in Twelfth Night in the future. She reportedly admitted Daly was severe and rigorous with his company, but she believed the discipline
necessary and his results wonderful.\textsuperscript{240}

By the time the season ended on April 19,\textsuperscript{241} Ada had performed in the five productions of the twenty-nine week season two hundred and thirty-two times. She portrayed three major ingenue roles in contemporary comedies from the German, one minor part in a Pinero comedy, and the main character in an eighteenth-century comedy. She had grown in public favor to the point that critics and audience alike expressed their desire to see her in major roles worthy of her talent. Daly accommodated them by adapting \textit{The Country Girl} just for Ada. Reviews repeatedly praised her naturalness, simplicity, and vivacity. Critics commented on her use of facial and vocal expression in conjunction with body movement to communicate the characters' feelings, whether expressing her enthusiasm through romping as Peggy Thrift, or her scorn through a cold stare as Tony Poswog.

On April 21, Ada and the rest of the company began their summer tour in Philadelphia, stayed three weeks and traveled to Boston, opening there on May 12. After three weeks in that city, she opened in Chicago where she performed for another four weeks, closing the tour on June 30.\textsuperscript{242} In all three cities she repeated her Tony Poswog, Peggy Thrift, Barbee Vaughn, Floss, and Phronie Tremont to enthusiastic audiences.\textsuperscript{243} In addition to the successful tour, Ada had another reason to be excited, for on July 5 she was to sail to England with the rest of the Daly company as part of the first American stock company ever to perform in London. New York newspapers, as well as those in other cities, discussed the merits of the venture, predicting great success for the entire company but especially for Ada.\textsuperscript{244}

Several papers compared Ada to the British actress Ellen Terry,
who had made her first American tour the previous year. The Brooklyn Eagle believed that Ada was "very much prettier than the English woman." Calling Ada and Terry "queens of laughter," The Journal compared the actresses' portrayals of hoydens. As Letitia Hardy in Hannah Cowley's The Belle's Stratagem, Terry played the hoyden to deceive her lover, while Ada also practiced a bit of deception in the role of Tony. The critic judged their portrayals in the following manner:

Anything more charmingly humorous and gracefully awkward than Miss Ellen Terry in the English play it would be difficult to conceive. When she sings, "Nobody axed you, sir, she said," for Doricourt and trips off dancing, it seems the perfection of light, airy comedy. When, however, one has heard Miss Rehan at Daly's sing "Have you seen Miss Jenny O'Jones?" it seems that judgement must be given for an equal place in that branch of comic art to the American actress.

Although she had never seen Ellen Terry, Ada confided to a reporter that she considered it a compliment to be told she resembled the British actress. In addition, she expressed surprise at the interest shown in the place of her birth, the determination of which prompted the interview. While she was born in Limerick, Ireland, she assured the writer that she was thoroughly American. Having been educated in the United States, she wished it to be understood in England that she represented America. She sailed with the rest of the company, twenty-two performers in all, for England on July 5 aboard the Alaska amid great excitement and with the good wishes of her friends and family. Her old friend and fellow actor, John T. Raymond, managed to see her off, bestowing a paternal kiss on her tear-stained face.
Otis Skinner, who was part of the company for their English tour, reminded the actors that London was a city with a long tradition of theatre. "The challenge of a troupe of American comedians smacked of the audacious. There was a vague feeling of resentfulness in the air, and outspoken objection in certain theatrical circles. What right had [they] to take the bread out of English actors' mouths?"

When Ada opened on July 19, as Floss in *Seven-Twenty-Eight* at Toole's Theatre in London, she divided the critics. [Daly used the title *Casting the Boomerang* for the play because an English producer had pirated the original one a month earlier.] The Telegraph reported that she and the company received a cordial welcome from an enthusiastic audience and it praised Ada's "majestic presence" as well as her charming coquetry; but *The Times* called her ingenue "stiff, pedantic, frequently ungraceful from over-affectation, and altogether we should hope, a libel upon American maidenhood." Another newspaper found her pretty and graceful with a certain charming chic, yet lacking in vocal delivery. A good number of critics denounced her "drawl;" others simply puzzled over it; and some found it "delightfully unconventional," or beautiful, graceful speech. One reviewer judged her "too crude and bouncing to be satisfactory to an English audience," while another praised her unconventional stage coquette. Clement Scott, critic of *The Truth*, believed Ada to be the best artist in the company and her affected speech and manner to be good-natured ridicule of the girl of her own time. In Scott's opinion, reviewers who condemned her assumed her drawl to be her own speech. On the English stage, Scott explained, funny women were generally old or middle-aged. Therefore, a young, pretty woman who was
funny puzzled critics by not adhering to accepted convention. But the public appreciated Ada's fund of bright, pleasant, unlabored, subtle humor, and Scott concluded that Ada was "more than clever in the accepted sense, she was as original as she was amusing."  

The critics received the company as a whole warmly, praising their superior ensemble acting. Seldom had "a troupe shown more praiseworthy ensemble," in The Globe's opinion. After they presented Dollars and Sense on August 1, another critic cited the smoothness with which the actors played together as the chief charm of the company and called Mrs. Gilbert and Lewis outstanding. John Drew, too, earned compliments as a "first-class comedian, easy, unaffected, pungent, and . . . with remarkable colour in his acting." The Daily Telegraph focused on the excellent scenes between Drew and Ada, equating them in quality with those between Lewis and Mrs. Gilbert. This quartet of performers "received more critical attention in England than they had in the United States."  

Mixed reviews again accompanied Ada's Phronie Tremont in Dollars and Sense. As Vanity Fair put it, she had "been much fought over. She delights one group of critics, and horrifies others. She means to be boisterous, and she is, and she plays with spirit and freshness and 'go' that for some extraordinary reason has baffled the proper comprehensions of some of the fraternity." She became a "histrionic enigma for steady matter-of-fact critics" because of her unconventional style. Praising her gift for characterization, Clement Scott described her Jenny O'Jones scene: "Miss Rehan rushes pell mell into a wild bit of pantomime that most English audiences will not understand or appreciate." After creating a vivid picture of her wild
"eccentricity," he continued to explain her acting as Phronie in the Jenny O'Jones scene and the critical response to it:

She is as unkempt as Nan Good for Nothing, and as gauche as Shakespeare's Audrey. She talks slang and slobbers out her words. She dances and kicks up her heels, she tosses and tumbles, imitates the idiotic jingles of the nursery, and thoroughly unsexes herself. It is not an elegant performance, but, if the thing has to be done, I cannot see how it could be done better. Miss Rehan lets herself go and in the end she changes disgust into appreciation. But people call her vulgar because she has to play a vulgar scene. They never can separate a performer from the performance. She

When Ada portrayed Selena Vandusen in Needles and Pins on August 24, Echo admitted it had withheld praise from her. But in this role of "the girlish, spoiled heroine, her natural quaint, half-timid, half-bold essays were most amusing and stamped her as an artist of great powers." Another reviewer commented that she had "steadily and thoroughly worked" herself into favor as few other actresses had done. And after August 28, when she portrayed Hypolita in She Would and She Would Not, Ada converted disbelievers by dropping the drawl and mannerisms of the "American girl of fashion." In their place The Stage reported she created "a woman disguised as a boy, who played throughout with admirable refinement and sustained spirit." That she succeeded in winning the approval of the critics in her portrayal of Hypolita may be understandable because it is a role from an English comedy that her audiences knew, whereas the other characters she created were from unfamiliar American plays. At the same time, critics could have expected more of her in the role, making her favorable reception a significant success.

Ada's stay in London was a busy time for her. With the other
members of the company she would get up early in the morning to go sight-seeing, arriving at the theatre just in time for the evening’s performance. If the negative criticism disturbed her, she said nothing about it, praising her hosts and hostesses for their kindness. Upon returning to New York on September 15, she left almost immediately for a two week run of Dollars and Sense in Philadelphia before beginning the new season at Daly’s Theatre in New York.

Reviews in England and America indicate that one of the outstanding characteristics of Ada’s style was strong physical movement. Her height made her a dominant figure on the stage and she was attractive to the point of appearing pretty, although not beautiful, to most reviewers. Her eyes were especially expressive, and she used her whole body, gestures, face, and movement to reveal the emotions of her characters. After five years with Daly, she excelled in portraying the vivacious, young American girl and the exuberant, high-spirited hoyden; but she had also demonstrated that she could subdue her physical movement to portray leading ladies such as Kate Verity. She invested her characters with an unconscious simplicity and charm that made them seem natural. She adapted her voice and speech, too, to the role, affecting a drawl, or a slowness of speech, when acting some ingenue parts.

Ada reportedly confided in a friend years later that her first season in London in 1884 was the turning-point in her career. Her success in London symbolized for her the level of achievement she had gained in the five years she had been with Daly. She had advanced from supporting roles to the leading actress in the company, portraying
twenty-eight different roles between 1879 and 1884. Appearing in fewer roles for extended periods of time allowed Ada to perfect her characterizations. Daly's realization of Ada's value to the company became evident in his enlargement of roles for her and choice of plays with her as the central character. But, while she often held center stage, she also learned to subordinate herself for the sake of the ensemble.

As her artistry developed Ada grew in critical esteem with New York reviewers who voiced their dissatisfaction when they thought her role too small or unworthy of her talent. Working tirelessly, virtually without periods of rest, she won acclaim from coast to coast in the United States, and in England. Selena (Needles and Pins), Telka (The Passing Regiment), Floss (Seven-Twenty-Eight), Phronie (Dollars and Sense), and Tony (Red Letter Night) were her most successful and longest running roles. While they were all charming, vivacious, and lovable young women, each made different demands on her acting ability. Her potential as a versatile actress became even greater after her creation of Peggy Thrift and Hypolita, both from the previous century and characters who delighted in masquerading in male clothing. With her Kate Verity she proved her capacity for the expression of emotional depth. Strengthened by five years of experience, study, and training in one of the leading theatre companies in the country and having achieved critical and box-office success on both sides of the Atlantic, Ada returned to New York where she and Daly would seek new avenues for her artistic development.
Notes—Chapter 3


3 Kate Byron, a letter to Mr. E. J. Wendell 26 Sept. 1899 and written from North Long Branch, in the "Ada Rehan" File of Miscellaneous Clippings in the Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University. Hereafter cited as Harvard Theatre Collection.


5 Kate Byron, a letter to Mr. E. J. Wendell.

6 Joseph Francis Daly 308.

7 New York Herald 1 May 1879: 7.


12 Felheim 13.

13 Felheim 16-21.


16 Hornblow 246.


18 Hornblow 242-3.

19 Hornblow 196-200.

20 Towse 141.

21 Hornblow 261-65.

22 Edward A. Dithmar, Memories of Daly's Theatre, (Privately Printed by Augustin Daly, 1897) 84.

23 Joseph Francis Daly 308.

24 Joseph Francis Daly 314-17.

25 Joseph Francis Daly 316-18.

26 Joseph Francis Daly 316-18.

27 Margaret Hall, "Personal Recollections of Augustin Daly, Part II," The Theatre (New York) 7 (1905): 175.

28 Joseph Francis Daly 316.

29 Joseph Francis Daly 325.

30 Dora Knowlton Ranous, Diary of a Daly Debutante (New York: Duffield & Company, 1910) 4.

31 The New York Times 18 Sept. 1879, 43 vols. in Daly's Theatre Scrapbooks 8. Most volumes of the Augustin Daly Scrapbooks have no page numbers and the pagination that does exist is often erratic and unreliable. The scrapbooks are in the New York Public Library Theatre Collection and also available on microfilm in the University of Illinois Library. Hereafter cited as DTS.

32 Ranous 10.
33 Brander Matthews, *Rip Van Winkle Goes to the Play* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926) 190. Matthews claimed that Ada played an inconspicuous role in Newport; however, no other source corroborates his statement.


36 Joseph Francis Daly 325-27. Daly fixes the date of Divorce opening at 1 Oct. but all his dates are one day later than all other sources, including Ranous 17; William Winter, *Ada Rehan; A Study*, New ed. revised (New York: Privately printed for Augustin Daly, 1891-98) 160; Edward Augustus Dithmar 122, Harvard Theatre Collection; and newspaper accounts in DTS 8.

37 Joseph Francis Daly 327.


40 *The Sun* (New York) 1 Oct. 1879, DTS 8.


42 Ranous 23.

43 Ranous 23.

44 Ranous 6.

45 Ranous 25.

46 Ranous 10.

47 Ranous 10.

48 Ranous 67-68.

Company, 1922) 81.

50 Ranous 26-28.

51 Ranous 27.

52 The Sunday Mercury (New York) 19 Oct. 1879, DTS 8.

53 The Sunday Mercury (New York) 19 Oct. 1879.


55 Dithmar, Memories of Daly's Theatre 84.

56 Joseph Francis Daly 10.

57 Joseph Francis Daly 10.

58 Ranous 10.

59 The New York World 2 Nov. 1879, DTS 8 and Dithmar 122.


61 Ranous 57.

62 Dithmar 122.

63 The Clipper (New York) 6 Dec. 1879, DTS 8.

64 The Daily Graphic (New York) 1 Dec. 1879, DTS 8.

65 Newark Daily Advertiser (New Jersey) 3 Dec. 1879, DTS 8.


67 The Home Journal (New York) 3 Dec 1879, DTS 8.

68 Joseph Francis Daly 328.

69 Dithmar 122.


71 The New York Star 29 Jan. 1880, DTS 8 and Joseph Francis Daly 385.

72 Ranous 135-36.


74 Dithmar 123.
Joseph Francis Daly 335.


The Brooklyn Sunday Eagle 18 Apr. 1880, DTS 8.

Andrews American Queen (New York) 30 Apr. 1880, DTS 8.

Joseph Francis Daly 335.

Ramous 167.

Unidentified newspaper clipping in DTS 8.

Ramous 170-239, and Dithmar 122.

Ramous 246.


Joseph Francis Daly 338.

According to Dithmar 123, and New York Herald 10 Nov. 1880, DTS 9, the play opened 9 Nov.


The Daily Graphic (New York) 10 Nov. 1880, DTS 9.

Although Joseph Daly (338) says that Needles and Pins was the first play in which they were recognized as the famous comedy quartet,
Richard Harlan Andrew in his dissertation, *Augustin Daly's Big Four: John Drew, Ada Rehan, James Lewis and Mrs. G. H. Gilbert*," diss. U of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 1971, says he could find no evidence to support Joseph Daly's assertion. For an excellent study of "The Big Four" see Andrew.

96 Joseph Francis Daly 338.
97 Dithmar 104.
100 Joseph Francis Daly 343.
101 Joseph Francis Daly 342.
102 Ada Rehan, "Some Characters I have Known," Madame Jan. 1905

103 Margaret Hall 2: 177.
106 *Boston Gazette* 14 Aug. 1881.
108 Dithmar 124.
110 Dithmar 124.
113 Joseph Francis Daly 347.
114 Joseph Francis Daly 348. The play was adapted from a German script by Gustav Moser and Franz Von Schonthan.

The New York Star 11 Nov. 1881, DTS 10.


The Daily Graphic (New York) 11 Nov. 1881, DTS 10.

The Critic (New York) 26 Nov. 1881, DTS 10.

The Boston Saturday Evening Gazette 21 Nov. 1881, DTS 10.


Joseph Francis Daly 348.


Joseph Francis Daly 349.

Dithmar 124.

Joseph Francis Daly 350.

Joseph Francis Daly 353.

The Knickerbocker (New York) 17 Aug. 1882, DTS 11.

Dithmar 124.

Dithmar 125.


The Commercial Advertiser (New York) 3 Nov. 1882, DTS 11.


New York Dispatch 19 Nov. 1882, DTS 11.

Joseph Francis Daly 355, and Dithmar 125.


The Truth (New York) 26 Nov. 1882, DTS 11.

The Theatre 2 Dec. 1882, DTS 11.

The Music and Dramatic Courier 30 Nov. 1882, DTS 11.

Joseph Francis Daly 356.


Joseph Francis Daly 357.


The Post (New York) 15 Jan. 1883, DTS 11.

161 Margaret Hall 2: 175.
162 Dithmar 125.
163 Joseph Francis Daly 358.
165 Joseph Francis Daly 359.
170 The Truth 26 Feb. 1883, DTS 11.
175 Judge 1 Apr. 1883, DTS 11.
177 Evening Transcript 1 May 1883, DTS 12.
178 The Hartford Daily Times 10 May 1883, and The Transcript (Holyoke, Mass.) 12 May 1883, DTS 12.
179 The Brooklyn Union 15 May 1883, DTS 12.
Morning Express (Albany) 23 May 1883 and Buffalo Express 25 May 1883, DTS 12.


The Philadelphia Inquirer 24 Apr. 1883, DTS 12.

Boston Courier 6 May 1883, DTS 12.

The Penny Post (Cincinnati) 29 May 1883, and The Inquirer (Cincinnati) 30 May 1883, DTS 12.

The Chicago Times 5 June 1883, The Banner (Chicago), and The Morning News (Chicago) 6 June 1883; The Evening Journal (Chicago) 7 June 1883, The Chicago Tribune 10 June 1883, and The Inter-Ocean (Chicago) 24 June 1883, DTS 12.

The Chicago Times 5 June 1883, DTS 12.

The Journal (Milwaukee) 3 July 1883, The Daily Herald (Omaha) 7 July 1883, and Denver Republican 12 July 1883, DTS 12.

The Evening Call (San Francisco) and San Francisco Times 17 July 1883, The Argonaut (San Francisco) 21 and 28 July 1883, Daily Examiner (San Francisco) 31 July 1883, The Daily Evening Post (San Francisco) 24 July 1883, The Wasp (San Francisco) 4 Aug. 1883, San Francisco Music and Drama 11 Aug. 1883, and Daily Examiner (San Francisco) 12 Aug. 1883, DTS 12.

The Evening Call (San Francisco) 17 July 1883.

The Evening Call (San Francisco) 17 July 1883.

The Argonaut (San Francisco) 28 July 1883, DTS 12.

The Wasp (San Francisco) 4 Aug. 1883, DTS 12.

The Argonaut (San Francisco) 4 Aug. 1883, DTS 12.

The Argonaut (San Francisco) 28 July 1883, DTS 12.

The Daily Tribune (Salt Lake City) 16 Aug. 1883, DTS 12.
The Boston Budget 9 Sept. 1883, DTS 12.
Press (Philadelphia) 17 Apr. 1883, DTS 12.
Richard Harlan Andrew 63.
The Boston Sunday Herald 18 Nov. 1883, DTS 14.
The Evening Telegram (New York) 6 Dec. 1883, DTS 14.
Joseph Francis Daly 364-66.
Unidentified newspaper clipping, DTS 14.
Joseph Francis Daly 365.
The Sunday Mercury (Philadelphia) 4 May 1883, DTS 14.
The Sunday Mercury (Philadelphia) 4 May 1883.
For her London debut at Drury Lane on 18 Oct. 1785, Dorothy
Jordan chose Peggy Thrift in Garrick's *The Country Girl*. Her biographer, Brian Fothergill, *Mrs. Jordan, Portrait of an Actress*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), claims her "natural ability as an actress" and an inner joy and happiness that flowed from within her resulted in Jordan's triumph as Peggy (p. 74). She exuded innocence, simplicity, frivolity, and vivacity as Peggy. A comedienne who excelled in hoyden roles, where she romped about the stage like a tomboy in male disguise, Jordan made this part one of her best, most popular, and often repeated performances. (p. 85).

226 The Sun (New York) 17 Feb. 1884, DTS 14.
227 Brown 552.
228 Dithmar 125.
230 The Dramatic Times (New York) 22 Mar. 1884, DTS 14.
233 Joseph Francis Daly 367.
Albany Evening Journal 23 Apr. 1884.
The Times (Philadelphia) 6 May 1884, DTS 14.
The Times (Philadelphia) 6 May 1884.
Dithmar 25.
The North American (Philadelphia) 22 Apr. 1884; a Chestnut Street Opera House Poster advertising Red Letter Nights and The Country Girl; The Evening Telegraph (Philadelphia) and The Philadelphia Inquirer 3 May 1884; The Times (Philadelphia) and The Evening News (Philadelphia) 6 May 1884; The Daily Evening Traveller (Boston) and The Boston Transcript 13 May 1884; Boston Home Journal 17 May 1884; and The Evening Journal (Chicago) 3 June 1884, DTS 14.
The New York World 30 Mar. 1884 and The Journal (New York) 2 and 6 Apr. 1884, DTS 14. Ellen Terry (1847-1928) was a successful
British actress ten years older than Ada Rehan. Acting since the age of nine, Terry apprenticed with British stock companies in much the same way Ada had with American troupes. However, Terry left the stage twice for about seven years between 1864 and 1874. She made her first great success as Shakespeare's Portia in 1874 and in 1878 she originated the role of Olivia in W. G. Wells' play of the same name adapted from The Vicar of Wakefield. The sentimental heroine afforded her the opportunity to charm the audience with her natural grace, fine speech, and feminine sweetness. It also led to her engagement by Henry Irving at the Lyceum Theatre in London, an association that lasted some twenty-four years (1878-1902). Capable of being gay, sprightly, vivacious, and a hoyden, Terry triumphed as Letita Hardy in 1881 in Hannah Cowley's The Belle's Stratagem. As Irving's leading lady she also presented one of her most effective parts, Beatrice, in 1882. The following year she and Irving made their first American tour. In America she won praise for her sweetness of manner, grace of movement, musical voice, and simplicity of style. Lady Teazle, Viola, Imogen, and Catherine, in Victorien Sardou and Emile Moreau's Madame Sans-Gene, represent only a few of her subsequent achievements that earned her fame. For further information see Charles Hiatt, Ellen Terry, (London: George Bell and Sons, 1899). Christopher St. John, Ellen Terry, (London: John Love, the Bodley Head, 1907); Roger Manvell, Ellen Terry, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1968).

246 The Brooklyn Eagle 27 Apr. 1884, DTS 14.
249 The Sun (New York) 6 July 1884, DTS 14.
A successful and versatile actor who portrayed comic and tragic roles in classic and contemporary plays, Otis Skinner (1858-1942) debuted in 1877 as a member of the stock company of the Philadelphia Museum. Playing a variety of roles, he learned his craft in the stock company school of acting. Like Ada Rehan, he performed with the most prominent nineteenth century actors, including Edwin Booth and Helena Modjeska. He joined Augustin Daly's company in 1884 and played major supporting roles in domestic, Shakespearean, and other classical comedies. In the 1890's he successfully portrayed Henry VIII, Orlando, Shylock, Macbeth, and Sir Edward Mortimer. Although not handsome, he was well built, with a resonant voice, audience appeal, and intelligence. A popular romantic hero, he also adapted to the twentieth century by playing such roles as Hajj in Kismet for three years. He did not, however, attempt Ibsen and Shaw but confined himself to sentimental comedies and romantic costume dramas for the rest of his long and active career. Garff B. Wilson, in A History of American Acting, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), provides an assessment of Skinner's career. See also Otis Skinner, Footlights and Spotlights, (New York: Blue Ribbon Books, 1924).
Bell's Life and Figaro (London) 26 July 1884, DTS 14.

259 Morning Advertiser (London) 21 July 1884, DTS 14.


261 Referee (London) 20 July 1884, DTS 14.


264 The Truth (London) 31 July 1884, DTS 14.


266 The Queen (London) 9 Aug. 1884, DTS 14.

267 The Daily Telegraph (London) 1 Aug. 1884, DTS 14.

268 The Daily Telegraph (London) 1 Aug. 1884.

269 Andrew 65.


273 The Truth (London) 7 Aug. 1884.


280 Unidentified newspaper clipping titled "Is It True? (Wm. H. Brady quoted in the The Daily Telegraph)," Harvard Theatre Collection.
After the success of the Daly company in London, Ada embarked upon her sixth season in New York as a member of the first American stock company to win British approval. As part of the quartet of leading players who first gained recognition for their ensemble acting while in England, Ada enjoyed new prominence on the American stage. The New York audience cheered when the four principal players, Ada Rehan, John Drew, James Lewis, and Mrs. Gilbert, appeared on October 7, 1884 to open the season with Daly's adaptation of Von Schonathan's The Wooden Spoon. Recognized as the "Big Four," Ada and John Drew typically played the young lovers while Mrs. Gilbert and James Lewis played the older generation. In this production Ada's role, Aphra Grumbleigh, was less prominent than other characters she had enacted. The slight plot consisted of a family divided over political candidates. The wife, Mrs. Grumbleigh, played by Mrs. Gilbert, campaigns for a candidate supported by the newspaper editor, Paul Impulse, portrayed by John Drew, while Mr. Grumbleigh, enacted by James Lewis, and their daughter, Aphra, support the opposition candidate. All ends happily with Ada and Drew pairing off and the older couple reconciling.

Ada's creation of one of those "pictures of young American womanhood . . . won critical praise." Several reviews called attention to her charm, dash, and fuller figure, which added to her beauty. The Dramatic Times declared a new young actress making her debut with the company in a minor role, Edith Kingdon, on an equal footing with Ada but very different from her. The Brooklyn Daily
Eagle pointed out that all the actresses in the company mimicked Ada. Another critic confessed to succumbing to Ada's charm: "Miss Rehan's girls are just the kind young men fall in love with. I know that I do. . . . [moreover] Miss Rehan is I believe, the leading comedienne of our day, and stands head and shoulders over anyone in her line in this country or England." Another admirer, Hillary Bell, attributed her "occult and elusive charm" to her voice. "This is the melody of modulation, of depth, of feeling and of richness. Her voice is one of tenderness and rhythm and infinite sweetness—a suspicion of lisping, a soupcon of pouting, an echo of laughter—it 'Laps you in soft Lydian airs' with a caressing gentleness that is beyond all praise."

Otis Skinner recalled that "a small army of pretty maids" dreamt "of the day when they should push Ada Rehan from her pedestal." But at this time Ada's position was secure and unlikely to be challenged successfully by any new young actress. She was "buoyant, scintillant, with a manner unlike other women, a voice that melted and caressed as it drawled, an awkward grace, and arch expression, a look of mischief in her gray Irish eyes, she was a goddess of laughter—a modern Peg Woffington. She had a sense of the incongruous that sometimes caused her to go to pieces with suppressed amusement." Although irritating when uncalled for in performance, Ada's propensity to laughter endeared her to her fellow performers and the public alike.

For her second new role of the season, Ada portrayed Lady Nell in Pinero's *Lords and Commons* on November 15. A contrast between American democracy and British aristocracy, the play failed to please and Ada seemed out of place as the young English gentlewoman of high birth. Daly began rehearsals the following day for *Love on Crutches*, a German
comedy from Stobitizer he had not even finished adapting. A good example of Daly's unrelenting drive, the rehearsals almost forced Ada and the rest of the company to live at the theatre for the next two weeks. In addition to performing Lords and Commons six nights a week, Ada appeared in the Saturday and Wednesday matinees. According to Skinner, the company rehearsed all day with "a half-hour for lunch or a sandwich and a cup of coffee brought in, . . . a hasty dinner, the evening's performance, . . . then midnight. . . . Sometime before daybreak an excuse for sleep, a cold bath and we were at it again."^13

Ada's "painful rehearsals" resulted in success, and "one of Daly's supreme achievements."^14 As Annis Austin in Love on Crutches Ada portrayed a dissatisfied young wife who uses an alias to enter into a correspondence with an author, enacted by John Drew, who is her husband but also using a nom de plume. They develop a spiritual bond with their correspondents, which causes much confusion and estrangement between husband and wife. When they discover their true identites, they reconcile their differences and reaffirm their love.^15 Ada earned her usual praise for her charm and beauty,^16 with the New York Daily News identifying her facial expression and manner as positive characteristics of her acting.^17 One reviewer declared Ada without an equal or rival on the stage of her day. Her performance with Drew was unmatched in finish, naturalness, high breeding, and elegant comedy by the French or German stage.18

Perhaps the only actress who might have been a rival for Ada was Rose Coghlan (1851-1932), who, with Lester Wallack, posed the greatest competition for Ada and Daly. Of Irish ancestry but British birth, Coghlan had headed Wallack's company since 1877.19 While critically
acclaimed, Coghlan was not fully appreciated by the public. Her contemporary, Lewis C. Strang, believed her to be a fine actress but lacking in personal magnetism. The historian George C. D. Odell explained the dying out of the old and the growth of the new order:

Wallack's quite apparently had passed the days of its supremacy; the newer methods and the fresher faces of Daly's Company were beginning to push the older art into the background.

The Union Square Company, which presented primarily melodrama had also declined, leaving Daly's company the leading one in America and Ada the leading actress.

Edith Kingdon and Otis Skinner as another pair of young lovers in the play also won special notice. During a benefit performance of Love on Crutches, Kingdon incurred Ada's anger by publicly embarrassing her. During one scene a patroness of the charity benefitting from the performance threw a bunch of roses on the stage for Kingdon who ignored them. Ada urged her in an undertone to pick them up, but Kingdon insisted that they were meant for Ada who had already received her roses as well as Mrs. Gilbert. Rather than insult the patroness, Ada picked up the roses and attempted to present them to Kingdon who emphatically refused them. Embarrassed, Ada flung them on a nearby divan; but the two women never spoke again while members of the company. Margaret Hall hints that there may have been another reason for personal antagonism on the part of Kingdon. A young millionaire well known for his "susceptibility for the latest stage favorite" earnestly pursued Ada, but she rejected him and he "turned his ardor in another direction, which led ultimately to the altar." The millionaire in question may have been George Gould whom Kingdon
married about a year and a half later.

Although Love on Crutches drew large audiences, at least one reviewer dissented from the general approval of the play. Signing himself F. D. H., the critic for the Albany Evening Journal declared "it very weak and watery" as compared with Seven-Twenty-Eight.25 But the main thrust of his article dealt with "Ada Rehan's Claim to Become a Star." In the critic's opinion, Daly had a star "of the first magnitude, yet he either [did not] realize it, or more likely being an expert judge he [knew] it, but personally [repressed] her genius to the needs and bounds of his hobby—a 'good all-round company.'"26 All he gave her to do was "'love and be loved,' like a school girl, through an endless succession of light farces."27 The writer believed that Ada should have been portraying stronger characters like Peggy Thrift, characters that challenged her and fitted her genius.28

In the middle of the run of Love on Crutches tragedy struck the Daly family. The Dalys lost their only children, two boys aged eleven and fourteen, to diphtheria on January 5.29 Their deaths affected Ada deeply for The Sunday Star reported two weeks later that Ada began to look "rather fagged."30 It may have been, however, that five years of intense performing with the Daly company accounted for her fatigue. Georgie Drew reportedly discovered that Ada had changed from the carefree accomplice of ten years before at the Arch Street Theatre to a high-strung, nervous woman who was becoming bitter and distrustful. Ada confided to Georgie that the reason for the change was Augustin Daly, who "ruled her with almost hypnotic powers."31

In her memoirs, Otis Skinner's daughter, Cornelia Otis Skinner, described the Daly-Rehan relationship. She believed that Ada was Daly's
mistress in spite of the fact he had a wife and was a strict Catholic. Skinner believed that Daly treated Ada like a possession. After engaging her "he set about making her over, deliberately destroying her happy-go-lucky spirit, turning her into a conventional fin-de-siècle woman of the world—poised, highstrung, witty, and neurotic. . . . He treated her very much as his personal chattel. If they appeared together on the street, Daly walked ahead of her, like an Indian, never speaking to her. Offstage she lived alone, on his insistence."\(^{32}\) In addition, Skinner believed that Daly was "woman-crazy" and flirted with every young woman "he thought might be capturable in his company. Occasionally he succeeded." He paraded "his conquests in front of her [Rehan], driving her into hysterical rages."\(^{33}\) In Skinner's eyes these affairs did not last long and Daly always returned to Ada "who wounded and morose, always took him back."\(^{34}\) Usually friendly and pleasant with the other members of the company, she was edgy and difficult only when Daly was embroiled in one of his affairs.\(^ {35}\)

The matinee of Love on Crutches on February 7 marked its ninetieth and last performance, and Farquhar's The Recruiting Officer, with Ada as Sylvia, opened the same evening.\(^ {36}\) The action revolves around the pranks of Sylvia who falls in love with Captain Plume (played by John Drew) after promising her father not to marry without his consent. She determines to enlist in the service in order to force permission from the old man and she actually masquerades as a rakish young gentleman. The Telegram believed Ada's naturalness and vivacity made it one of her best roles.\(^ {37}\) Hillary Bell concentrated on her spontaneity\(^ {38}\) and claimed her acting revealed "increasing depth and tenderness and truth."\(^ {39}\) Because her voice was well trained, her several accents
seemed natural and each feeling she expressed appeared to be her very own. The epilogue was a masterly piece of elocution in which her "clear, melodious voice [rang] out each rhythmic line—now enunciating a word distinctly, now lingering lovingly over emphasis." Other critics reported that Ada was brilliant as Sylvia, unmatched for portraying the graceful charm of the spoiled young society girl; and they declared her Sylvia superior to her Peggy Thrift.

The Recruiting Officer ran only two weeks and Daly followed it with revivals of She Would and She Would Not on February 24, and The Country Girl on February 28, both of which featured Ada in cavalier roles. She inspired the usual praise for her Hypolita and Peggy Thrift, but Edith Kingdon as Donna Rosara in She Would and She Would Not received most of the attention. The Mail and Express criticized Kingdon's coarseness. The reviewer complained that she exaggerated her gestures, glances, tone of voice, and body movement. In his opinion, she had tried to imitate Ada in Love on Crutches but only seemed coarse; and as Donna Rosara, she stopped copying Ada, but was vain and even coarser. Whatever threat Kingdon may have posed to Ada in relationship to Daly, she does not seem to have threatened Ada's position in the company or popularity with the public. Furthermore, the critic for The New York World compared Ada favorably with two European actresses. He claimed Ada had the comedy brilliancy of Ellen Terry, and the languishing emotional delicacy without the sharpness in outline of Modjeska in the role of Hypolita. Helena Modjeska (1840-1909), a Polish actress who made her American debut in 1877, succeeded in a wide range of parts; Towse ranked her with Sarah Bernhardt. "In technical skill Modjeska was surpassed by no actress of
her day. In intellectual grasp, clearness of conception, distinction
of manner, and skill in portraying the more delicate graces and traits
of feminine nature, she excelled all but one or two of them. The
main "Drawback" to Modjeska's acting was her foreign accent.

On March 4 Ada appeared as Nisbe in Daly's adaptation from Von
Schonthan's A Night Off. Daly achieved the first success of this
farce in America. An eager, sprightly, happy, and handsome girl,
Nisbe was another variation of the many ingénues Ada performed so well;
and John Drew, as Jack Mulberry, provided the romantic interest for
her. As the daughter of a college professor whose tragedy is
performed by a band of strolling players, Nisbe falls in love with one
of the actors. Ada earned praise as the affectionate, high-spirited
girl, with a dash of coquetry and a fondness for romance. She won a
favorable response from all except one critic who described her
mannerisms—her drawl and eye-rolling— as "too much." Although A
Night Off continued to play to full houses, it closed on April 18,
ringing down the curtain for the season.

The summer tour began on April 20 in Philadelphia with a two-week
run of Love on Crutches, and continued on to Boston for two weeks,
followed by one-night-stands in Albany and Buffalo, New York. Next the
company headed west to visit Chicago again for two weeks, plus San
Francisco for four weeks, and finally a well deserved four week
vacation after returning to New York. As had become the custom
during summer tours, Ada added her most successful new roles to her
repertoire, Annis Austin, Nisbe, and Sylvia. She repeated the old
favorites Peggy Thrift, Hypolita, and Phronie, earning the usual
praise for her performances. Her popularity reached such heights in
Chicago that a hat was named in her honor;\textsuperscript{60} and in exchange for advertising the name of her dressmaker on the program, she received her stage clothes free.\textsuperscript{61}

After returning to New York, Ada spent her first vacation in four years with the Byrons,\textsuperscript{62} enjoying the sun and solitude in New Jersey at a deserted hotel on the beach.\textsuperscript{63} Before opening the season in New York, she repeated her Nisbe, Annis Austin, Hypolita, Peggy Thrift, and Telka Essoff in Philadelphia between September 13 and October 6 and rehearsed for the American première of Pinero's farce, \textit{The Magistrate}.\textsuperscript{64}

1885-86

Although Ada portrayed the female lead, Agatha Posket, in \textit{The Magistrate}, the opening production of the 1885-86 season on October 7 in New York, the action did not revolve around her. Rather, it focused on her husband, a police Magistrate played by James Lewis.\textsuperscript{65} A thirty-six-year-old widow with a nineteen-year-old son when she married Eneas Posket, Agatha shaves five years off her and her son's ages, making herself thirty-one and him fourteen. In an attempt to conceal her age, she manages to get herself and her sister arrested and brought before her husband. But all ends happily when the truth comes out and her son leaves for Canada with a new bride. The play pleased audience and critics alike\textsuperscript{66} with reviewers focusing on the company working "harmoniously together for the artistic presentation of the whole."\textsuperscript{67} While most newspapers reported that Ada was charming as usual,\textsuperscript{68} The Dramatic Times and The Mail and Express thought the role did not suit her, and Town Topics claimed that "she made up too young for the
part.⁶⁹ In addition, all of the main characters, including Agatha, "were American through and through."⁷⁰ Nevertheless, the audience laughed unceasingly throughout the performance and repeatedly recalled the performers.⁷¹

By 1885 Ada had become a mainstay in a company that attracted "the elite of the city 'upper crust.'"⁷² Mark Twain thought so highly of her that he told Daly that his children respected him only because he knew Ada and Drew personally.⁷³ First nights had become prestigious events with such notables in attendance as "General Sherman, General Horace Potter, Mark Twain, H. C. Bunner, George William Curtis, Charles Dudley Warner, Frank R. Stockton, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Stanford White, F. D. Millet, Edwin A. Abbey and many others."⁷⁴ The opening night of The Magistrate had proved even more exciting than most because Pinero had directed the play himself and was in attendance.

Pinero's direction differed in several ways from Daly's. Daly wanted Ada to portray the role of the son, but Pinero refused to cast her in the part.⁷⁵ Otis Skinner recalled that "the rehearsals progressed sloppily and without spirit, lacking the goad of our martinet director."⁷⁶ During one rehearsal of The Magistrate, Pinero became hysterical, nearly dissolving in tears because the action was moving so slowly.⁷⁷

Daly, on the other hand, carried out rehearsals with a disciplined and highly critical tone. The Graphic described him as a "terribly hard task master" who did not "hesitate in the heat of rehearsal to tell his leading lady that she [did] not know how to cross the stage, that she [said] her lines like a school girl and that she [looked] like a guy,"⁷⁸ reducing Ada "to a mere tear besoaked pulp" and expecting
her, as well as the rest of the company, to perform brilliantly. 79

Because of Ada's growing popularity, more and more stories began to appear in newspapers about the twenty-eight-year-old actress. They reported that she had many offers to star with other companies, but she preferred to remain "leading lady of the best comedy company in the world." 80 The Dramatic Times compared Ada to the famous British actress Ellen Terry who considered Ada the "cleverest woman in America" because of her acting talent. 81 Both actresses occupied equivalent positions on the stages of their respective countries. But unlike Ellen Terry, Ada did not mingle in "a certain society" and was only known through her stage work, reported the tabloid. Her stage charm, in its opinion, resided in the grace she infused into the characters, "not in her own personality." Although she did not win the audience immediately like Terry, she conquered them in the end. The reporter believed that like Terry, she exhibited earnestness, grace, intelligence, spirit, naturalness, and a melodious voice. Her versatility allowed her to triumph in subtle, exaggerated, Restoration, eighteenth-century, or contemporary comedy. 82

Ada probably had not attempted tragic roles because Daly did not choose to do them. The Dramatic Times thought she was limited by the company supporting her, which lacked her breadth and depth. The newspaper cited long speeches in which she exhibited the consummate skill of elocution. "In light thoughts, the quick exclamations, the flashes of wit, Ada Rehan [was] no longer an actress, but in personal conversation with the audience." 83 Similarly the Life critic affirmed Ada's success, declaring her "the Ellen Terry of America." 84

At the December 9 matinee Ada presented her Agatha Posket for the
seventy-fourth and last time, following it that evening with her Nisbe in a revival of *A Night Off*. Odell recalls that seeing a performance of this revival was "one of the most delightful evenings [he] ever spent in the theatre. This was . . . [his] first experience with the wonderful ingénue accomplishments of Ada Rehan, whose Nisbe, in *A Night Off*, was the most perfect of its kind [he] ever saw." Odell considered Ellen Terry, opera singer, Adelina Patti, and Ada "three of the most captivating stage personalities [he] ever beheld." During *A Night Off*, Ada was also rehearsing for the upcoming production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Illness caused her absence from the Saturday matinee and evening performances of *A Night Off*, before opening in the new production the following Thursday, January 14. Her rigorous schedule began to take its toll on her health. As usual, Daly rehearsed Ada after the evening performance until three in the morning, beginning another rehearsal at ten in the morning, and stopping only for matinee and evening performances.

While Ada and "Virginia Dreher, as Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, were delightful," they appeared to one critic to be "more suggestive of a modern drawing-room than Shakespeare's rural lasses were intended to be." Nevertheless, reviewers agreed that the honors fell on Ada. She was charming, vivacious, amusing, "the embodiment of high spirits and merriment." One critic reported, however, that she was too young and good-looking for the role. According to Marvin Felheim, Daly's biographer, Daly rid the script of bawdy humor and took lines and whole speeches from one character and gave them to another with Ada Rehan benefitting the most from his editing. As *The Dramatic Times* pointed out, however, the main action of the play...
focused on Falstaff and secondary interest centered on Mistress Ford.97

When Ada repeated her Hypolita in a revival of She Would and She Would Not on February 13, The New York Times asserted that she improved in the role year to year. Before the main comedy, she and John Drew presented a short "duologue" entitled, A Wet Blanket, in which Ada portrayed a married American woman who discourages the lovemaking of an English Baronet by telling him her husband is making love to his wife. Although the critics referred to it as a "trifling," they admired Ada and Drew.98 On February 18 she triumphed again as Peggy Thrift in a revival of The Country Girl.99

Ada's last new role of the season, Nancy Brasher, took place on February 24.100 Another adaptation from the German by Julius Rosen, Nancy and Company, earned rave reviews. Music and Drama announced that there could "be found nothing more brilliant in New York."101 Ada portrayed a young wife who sends a play she has written to a professional dramatist, Kiele O'Keefe, (John Drew), without the knowledge of her husband. O'Keefe edits it and gets it produced, which prompts Nancy to go to New York to see him before the play opens. Complications arise when an uncle of O'Keefe's fiance sees Nancy with him and Nancy's husband arrives on the scene. "In the matter of humor she [left] nothing to be desired in her creation of Nancy,"102 and she was "bouncing, rollicking [as well as] tender-hearted."103 But she also declined, reportedly, to exaggerate or engage in un-bridled romping, showing a new restraint by letting the fun grow out of the character of her role and the situations.104 Edith Kingdon portrayed the ingenue, Daisy Griffing, in a secondary love episode in the play. Once again, a critic noticed that Kingdon imitated the "gait, ...
half childish manner, . . . ascending inflection, . . . drawling speech," and "the upward motion of the head" for which Ada was known. But Kingdon lacked Ada's originality in the writer's opinion. Only one reviewer praised Edith Kingdon, urging his readers to see the play for her sake. Critics were most impressed with Ada's depiction of remorse in the last act when, as Nancy, she sees that she has "caused misery to several persons." Her blending of emotion and comedy convinced some skeptics that the "deeper passions of the human heart were by no means beyond her abilities."

Although Ada's critical success continued to build it took its toll. One reviewer questioned Ada's endurance at the rate Daly was driving her. She had rehearsed Wednesday morning, played a matinee in the afternoon, and opened that night in Nancy and Company with the result that her "fair Irish face, ridged with weariness, was really thin and ghastly." But the overwork did not affect her popularity. According to the New York Sportsman, just before the opening of the play The Sun featured her in its series, "Celebrities of New York," and declared her first in that series of public favorites. The article described her as a model of duty because she spent every Sunday with her mother in Brooklyn. Comparing her to her eighteenth-century counterpart, Peg Woffington, the reporter thought she excelled in impressions of caprice and affectation as a country girl, a romp, a hoyden, and disguised as male characters. The critic believed Ada felt herself the imaginary being she portrayed throughout the play and thought her movements sprang spontaneously from the character. The following summation provides an insight into her audience's perception of her:
Ada Rehan is a thing of naturalness, kindness and light, a girl sensible, gracious, charming; less concerned to inspire the enthusiasm of Sarah Bernhardt than to diffuse around her an atmosphere peculiarly her own and of happiness. Light and airy as is her nature, it is full of harmony. You go from the theatre after seeing her with pleasant feelings and content. Her eyes are like those of the women of Limerick, singularly soft, yet laughing and sparkling with bright intelligence and good feeling. Her movements are elastic and graceful. The whole woman is essentially womanly, blending much of gentle, bright tenderness with visible energy and elan.

Praised by The Sun's writer, and other papers across the country, Ada Rehan's work continued to increase her popularity.

One reviewer praised her "delivery of an epigram, . . . naturalness of an exclamation and . . . speaking of an epilogue" in which she surpassed Bernhardt, and Modjeska.\textsuperscript{113} The Mail and Express likewise judged her superior to some of her sister performers who were described as "simply personalities."\textsuperscript{114} In addition, Ada relieved any brusqueness in the character of Nancy Brasher with softness, retaining a "delicious femininity."\textsuperscript{115} Nancy and Company continued to surpass any of Daly's previous comedies in drawing power,\textsuperscript{116} and The New York Dramatic News accorded the theatre and its company new status by calling Daly's "the Comedy House of New York and his company . . . the best comedy organization New York ever saw."\textsuperscript{117} Wallack's no longer attracted an audience with its choice of plays. Not knowing where to acquire new plays, Wallack presented "crude melodramas," unsuited to the tastes of his audiences. "Those audiences really sought solace at Daly's--a momentous fact."\textsuperscript{118} In addition Rose Coghlan and some of the other more accomplished performers had resigned from Wallack's company, weakening it.\textsuperscript{119} Nancy and Company closed the season on May 1 after seventy-seven
performances. Reports of Edith Kingdon's engagement to George J. Gould, son of the railroad tycoon Jay Gould circulated, indicating that Kingdon might be retiring soon. During the season Ada had added four new roles to her repertoire and repeated three for a total of seven roles presented in two hundred and fifty performances, sixty more than the previous season. With more and more newspaper articles about her, she grew in popularity.

The pace did not let up for the actress when the season ended. After closing in New York on May 1, she performed in Boston between May 3, and May 9, and in Philadelphia between May 11, and May 16. In both cities she presented her established characterizations: Nisbe, Nancy, and Peggy Thrift.

After closing in Philadelphia, Ada departed for her second trip to England from New York on Saturday afternoon May 16, 1886. She arrived to the ship late accompanied by her brother, Arthur Rehan, who helped her navigate through the crowd. A gala occasion, "it seemed as if half the actors and actresses in town were on board the ship, and those who did not come had sent remembrances in the form—or rather the myriad forms—of flowers, until every table in the saloon was literally a flowerbed." The center of attraction, Ada needed her brother's protection from suffocation by the crowd of well-wishers. The excitement of the journey brought her close to tears.

Although it is unclear whether Daly hired her as a press agent or merely gave her permission to accompany the troupe on its European tour, journalist May Harriott traveled with the company, sending articles about their activities to various American newspapers. She described Ada as "very retiring by inclination," wishing "to be
secluded in her state-room as she habitually [was] in her hotel in New York or her mother's quiet home in South Brooklyn. Because her many admirers aboard ship overwhelmed her, she limited her social engagements but attended daily luncheons given by May Daly in her cabin for close personal friends. Harriott's description of a shy woman, seems a decided contrast to the vivacious young women Ada portrayed on the stage.

Although she spent some of her time rehearsing as Nisbe in A Night Off, Harriot observed that Ada still faced the opening night performance in London on May 27 with fear and trepidation. The solicitous inquiries of her likewise anxious comrades seemed only to intensify her anxiety. The London audience at the Strand Theatre greeted her with tumultuous applause, cheering, waving handkerchiefs, and shouting welcome. "The whole house seemed to rise up before her," taking her breath away. The compliments of the critics dispelled any fears of censure similar to that which she had received during her visit to England two years before. Even those whom she did "not wholly please" with her "quaint individuality," she amused. And The World, which called her "too crude and bouncing to be satisfactory to an English audience" in 1884, judged her "indubitably clever, and even sympathetic" in 1886. The London Chronicle considered her "the most singular artiste of the company... Tall, with rather pallid complexion and fair hair, Miss Rehan [had] a simple innocent manner, and a peculiar lisping voice. Like all great actresses there [was] not a trace of consciousness or effort in her style. Easy and natural to a degree, her quiet unassuming manner of poking fun [was] intensely comical." The newspaper The Bat recognized Ada's preeminence in
referring to "Mr. Augustin Daly's Ada Rehan Company"\textsuperscript{136} and several other newspapers complained that in the role of Nisbe, "the professor's youngest daughter, [she was] scarcely allowed full scope for her fund of inimitable drollery."\textsuperscript{137} With a thorough understanding of humor and a rich, rippling voice, Ada had "no parallel on the English stage."\textsuperscript{138} Perhaps the most meaningful compliment to Ada came from Ellen Terry who wrote to Daly: "You've got a girl in your company who is the most lovely, humorous darling I have ever seen on the stage."\textsuperscript{139} Out of admiration for Daly's company, Henry Irving hosted a special supper for them in his Beef-Steak Club-room at the Lyceum Theatre on June 3 after the performance. The great English actor showed Ada special deference when he personally escorted her to dinner, while Daly escorted Irving's leading lady, Ellen Terry, to the midnight celebration.\textsuperscript{140}

The \textit{Illustrated London News}' record of Ada's Hypolita in \textit{She Would and Would Not}, presented on June 26 illustrates Ada's power to use her voice, eyes, and face to create humor:

\begin{quote}
Miss Ada Rehan aptly caricatures the tricks and affectations of the dashing youth she personates. She is never too loud, never too boisterous, never too pronounced in her borrowed manner; but as the words ripple off her tongue and as the various expressions chase one another across her face, we can see that she possesses that gift, so rare in a woman, of pungent and genuine humour. There is a "laughing devil" in her eye to say nothing of her "sneer," that colours every part she clothes with her own extraordinary individuality.
\end{quote}

The author's assertion that Ada was never too boisterous, loud, or pronounced in manner coincides with another reviewer's belief that the company had improved their presentation of the eighteenth-century comedy since their last visit.\textsuperscript{142} In addition, several other newspapers complimented Ada on the "bold swagger" she affected while
dressed as a boy without concealing her femininity. Her Peggy Thrift presented for the first time in London on July 1, 1886 met with similar success. It proved to be "The freshest and most individual embodiment of the character that had been seen in recent years" on the London stage.

Just as her strong physical movement had drawn negative comments on her last visit to London, Ada's movement as Hypolita annoyed some reviewers who called her "restless;" others declared her better suited to contemporary plays.

Especially affable during his stay in England, Daly arranged excursions for the company; and Ada was unusually sociable. Otis Skinner recalled a journey to Stratford-Upon-Avon over the Fourth of July weekend, during which he, Daly, Drew, and Ada "went out for an evening row on Avon." Escort by the famous theatrical couple, Sir Squire and Lady Bancroft, Ada visited the renowned Garrick Club as well and appeared at several artists' receptions. According to May Harriot, one of the most pleasant excursions for Ada was a visit to the home of the great journalist and editor of Truth, Henry Labouchère, at Twickenham-on-the-Thames, formerly the villa of the poet Alexander Pope. Clement Scott, editor of The Theatre and critic of The News, as well as George Augustus Sals, editor of the London World, all attended the gathering. Ada enjoyed the visit but thought she "acted like a novice" in the presence of such intellectually sophisticated men.

Ada earned more accolades when she appeared as Nancy in Nancy and Company on July 7. "The life and soul of the piece," Ada was "a most brilliant comedy actress, lively, spirited, having a strong sense of humour." A few critics found her expression of pathos less
successful than her humorous acting, agreeing that her forte' was pure comedy. During the run the Prince of Wales attended a performance on July 19, greeting the artists personally after the play; and a few nights later, Henry Irving invited Ada and Daly to a dinner at which the Prince was also present.

From London Ada traveled to Edinburgh on August 1 and then to Glasgow for another week, meeting with the same success in the same roles. The following three weeks provided a new challenge for the actress and her fellow players as they performed in English before a German-speaking audience. The opening in Hamburg at the Thalia Theatre with *Love on Crutches* on August 18 was the first and only time an entire American company visited Germany," according to John Drew. Unfortunately, the management mistakenly assumed that since the piece was a German adaptation the audience would be familiar with it. But the play had never been performed in Hamburg before, and the performance bewildered the German speaking audience. A *Night Off*, *Nancy and Company*, *The Country Girl* as well as *She Would* and *She Would Not* also failed to impress the Hamburg audience and critics. The Company received a warmer reception in Berlin but played to small audiences. The language barrier partially accounted for the small houses, and perhaps as well, the "marked tendency to exaggerate, to paint with too vivid colours, to represent the different comic characters in the shape of caricatures." In addition the German public and critics judged the "old comedies" too "simple-minded," but believed the actors belonged "to the very first ranks of their profession. Miss Rehan and Miss Dreher [could] not easily [have found] their better on any German stage."
While in Berlin, Edith Kingdon suddenly left the company, returned to the United States, and shortly thereafter married George Gould, creating an uproar of rumors in the press. An American newspaper reported that Kingdon received better notices than Ada in Hamburg and as a result, Daly took her out of the piece the next day which caused her to leave the company. The paper implied that Ada used her powerful position in the company to persuade Daly to remove Kingdon from the play when it declared Ada "a power in the Daly company in more ways than one." 

May Harriott also reported that the Hamburg critics thought "Miss Kingdon the acme of all that [was] natural and unartificial," whereas "Miss Rehan [was] too tall to their taste, and [was] awkward and theatrical and without any nature whatever." But Daly denied that Ada was jealous of the younger actress explaining that "if there was any [jealousy] it was all on her [Kingdon's] side. No one had any cause to be jealous of her." But for two years the two actresses had not spoken to each other. However, if rumors that George Gould had courted Ada Rehan, who rejected him, before he turned his attentions to Edith Kingdon were true, Kingdon may have personally resented Ada. The strained relations between the two women may have hastened the younger actress' departure and marriage, but the disagreement may have been between Daly and Kingdon only and had nothing to do with Ada.

Before opening in Paris, the company rested and toured the city for three days. During that time several newspapers criticized the German origins of the plays and the fact that the company performed in Germany before Paris. But Otis Skinner thought the French hostility resulted from their belief that the American comedians were beneath
their notice. As a result, not only were all the performers, except Lewis, visibly nervous on opening night September 2, but the audience and critics considered Love on Crutches lacking in humor. However, with the presentation of A Night Off the following evening and The Country Girl as well as Nancy and Company on closing night September 4, the company won the favor of some of the public. Ada and Lewis enjoyed the greatest popularity.

"M. [Constant Benoit] Coquelin was enraptured with Miss Rehan, especially in The Country Girl and begged to be introduced to her. He spent an hour in the green room afterwards, chatting with Miss Rehan, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Drew." Although most of the French critics shared Coquelin's admiration of Ada, one supposedly obscure reporter slighted her "personal charms and . . . professional gifts," provoking another critic into challenging him to a duel in order to protect Ada's honor. The actress' champion won by not too seriously wounding his opponent in the arm.

Beginning September 6, with the rest of the company, Ada repeated her Nancy, Nisbe, and Peggy Thrift during a week in Liverpool and presented the same repertoire for another week in Dublin to equally appreciative audiences, ending her tour of Europe on September 18. The return crossing was an unpleasant one, however, because Ada suffered from sea-sickness on the passage home. She expressed her great relief at being ashore once more when they docked in New York on September 27. Along with her luggage, she brought back a brindle English bulldog named Phisto, short for Mephistopholes, a gift from the great actor Henry Irving. At twenty-nine years old, the actress was internationally known and she had visited "five foreign countries in four months—a tour unparalleled in the history of the American
The only other American actress who enjoyed such popularity abroad was Mary Anderson. But she confined herself to tragic roles and to Great Britain.

1866-87

With only a week to recover from the sea voyage, Ada began her eighth season with Daly in another German adaptation from Blumenthal, *After Business Hours*. The distinguished first night audience once again gave Ada and the company an enthusiastic welcome home from their first continental tour. As Mrs. Brandagee, Ada played a socially ambitious young woman who wishes to expand her wardrobe and invests in the stock market through a slick broker. John Drew portrayed her husband, Brandagee, an economical young lawyer, who also invests in order to teach her a lesson; and the broker manipulates the market so that when the wife gains the husband loses and vice versa. Although the piece contained an "excellent moral," it was "clearly not one of the brilliant series to which *Seven-Twenty-Eight*, *Love on Crutches*, and *Nancy and Company*" belonged. But the audience enjoyed it and the whole atmosphere took on the air of a gala social occasion. Odell thought Daly "usually began the fall term with a comedy of no great importance, his sole purpose being to ... reintroduce the company to their adoring public." He also declared Daly's now "the most popular theatre in America." The critics reported that "Miss Rehan brought out in a delightful manner the unconscious ignorance and simplicity, the fondness and the petulance of the young wife who went astray in 'puts' and 'calls.'" Ada enchanted the audience with her charm, adding another portrayal to her long list of successes and
prompting *The American Art Journal* to call her "our modern Peg Woffington." On November 15 she gave her forty-eighth and last performance of Mrs. Brandagee.

On November 16, Ada added another new role to her repertoire when she portrayed Una Urquhart in Daly's adaptation, *Love in Harness*, from the French of Albin Valabrègue. In this comedy she again portrayed a disgruntled wife to John Drew as her husband Frederick. She returns home to her parents because, among other things, her husband threw her ball gown out the window. Although Ada made some obvious slips in her lines, she was "excellent" and the play a success. The *New York Times* assessment of her role and acting typified many other reviews: "Miss Rehan as the petulant wife, who fretted and loved, has quarrelled about nothing, and will never, never make up again, has a role admirably adapted to her powers." Apparently when Ada entered "carrying the dog that Henry Irving gave her and declared that it was the only being in the world who loved her, there were shouts of laughter, and so it went on throughout the entire play." After the seventy-third consecutive performance, *Love in Harness* closed.

After closing as Una Urquhart on Monday night, Ada debuted as Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew* on Tuesday, January 18, 1887. Her most famous role, it was also Daly's most important production thus far. Daly had gradually felt "his way towards productions of the classics . . . and now we find him climaxing the series with the first performance . . . of the complete *Taming of the Shrew*, Induction and all." Odell describes the momentous occasion in the following manner:

Ada Rehan reached the peak of her fame in the role of
Katharine; I believe I may say that her stormy entrance as the shrew, with her flaming red hair and her rich dress of superb mahogany-coloured damask, was the most magnificent stage-entry I have ever seen. And her change from shrew to loving wife was an exquisite bit of acting, placing Miss Rehan among the great artists in dramatic history.

Exactly when Ada began rehearsing for the production is unclear, but Joseph Daly recalls that it was in preparation during the run of the first two plays of the season. Years later in speaking of Daly's directional techniques and philosophies Ada credited him not only with her recognition "as an actress both here and in England" but with "what knowledge [she possessed] of the technique of the stage." She recalled that "attention to detail, minute detail," meant everything to Daly:

Truth was the keynote and this applied to the staging, as well as to the voice tones in the delineation of a role. This characteristic of the greatest man ever connected with the stage in America . . . was merely an earnest endeavor to give to the patron of the theater exactly what he bargained for when he paid his money at the box office window: a play rendered as nearly true to nature, both as to the staging and acting, as it was possible to do with the aid of the best talent procurable, together with scenic accessories absolutely correct.

In a preface to Daly's adaptation of The Taming of the Shrew written in 1901, Ada explained that in directing her in the role, Daly emphasized Katherine's "high qualities," believing Bianca to be the real shrew. After her marriage, Bianca revealed her true nature, in Daly's opinion, by arguing with her husband. But Katherine proved herself to be of a heroic "mould" and belonged to a "Titanic age." To Daly, Ada recalled, Katherine was like "a goddess made woman, who, in the infancy of her new birth, rages with the wildest of the tempest that plays about her Olympian home, and then, growing to the
consciousness of earthly weakness, turns the whole divine force within her to exemplifying the perfection of human obedience and dependence." Ada expressed her pleasure at developing the varying moods of Katherine under Daly's direction, saying that they believed that Katherine's submission was a proportioned penance to her outrageous offenses. In Ada and Daly's view, Petruchio possessed the magnetic force of a conqueror; and once Petruchio convinced Kate he equalled her in mind and strength, "she slowly but surely" submitted. Kate felt "only too eager to go home to her father, and acknowledge her willingness to accept Petruchio as her lord and master." The thirteen years that Ada performed Katherine in Daly's company, "he watched and directed every performance;" but she took pride in the fact that he never suggested any change. Ada clearly agreed with Daly's conception of Katherine. Moreover, Ada's friend, Graham Robertson, reported that she told him she would follow Daly's directions even if she thought them wrong.

Following Daly's direction in this case resulted in enormous success for Ada. A "magnificent rendering" as Kate, she visibly communicated the shrew's "various moods of temper and docility." She expressed her "stern imperious wrath with ... exhibitions of frenzied passion" through a "clouded face" with "sullen eyes and trembling lips;" through "nervous hands, and impatient walk, the quick toss of the head and fierce dignity;" and through "the fretful gestures and inarticulate accusations of fury at the saucy assurance of Petruchio's wooing." Town Topics reported that she had been seen to better advantage in "modern farcical plays" than in "old comedies," but she was perfectly fitted to Kate. Critics kept lavishing more and
more praise on her with one reviewer calling her "the Goddess of Comedy" who appealed to "a sense of artistic appreciation that [was] reached by no other woman on the stage." A triumph for Ada, the production proved to be a high point in Daly's career as well.

Although extravagantly praised, Ada did not escape criticism. Several reviewers thought she lacked the physical requisites for the role. Her figure was too slight, her voice too weak, and her facial features too small to express passion and scorn fully. One critic thought she lacked any hint of "woman-like softness underneath that virago exterior," making her submission seem "a little sudden." John Ranken Towse of the Evening Post considered Ada's performance good and "even brilliant" in some respects; but he thought she vulgarized the character unnecessarily. Because she opened her performance at too high a pitch of emotion she had no reserve force for climaxes in Towse's opinion and lacked light and shade as a result.

As her popularity grew, newspapers offered news about her both on and off the stage. One paper reported that with Daly's help Ada had acquired some lots on which she hoped to build a house in Manhattan for her mother. And, for the first time, a paper publicly denied that any kind of an improper relationship existed between Ada and Daly, pointing out that both were good Catholics and that he was happily married.

At the same time, the public clamored for the opportunity to see her as Katherine. The New York Times reported that even men who behaved in a reserved manner as a rule could not contain their enthusiasm. The New York Star reported that the average woman's desire was to see Ada as Katherine.
The Shrew continued to draw crowded houses, and for one matinee Daly turned away between three and four hundred people despite a rain storm that left other theatres empty. When Sarah Bernhardt saw Ada's Shrew, "she was so much elated that at the close of the third act she went behind the scenes and effusively embraced Miss Rehan and complimented her as highly as possible." And on the one-hundredth performance of the play, April 16, 1887, Daly gave a lavish midnight supper for the company on the stage of the theatre with such special guests as General Sherman, Mark Twain, Sarah Bernhardt, and many more.

The rigorous schedule of eight performances a week and rehearsals when not acting on stage, began to tell on Ada. The New York World observed on opening night that the leading lady was in poor physical condition due to overwork. By the time the play had been running for a month and a half, she became so ill with a bad sore throat that her doctor gave an order for her not to perform which she ignored. The following month, however, she "retired from the afternoon performances of Katherine" for her health. Ada gave her last bow as Kate on April 30 to close the season after one hundred and twenty-one performances.

John Drew called The Taming of the Shrew an "historical event" as well as "the highest point of achievement in Daly's career of many successes," and Kate "the greatest part in Ada Rehan's long list of performances." In her performance as Kate, Otis Skinner detected an underlying humor, even in episodes of violent passion, that Ada communicated to her audience, which he doubted any actress before or during her lifetime had ever even approached in the portrayal of
Katherine. And the great American tragic actress of the time, Mary Anderson, simply declared Ada's shrew "unforgettable."  

The close of *The Taming of the Shrew* brought to a close an incomparable season for Ada Rehan. Although she successfully created two new roles in comic adaptations from the German and the French early in the year, Ada had achieved the greatest triumph of her career thus far with her appearance as Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Of the two hundred and thirty-seven performances she gave in the season, over one hundred and twenty were as Katherine. T. Allston Brown theorized that this season "had probably exceeded in the wealth of its artistic and monetary value any in Mr. Daly's career." Ada's Katherine was largely responsible for Daly's success. Two days after closing in New York she opened the summer tour in Philadelphia on May 2 as Una Urquhart in *Love in Harness*.

During the summer tour to Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Denver, San Francisco, and Salt Lake City, Ada repeated her Katherine, Nancy, Nisbe, Peggy Thrift, and Una Urquhart. Between May 2 and August 25 she performed 111 times in six cities, a grueling schedule for the entire company, and especially for Ada who was already suffering from fatigue. Earning the same laudatory reviews on the road as she had received in New York reinforced her popularity and influence from coast to coast. The Evening Mail claimed she set the style of fashion because she designed and executed the making of her own costumes. Dressmakers and designers copied her clothing for ladies of fashion who imitated Ada's costume and physical behavior:

The Rehan roll, a sort of Henry Irving stride between three short steps relieved by lateral twists and casual whirls has long raged as an epidemic among
Delsarte girls east and west. The Rehan drawl has worried more than a few followers of this ingenious actress and it is not possible to enter an assembly of swelldom or move twenty feet on the promenade without encountering some girl trying to keep her chin tilted a la Rehan. 232

Few people really had social access to her outside the Daly company and her own family. Ada's on-stage behavior continued to be the only source for public imitations. In Chicago she never ventured out alone without Mrs. Gilbert, and her sole companion indoors consisted of her "bandy-legged spaniel, Henry Irving." 233 While critics referred to her as "the foremost comedienne of the English-speaking stage," her health was the price she was paying for her fame. 234 Nevertheless, she finished the summer tour, returning to New York on August 29 without having missed any performances. 235

1887-88

Ada took a much needed vacation before beginning a week of preseason performances on September 26 in Philadelphia where she repeated her Nancy, Katherine, and Peggy Thrift. 236 Undoubtedly she was also rehearsing for the opening on October 5 of Pinero's Dandy Dick, in which she portrayed Georgiana Tidman. In the play, Georgiana, the widowed sister of a Dean of the Church of England attempts to help solve her brother's financial problems by inducing him to bet on the race horse Dandy Dick that she partially owns. 237 A "horsey" female and habitual speaker of turf slang, 238 Georgiana "became a typical 'sporting Duchess'" in Ada's capable hands. She "rattled off her racing talk with spirit and looked very handsome," 239 but the play did not become a decided hit. 240 The New York Dramatic News reported that
Ada gave an "admirable impersonation," managing to remain feminine "while portraying the masculine, 'horsey' side of the character as well." At her first entrance, the audience stopped the show with its thunderous applause of welcome. Although the newspaper acknowledged that the role was skillfully performed and Ada was "the most popular actress on the stage," the show received only thirty-two performances.

For her second new role of the season she originated a more familiar kind of character, Valentine Osprey, in another of Daly's German adaptations from Von Schonthan and Kadelburg, *The Railroad of Love*, on November 2. A coquettish, rich young widow, Val is uninterested in marriage; but a young lieutenant in the army, portrayed by John Drew, falls in love with her, pursues her, and wins her. *Town Topics* pointed out the similarity between this role and many others in Ada's repertoire. However, she had "improved considerably in relaxing her mannerisms, which often [bordered] on affectation, and developing a heart-felt and sympathetic naturalness." Her real triumph came in a scene, where she tried to keep her lover in the room while she retrieved a letter. She portrayed "many varying moods . . . indignation, . . . humiliation, scorn, . . . love and . . . apprehension. . . . She exhibited, indeed, a depth of feeling which [was] likely to raise her to a high position in her profession." Her performance prompted one writer to bestow on her the title, "the queen of comediennes." All the reviewers affirmed her charm and spirit as well as her blending of humor and pathos. But the most meaningful praises to Ada may have come from the famous British artists Henry Irving and Ellen Terry who personally congratulated the
actress on her success after witnessing the play. Irving and Terry began their third American tour since 1883 at the Star Theatre in New York on November 7 in W. G. Wills's version of Faust. Irving portrayed the title role, while Terry played Margaret. They continued their run until December 10, including The Bells, Louis XI, and The Merchant of Venice in their repertoire. The Railroad of Love ran for more than one hundred performances. Odell believed it could have run longer but Daly was anxious for another Shakespearean success.

In the third and final production of the season, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Ada undertook another Shakespearean character, Helena. As the lovelorn Helena, Ada earned considerable praise but the role did not demand of her any great emotional power. The Daily Graphic typified the critical comments. It admired her spirited acting in the quarrel scene with Hermia and the beautiful style with which she read her lines. The Telegram found Ada delightful, but the production disappointing. Henry Irving, known himself for elaborate and spectacular Shakespearean productions, strongly disapproved of "the extraordinary and fussy confusion of the staging." One scene included set pieces featuring people painted on canvas that looked out of place next to the real people on stage. At the same time, many papers praised the production and it played more than seventy times before it closed the season on April 7.

As Ada's popularity increased women continued to imitate her manner of walking, speaking, and dressing. However, the 1887-88 season must have seemed like something of an anticlimax to her. She performed Georgiana, her first role of the season, well, but neither it nor the play attracted large enough audiences to warrant a long run.
While she succeeded very well in her next role, Val Osprey, it was not a very challenging one. Likewise, her last presentation of the season, Helena, offered her little opportunity to duplicate her Katherine of the year before. Although the "Big Four" attracted audiences and appeared in their quartet roles in the most successful production of the season, they did not receive the public attention Ada did. She drew great audiences and one manager credited her with Daly's success. By the end of the season Ada had presented three new roles in two hundred and twenty-nine performances, and by general agreement of newspaper reviewers had become one of the foremost comediennes on the American stage.

Comparing her to Mary Anderson (1859-1940) one critic observed that like Anderson, Ada had the beauty, brains, youth, and talent that the public required of "star actresses." Anderson who debuted as a star at Macauley's Theatre on November 27, 1875 when Ada belonged to the company achieved great popularity as a tragic actress. But she lacked versatility. Towse recalled that "she had intelligence, a liberal measure of capacity, a sure comprehension of the finer feminine instincts and feelings, but she had not genius. In great parts, demanding imagination, passionate eloquence, or subtle discrimination, she was second-rate." Anderson successfully performed in London for the first time in 1883, the year before Ada's debut in that city. She was still in London preparing to perform Juliet in Romeo and Juliet the following year when Ada presented her Floss. Anderson returned to America in 1885 after she successfully portrayed Rosalind in London, and she toured America for a year as Rosalind and Juliet. Returning to London for the 1887-88 season, she doubled as Perdita and Hermione in
The Winter's Tale. A popular success, it ran one hundred and sixty-four nights. During the season Tennyson prepared *The Foresters* for Anderson, which she never produced. After returning to the United States, Anderson retired while touring in *The Winter's Tale* in March 1889. Although William Winter held her in high esteem, one of her biographers reports that other critics disagreed. When she performed Rosalind in New York, she did not please her audience.  

After closing the season on Saturday night in New York, Ada opened immediately with her Val Osprey in Boston on Monday, April 9, for a week's run. She repeated the same role the following week in Philadelphia, closing on Friday night and returning to New York in order to sail to England at noon the next day, April 21, for her third tour abroad.  

In April of 1887 Daly commissioned one bronze and one marble bust of Ada as well as a portrait by Hillary Bell, which he hung in the foyer of the theatre, but he did not display the loyalty to her that her public lavished upon her. Although his wife accompanied him on the ship, he reportedly courted Phoebe Russell who, according to Cornelia Otis Skinner, treated his attentions as a joke. In addition to being seasick owing to an unusually rough passage, Ada had to share her cabin with Russell because of arrangements made by Daly. Otis Skinner told his daughter, Cornelia, that Ada spent most of the journey in her berth, sometimes sobbing into her pillow at night to muffle the noise, and refusing to speak to her roommate except for one occasion when she told the younger woman to "let that man alone." Cornelia Otis Skinner thought Russell was mean to Ada. Not content with having related the details of Daly's wooing of her to Otis Skinner and John
Drew, Russell "had also given them a hilarious and somewhat cruel account of her cabin mate." 273

As a result of Daly's behavior, by the time Ada reached England and opened with her Val Osprey on May 3, 274 she reportedly believed "that Daly and Phoebe R. were either having or about to have an affair, and Daly let her believe it." 275 Her emotional distress did not seem, however, to affect her performances adversely. Critics commended the leading lady but not the play, attributing any value in the production to her acting. 276 Like Ellen Terry, Ada possessed a charm that endeared her to her audience; and she seemed at her best in the earlier scenes in the play as the flirtatious widow in The Truth's view:

But her talent [took] wider range further on, when in the space of a quarter of an hour, the actress [ran] down the whole keyboard of disappointment, vexation, annoyance, wounded pride, indignation, and resignation, and back again up the scale to relief, satisfaction, joy, bewilderment, and outspoken love. It [was] a brilliant piece of dramatic execution, and it [conquered] by its absolute cleverness. 277

The London press and public took the actress to their hearts. Ada's acting reminded Percy Fitzgerald of The Theatre magazine of the girls in the country parts of Ireland whose character seemed composed of "a pleasing gravity in trifles alternated with raillery and merriment." 278

Irish himself, he suggested that Ada's Irish heritage was the source of her talent. 279

But while Ada's career flourished, her personal life was in disarray. The tension between Ada and Daly continued to mount, reaching a climax on May 29, the opening night of The Taming of the Shrew. According to Cornelia Otis Skinner, Ada found a note backstage written by Daly, which she assumed was intended for Phoebe Russell:
"Enclosed you will find $200. There is more where this comes from."

Not realizing the money was intended for Winter, Ada reportedly flew into a rage, locked herself in her dressing room, and refused to come out. Daly had brought his friend and well known critic with him to England in order to improve the company's press coverage. Since Winter "was well known over there. . . . The local papers were only too glad to print any items he might care to send them."

Daly could not tell Ada in front of the entire cast that the money and note were sent to William Winter. So he entreated her to come out so that they could begin the play. Ada finally agreed to perform but only after Daly knelt and begged her forgiveness; whereupon she bit his hand "to the bone." Cornelia Otis Skinner paints a dramatic picture of the actress, ordering the play to begin, thirty minutes late, with Daly's blood still fresh on her mouth.

Still shaking with fury at Daly, Ada's entrance as Katherine took the audience's breath away. W. Graham Robertson, described her unforgettable Katherine:

Not a whit of her shrewishness did she spare us; her storms of passion found vent in snarls, growls, and even inarticulate screams of fury; she paced hither and thither like a caged wild beast, but her rages were magnificent like an angry sea or a sky of tempest, she blazed a fiery comet through the play, baleful but beautiful.

The London Era's reaction typified critical response: "If a better Katherine has been seen on the boards than Ada Rehan, we have not seen her. From the moment this lady swept on to the stage in a whirlwind of 'temper' . . . boxing her sister's ears, jousting at flouts and jeers with Petruchio, and breaking the flute over the musician's head, to the final scene of all, when tamed and transformed, she lectures her fellow
wives upon their duties and makes sweet submission to her lord, Miss Rehan held the audience firmly in her grip.  As Bianca, Kate's sister, Phoebe Russell's boxed ears must have rung. The British critics saw Ada's Katherine as one "whose temper never degraded or vulgarized the proud creature it dominated, whose insufferable arrogance never robbed her of one jot of her natural refinement." With "the personal magnetism that always stamps the great individual artist" few actresses could rival Ada Rehan. The only British actress able to stand "in the same plane" as Ada was Ellen Terry. The London Piccadilly declared Ada "worthy to rank with Sarah Bernhardt" as well, "and thus to complete a trinity of the most accomplished actresses that the world has ever seen or [was] likely to see." While Daly may have been able to exert his influence on many American critics, it seems unlikely that his power could extend to so many British critics as well. Ada had clearly triumphed; yet when another actress, Effie Shannon, enthusiastically congratulated her immediately after her exit, the great Katherine burst into tears and wished she were dead.

For Ada to succeed so brilliantly in a Shakespearean character in England signified a rare and notable accomplishment. As one journalist explained to Daly "all London [looked] upon Miss Rehan as the 'star' of [his] company." After she gave her last performance of Kate in London on August 1, Ada further charmed the British by presenting her Shrew out doors at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-Upon-Avon on August 3 for the benefit of that institution. Unfortunately rain drove everyone inside to complete the performance. But Ada declined most
social invitations. W. Graham Robertson reported that the actress did not even attend gatherings that her intimate friends John Drew and his wife, Josephine, frequently hosted while in London and to which most of the other company members came. Before taking a four-week vacation, Ada portrayed Kate in Glasgow on August 6.

Prior to opening in Paris in September and during an interview with the New York Herald, Ada named Sarah Bernhardt as her ideal, which raised the topic of marriage because Bernhardt had just reconciled with her erratic husband. In Ada's opinion actresses should not marry, or at least not young, because it destroyed "the spectator's illusions to know that the lovely heroine he [had] been feasting his eyes on [was] the mother of six children." The New York Dramatic Mirror evidently took offense at the actress' remarks, devoting a column and a half to a refutation and condemnation of Ada's opinion. Since Ada was thirty-one years old, rumors of her impending marriage began to appear. More than one newspaper reported talk of her engagement, "to the eldest son of a wealthy English Baronet." But the rumors did not amount to an actual engagement: Ada seems to have had room for only one man in her life, Daly.

If the French critics did not rave about the Daly Company and Ada's performance, neither did they disparage them as they had done two years earlier. Ada repeated her Katherine, Nancy, and Val during the week of September 3 in Paris. To complete her European tour she presented her Katherine and Nancy in Dublin beginning September 17, and a week later she sailed for New York. Upon her arrival in New York on September 30, her brother "whisked her off to her mother's residence in Brooklyn."
Ada's great triumph as Katherine in England must have been a bittersweet memory if Cornelia Otis Skinner's story about Daly's behavior is accurate. Skinner believes Daly would not have married Ada even had he been free to do so, because he enjoyed the power that "keeping a woman of her beauty and prominence in the compromising position an extra-marital liaison involved in those cautious times." Likewise, in Skinner's opinion, Daly seems to have enjoyed the added sense of power he gained by arousing her jealousy at a time when she had achieved great influence in her career. At this same time, in 1888, Daly published his book Woffington, A Tribute to the Actress and the Woman in which he explained the affair between the eighteenth-century Peg Woffington and her manager, David Garrick. Although Daly's brother Joseph acted as his literary ghost, the explanation may well reflect Augustin Daly's view of his relationship with his own leading lady since he openly compared Ada to Peg Woffington in the book. Of the Garrick and Woffington relationship Daly offered the following:

Whatever of love there may have been between them at this time was prudently concealed, and both fared all the better for it in the estimation of a world which prefers to consider its idols as models of propriety, even if they be not so. In this way it offers a premium on prudence and regard for appearances--virtues in themselves, when the virtues they simulate are absent.

Daly seems to have successfully cloaked in mystery his own relationship with Ada. His socially elite clientele could probably tolerate the suspicion of an extra marital alliance and even enjoy the titillation its rumors aroused, but would have condemned public knowledge of it. Daly's alleged infidelities with other young women, like Phoebe
Russell, in addition to Ada, may have been a reassuring indicator to Mrs. Daly of her husband's lack of serious commitment to any other single woman. But in spite of the emotional intensity of Ada and Daly's respective feelings, "the quarrel was straightened out, [and] Rehan took Daly back as she always did." And Phoebe Russell remained a member of the company.

1888-89

On October 9, nine days after her return to the United States, Ada initiated the 1888-89 season with a new role, Jo, in Daly's adaptation from the French of Alexandre Bisson, The Lottery of Love. Although much publicity appeared about her and she earned good notices in the play, Ada's role was insignificant. However, on October 30 she presented another new but more important character, Xantippe in Justin Huntly McCarthy's Wife of Socrates. A curtain raiser, the one-act comedy featured Ada as the overbearing wife of Socrates who determines to get her husband's attention with scolding since his placid nature leads her to believe he does not care about her. Likening the role to that of Katherine, the critics judged Ada's performance another triumph.

Approximately one month later, newspapers announced the resignation of Phoebe Russell from the company. The New York World compared the circumstances of her resignation to those surrounding Edith Kingdon's departure from the company, stating that because of professional jealousy a powerful actress in the company influenced Daly to cast Russell in a small role in an upcoming production rather than a large one the manager had intended for her. The young actress, who had
not appeared on the stage yet this season, "defiantly asserted her rights" but to no avail. However, The Sun quoted a friend of a member of the company who explained that there had been trouble "'of a serious and delicate nature'" between Phoebe Russell and Ada since the previous season:

Miss Rehan grew alarmed at the promise developed by Miss Russell and particularly at the friendship entertained by Mr. Daly for his fair debutante. On one occasion, while on the other side Miss Rehan's feelings in the matter led her almost to the point of refusing to go on for a performance. . . . She was highly excited over the matter. . . . The discovery of a letter of some sort hastened this rather embarrassing episode.

Cornelia Otis Skinner claims that after Russell related the details of Daly's wooing of her aboard ship to Otis Skinner and Drew, to annoy Daly, the two actors had intensely courted the young actress; but Otis Skinner and Phoebe Russell actually fell "'madly in love" with each other. "Daly, his pride still galled, made up his mind to get even with them both." He cast Otis Skinner in only two revivals the entire season.

Although Ada received most of the publicity while they were in England, the "Big Four" still held a place of honor in America. Odell recalls that with the demise of Wallack's Theatre Company in the spring of 1888, Daly's became the first place in popular estimation. "So long as the 'big four' remained . . . one knew that . . . the best entertainment in the theatre was to be found at Daly's".

Daly decided to present ten Tuesday subscription performances of revivals beginning December 4 with Seven-Twenty-Eight, in which Ada repeated her girlish Floss to the delight of audience and critics alike. With the exception of Christmas and New Year's evenings, the
revivals continued until February 19; and Ada presented her Hypolita, (She Would and She Would Not), Silena Vandusen (Needles and Pins), Phronie (Dollars and Sense), Nancy (Nancy and Company), Peggy Thrift (The Country Girl), and Kate Verity (The Squire). The Wife of Socrates had been replaced on December 17 by a play in which Ada did not appear; but on December 26 she portrayed Tilburnia in Rehearsing a Tragedy, a one-act satire based on Sheridan's The Critic, presented after The Lottery of Love. Drew portrayed the author of a tragedy being rehearsed in which Ada played the character Tilburnia, who was required to express "exuberant passion, despair, and madness." She succeeded in enacting the role with an absurd gravity, provoking "laughter every minute she was in sight."

After more than one hundred performances, The Lottery of Love was replaced by another of Farquhar's comedies, The Inconstant, in which Ada played another new role, Oriana, on January 8. The closing of Wallack's Theatre in 1887 and the disbanding of his company left Daly's "the only house in the country where old comedy [could] be witnessed in its perfection." Ada was "no longer the dashing American girl of Augustin Daly's own comedy." She had been transformed into the perfect English girl. As the ward of old Mirabel, Oriana is betrothed to young Mirabel, the inconstant, who returns from Italy intent on breaking his contract. She pursues him, even pretends madness to move him, and follows him to a courtesan's house disguised as his page. When he is set upon by cutthroats, she returns with soldiers and saves him. Touched by her devotion, he vows his constancy. Calling her pleasant, winsome, and charming as well as an actress exhibiting a good deal of dramatic power in the mad
scene, the only flaw critics found in the performance was her too frequent "absences from the stage." Before the New York season came to a close, Ada had originated two new roles and repeated her Katherine. Although several critics denounced Daly's German adaptation, An International Match from Von Schonthan, as dull and boring, most critics complimented Ada's Doris. Her "deliciously charming" portrayal of the breezy typical American girl contained just the right balance between the untutored young woman of modern comedy and the clever, quick-witted society girl. The advances she made to her lover in the first act, however, seemed too forward to two reviewers and downright vulgar to a third. The Mail and Express praised Ada for doing "much to redeem the piece" but believed she was "passing beyond acceptability in ingenue roles." Yet The New York Times praised her charm, tenderness, vivacity, honesty, and, above all, her perfect innocence and purity. Ada's revival of Katherine beginning March 7, though superlative in the original, had improved in detail and in tenderness upon her submission.

Ada's final presentation of a new role, Delilah, in an adaptation from A. Bisson's French farce, Samson and Delilah, beginning March 28, elicited mixed reviews. Several newspapers condemned the depiction of an old reprobate's infidelities as unkind and wanting in nicety; some found it colorless and disappointing; and still more declared it a success because of the acting. As Delilah, Ada portrayed an extravagant young wife, whose husband, portrayed by John Drew, has a lawyer appointed his wife's guardian to keep her from spending her fortune; but she captivates the lawyer. While the press praised Ada
for her charm, a few said she had little to do but show off her costumes.

When the curtain came down on the 1888-89 season on April 27 Ada had appeared two hundred and forty times in seventeen different roles, six of which were new. Compared to the hectic nature of the previous season, this one must have been one of relief. Phoebe Russell's departure probably eased the tension within the company, and the frequent change of bill, in addition to the weekly revivals, kept Ada busy. The acquisition of Wallack's old English comedy tradition by Daly benefitted Ada because it broadened her range and tested her ability with well known roles such as Hypolita, Peggy Thrift, Sylvia, and Oriana. Unfortunately, her last two new roles of the season could not compare in quality with those of her established repertoire. Nevertheless, she earned good reviews and her audience proved itself willing to endure mediocre plays in order to see her perform.

Only two days after closing the season in New York, Ada opened in Philadelphia with Daly's company to begin the annual summer tour. During her next two weeks in Philadelphia, she repeated her Delilah, Oriana, Xantippe, and Nisbe before leaving for Boston where she also performed Floss, Val, and Doris for three weeks. Continuing her tour, Ada and the company presented their repertoire in Chicago for three weeks, Rockford, Illinois for four nights, Denver for five nights, Salt Lake City for two nights, San Francisco for three weeks, and, finally, returned to New York. The tour continued the exhausting schedule of the regular season with the added strain of travel by railroad rather than the luxury of playing at their home theatre in New York. The critical reaction to her performances on tour
closely resembled the opinions of New York reviewers with most critics praising her work, many raving about her, and a rare one condemning her. Moreover, the San Francisco Music and Drama declared Ada "the representative comedienne of America." To further point out her popularity, the Daily Report (San Francisco) revealed that her brother-in-law, Oliver Doud Byron, had offered to star her but she refused. Everything about her interested the public, which led one reporter to observe that Ada looked tired, as if she "needed a long vacation."

For the rest of the summer Ada appears to have taken the vacation she so badly needed. With Daly, his wife, and a maid, Ada sailed to Liverpool, England on August 11. She divided her time between London and Paris. Henry Irving and Ellen Terry saw to her entertainment in London, while Coquelin escorted her to the Paris exhibition. Arriving in New York on September 22 after a six-week vacation, she reportedly felt ten years younger and immediately departed for Philadelphia where she opened as Doris on September 24. In addition, she repeated her Val on September 25 and 26 as well as her Floss on September 27 and 28 before returning to New York to open the 1889-90 season.

Between 1884 and 1889, Ada rose to such preeminence that she not only was the most prominent member of the "Big Four," but she was fast becoming the leading member of the whole company, claiming the attention of the public and critics alike. Already having won British approval in 1884, she tested her ability to succeed in Germany, France, Scotland, and Ireland in 1886, earning praise in those countries as well. She also further distinguished herself in English Restoration
and eighteenth-century comedy, reviving her Peggy Thrift and Hypolita frequently, and adding Sylvia and Oriana to her other successes. But her inclusion of Shakespearean comedy in her repertoire marked a new level of artistic achievement. Her triumph as Katherine in The Taming of the Shrew at home and abroad proved to be the highest point of her career thus far and, perhaps, Daly's greatest artistic success as well. As her popularity soared, her personal relationship with Daly deepened, weaving her personal and professional life together in a complex pattern of emotional turmoil. Whatever personal involvement between Daly and Ada, he began allowing time for rest for his prize attraction. Ada began taking four-week vacations after the summer tours, which Daly alternated between the United States and Europe. The rigorous schedule of constant performance and rehearsal of new roles was taking its toll on her health and the summer tours, especially in America, added the stress of frequent travel to her life. Yet some price had to be paid during this period of great development and heightened status. Her immense artistic strides this season foretold a bright future for the "Queen of Comediennes."
Notes—Chapter 4

1 The New York Times and New York Herald 8 Oct. 1884, vols. 43 in Daly's Theatre Scrapbooks 15. Most volumes of the Augustin Daly Scrapbooks have no page numbers and the pagination that does exist is often erratic and unreliable. The scrapbooks are in the New York Public Library Theatre Collection and also available on microfilm in the University of Illinois Library. Hereafter cited as DTS.


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353 New York Herald 11 August 1889, DTS 22.


356 Evening Star (Philadelphia) and Philadelphia Item 24 Sept. 1889, DTS 22.

Having joined Daly's Company ten years earlier as a supporting stock actress, unknown in New York, Ada began the 1889-90 season an internationally respected comedienne. She embarked upon her tenth season with Augustin Daly in the role of the widow in her manager's adaptation from Victorien Sardou's *The Golden Widow* on October 2.¹ She earned praise for her spirited portrayal of the unconventional American Tryphena Magillicund'y, who possessed a vixenish temper and a touch of coarseness.² But the play failed miserably; only *The Sun* and *The New York Times* spoke favorably of it.³ The plot tells of a rich American widow who buys herself a title by marrying a broken-down count in name only. Both the *New York Herald* and *The Telegram* judged it the worst comedy Daly had ever produced.⁴ He quickly replaced it with another adaptation from the German of Von Schonthan and Kadelburg, *The Great Unknown*, on October 22. Ada portrayed Etna, "a hoydenish, carelessly bred girl of eighteen years, with a sound heart and a perfectly ingenuous nature."⁵ While *The New York Times* reported that "no one [could] equal her in such a part," the critic considered her "talents . . . worthy of more exacting and serious work."⁶ The *New York Herald* condemned the play, accusing Daly of changing the characters, vulgarizing the dialogue, and adding scenes for Ada. A few nights before Daly's production, the original piece had been presented at Amberg's Theatre in New York.⁷ According to the *New York Herald* critic that production succeeded where Daly's adaptation failed. More significantly, the reviewer did not believe that "Miss Ada Rehan
compared very favorably with Miss Ella Burg--another American girl--in
the character of the giddy but warm hearted Etna." However, The New
York Tribune as well as several other papers disagreed, attributing the
success of the piece to Ada's acting. According to The New York World
the lovemaking scene between Ada and Drew, in which Ada had all the
lines and won all the honors as well, constituted the "single merit of
the piece." Before her sixty-fifth and last performance of Etna on
December 16, Ada repeated her Telka Essoff on December 3 and Nisbe on
December 10 for the first two of ten subscription performances
presented again this season.

After beginning the season with two disappointing roles, Ada
dazzled her admirers on December 17 when she presented what was to
become one of her most famous Shakespearean characterizations, Rosalind
in As You Like It. Preferring a Rosalind with "a spirit of mirthful
sportiveness" that recalled actresses of the previous century like Peg
Woffington and Dorothy Jordan, Ada rejected the more recent poetic
Rosalinds that had come into favor. Odell's comparison of Ada's
Rosalind and Modjeska's better illustrates the difference between the
"poetic" and more "sportive" Rosalind:

In the forest scenes many thought Miss Rehan too
buoyant, too lively, too lacking in poetry. Of the
two noted actresses I had already seen in the part, I
have only a dim recollection of Mary Anderson's
Ganymede, but I remember with gratitude the poetic,
graceful interpretation of Helena Modjeska, one of the
greatest actresses I ever saw. The pensive beauty of
her Ganymede, touched with the womanly grace and
charming humour, was in direct contrast to Miss
Rehan's ebullient zest and arch merriment. Both were
beautiful performances, me judice, and the very
difference in approach and achievement offers but
another proof of the supremacy of Shakespeare in the
delineation of character.
Generally agreed that she triumphed in the role, critics and audience alike sometimes saw a variety of qualities in Ada's performance, as if she had created each individual's ideal Rosalind. In praising her "vigor," "vitality," "graceful humor," "exuberance," and "byplay," one critic described her Rosalind as "of the earth, earthy," the "passionate," "headstrong woman," "filled with life," of Shakespeare's invention. However, actress Mary Anderson, equally as enthusiastic about her portrayal, did not view Rosalind as "'of the earth, earthy'" yet admired Ada's "'simple method'" which she found refreshing. Anderson had first portrayed Rosalind herself in 1885 at Stratford-Upon-Avon in England for a distinguished and enthusiastic audience. Forest Izard, one of Anderson's biographers, recalls William Winter's presence and approval on that occasion. American critics, Brander Matthews and Laurence Hutton, record two British reviewers estimates of Anderson's Rosalind: Sidney L. Lee, in the Academy, believed Anderson "'appeared to far better advantage'" in the forest scenes where she "'proved herself in sympathy with the spirit of the comedy.'" However, "'Her pathos in the early scenes sounded artificial'" to Lee; and only in her reply to the Duke in the first act did she approach any real feeling. William Archer, of The Theatre (London), agreed with his colleague that Anderson's forest scenes were her best, but he judged her Rosalind "'girlish rather than womanly.'" Yet William Winter, who had seen both Adelaide Neilson's Rosalind and Modjeska's thought Anderson's the best he ever saw except for Ada Rehan's.

At first the Albany Times reviewer saw little in the first act that warranted the adulation Ada was receiving. Although he believed
she had improved in many ways since he had seen her eleven years before in "1878-79 at the old Leland Opera House" in Albany, she could not "set two worlds on fire." However, he joined her worshippers when she appeared in the forest of Arden disguised as a boy. She was "no longer the handsome, careless, good-natured girl, such as she was known in Albany, but an artist, skilled in stage craft, yet wonderfully natural in her art." Mary Anderson paints a vivid image of Ada's Rosalind:

She was the image of youth, beauty, happiness, merriment, and of an absorbing and triumphant love. When she dashed through the trees of Arden, snatching the verses of Orlando from their boughs and cast herself at the foot of a great elm, to read those fond messages . . . her gray eyes were brilliant with tender joy; her cheeks were flushed; her whole person, in its graceful abandonment of posture, seemed to express an ecstasy of happy vitality and of victorious delight; her hands that held the written scrolls trembled with eager, tumultuous, grateful joy; the voice with which she read her lover's words made soft cadences of them and seemed to caress every syllable; and as the last rhyme,

"Let no face be kept in mind
But the fair of Rosalind,"

fell from her lips, like a drop of liquid silver, the exquisite music of her speech seemed to die away in one soft sigh of pleasure. While, however, she thus denoted the passionate heart of Rosalind and her ample bliss of sensation and exultant yet tender pride of conquest, she never once relaxed the tension of her glee.

Ada's uninhibited but graceful use of her body combined with a beautiful and expressive voice for one of her most memorable characterizations. Her ability to reveal a complexity of feelings with total convincingness in the truth of the moment left an indelible impression.

Declaring her performance one that would "pass into the history of
the stage," Harpers Weekly noted her "incessant movement and sparkle," but denied that it was "monotonous or insincere." Hillary Bell praised her "exuberance of spirit," "womanhood," "limpid voice," "girlish sweetness," and "crowning genius," while the critic Nym Crinkle (A. C. Wheeler) emphasized her spontaneity. "No one [could] see the effort preceding the motion." Unlike all the other Rosalinds he had seen, Ada's did not calculate and measure the effect of her impulsive love for Orlando. "The impulse [got] from her heart to her feet and [had] traversed the whole economy of expression." Writing more than 30 years later, the critic Brander Matthews recalled her "playfulness," "tenderness," and buoyancy but, above all, her womanliness, which "was without taint of self-consciousness and with unfailing enjoyment of the situation." While also praising Drew, Matthews credited the actor with enhancement of Ada's Rosalind through his total acceptance of her as the lad Ganymede. Likewise more than one reviewer commented on her physical attractiveness in doublet and silk tights but no boots or legging, which titillated the male audience. Matthews and the press found her particularly alluring in roles requiring her to disguise herself as a male such as Hypolita, Peggy Thrift, Oriana, and, now, Rosalind.

The popularity of Rosalind among actresses seems naturally to have invited comparisons. The Home Journal as well as several other papers likened Ada's "joyousness of demeanor" and "exuberance of pure womanly gaiety" to that of Anna Cora Mowatt, despite the fact that Ada had not been born when the deceased actress portrayed the maid of Arden. The Journal considered Ada the best Rosalind since the British actress Adelaide Neilson who had died in 1880. And The New York Times saw a
similarity between Peg Woffington's merry hoyden and Ada's portrayal, pointing out that the poetic manner of enacting the role had only come into favor in recent years. Yet the Press attributed a "delicately spirituelle" quality and joyousness and merry banter of Anna Cora Mowatt to Ada in the part as well.

Perhaps the most interesting comparison inevitably arose when Julia Marlowe (1866-1950) opened in the same role at the Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York while Ada still appeared at Daly's Theatre. Where Ada seemed a stunning young woman in a magnificent gown in the first act, Julia Marlowe looked like an ingenue. Ada romped, swaggered, and threw aside her cape, while Julia Marlowe's cloak was a fixture. Ada pulled "her short skirts about her with a skip and a" mouselike "skriek" in comic abandon, snatching at Celia's ample skirts to wrap around her when Orlando appeared. To the contrary, Julia Marlowe half drew the folds of her cloak about her with shy dainty grace when she came face to face with Orlando. Although Ada feigned masculine characteristics in the role in order to fool the men around her, she was still womanly. But Marlowe could not ever have been mistaken for a man. Where Ada's height gave her an advantage, Marlowe's youth provided her with one. Most of the critics preferred Ada's Rosalind to Julia Marlowe's with a few of them severely castigating the younger actress. As a result, Julia Marlowe's production closed early.

Odell reports that the New York Herald considered Marlowe's Rosalind "'very pensive ... gentle and poetic--but monotonous.'" Odell saw both Rosalinds "and could hardly believe that the merry, bewitching Rosalind of Ada Rehan and the Juliet-like Rosalind of Miss Marlowe could have come from the same text. Neither was so poetically lovely
as Modjeska's. Marlowe's Rosalind appeared for only two weeks. Daly may have felt a strong sense of satisfaction at having bettered the rival performer. A few years earlier Marlowe had earned rave reviews in Philadelphia while Daly's Company fared poorly. He had made a bet with L. Clarke Davis, editor of the Public Ledger in Philadelphia, that she would no longer be heard of in a year. Julia Marlowe proved him wrong, of course, and Daly never forgave her. Discouraged by the critical attacks on her Rosalind, she avoided performing in New York City for the next five years.

But Daly's hard driving regimen was taking its toll on Ada who became so ill in late December that her doctor forbade her to perform. Refusing to disappoint her public she appeared, but only in one of two plays on the program for December 31. Then in the midst of her success the sudden death of her father, Thomas Crehan, on January 18 minimized all other concerns and she joined her family in mourning that evening, declining to perform. However, after burying her father on the afternoon of January 20, she again portrayed Rosalind that evening. Not surprisingly, she contracted a cold the following week but continued to work and presented her fiftieth portrayal of Rosalind on February 3, 1890. Among the floral tributes commemorating the occasion that filled the lobby of the theatre stood a six foot basket of roses from the distinguished German actor Herr Ernst Possart with the inscription: "To Miss Ada Rehan, the most charming actress, the incomparable Rosalind."

No one could doubt Ada's dominance at Daly's Theatre and public fame after the critical and public response to her Rosalind. The press called her the "representative American comedienne," and warned that
"a Daly play without her would be unfortunate beyond expression." It judged her "the be-all and end-all of dramatic art in New York" and stated that she "would have made a reputation under any manager who would [have kept] her long enough." With such statements the press confirmed and reinforced her power over the public.

Yet, once again gossip surfaced about jealousy over another actress, Henrietta Crossman, who had appeared with the company for the first time as Celia. In early November rumors indicated that because of difficulty between the two actresses Crossman was no longer in the working cast of the company. While the possibility exists that Ada may have been upset because Daly was giving special attention to the new company member, it is doubtful that Henrietta Crossman threatened Ada's career. But other personnel problems emerged that season. No less than four company members resigned during the season because of personal as well as professional disagreements with Daly. Wilton Lackaye resigned when Daly cast him in a minor role in As You Like It; William Gilbert, the low comedian, left as a result of an undisclosed disagreement with Daly; a minor actress quit because she had to wear costumes that did not fit; and Daly fired R. G. Knowles because the actor failed to greet him and requested a better role than had been assigned to him in the upcoming production.

Known for his dictatorial ways, Daly was said to own his company "body and soul" and Ada was said to be his slave. But the extent to which he dictated Ada's private life is not known. She lived alone in an apartment but had some servants. "The only real pleasure in which she indulged was] a visit paid every Sunday to her mother in Brooklyn." She reportedly looked a great deal older in person than
she was because "of the severity of the labor imposed by Mr. Daly." As
with the rest of his company, he did not permit her to speak to
newspapermen.\textsuperscript{59}

Although \textit{As You Like It} could probably have continued to draw full
houses until the end of the season, Daly withdrew it after sixty
performances on February 12. In its place, he presented Ada in the
role of Dina Faudelle in his adaptation from Sardou, \textit{A Priceless
Paragon}.\textsuperscript{60} As a well meaning but frivolous young mother-in-law who
creates chaos while trying to perform good deeds, Ada once again won
the admiration of the public and reviewers alike. More than one
observer noted, however, that she needed more rehearsal.\textsuperscript{61} Not a very
substantial comedy, reviewers predicted it would last only a few
weeks.\textsuperscript{62} Then on February 25 Ada portrayed Rose Morel in a one-act
translation of Francois Coppée's \textit{The Prayer}, presented as a curtain
raiser to the \textit{Priceless Paragon}.\textsuperscript{63} The emotionally charged story
revolved around Rose's inability to forgive her brother's killers and
God for his death. While the \textit{New York Herald} and \textit{The New York Star}
disliked Ada's acting,\textsuperscript{64} most newspapers gave their approval to her
portrayal.\textsuperscript{65} However, true to press predictions, both plays closed on
March 5 after which Ada portrayed her Helena for two weeks and her
Katherine for another week.\textsuperscript{66}

In late March, Ada concluded the season with her last new role,
Miss Hoyden, in a one-act condensation, \textit{Miss Hoyden's Husband}, from
Richard Brinsley Sheridan's \textit{A Trip to Scarborough}.\textsuperscript{67} The plot shows
how a penniless young scoundrel fools his brother and another man,
wedding Miss Hoyden and her fortune. Miss Hoyden is a "saucy,
ill-bred, unsophisticated lass with an archaic vocabulary and a sharp
spice of Mother Eve in her composition." As usual Ada earned praise for her vivacious and charming portrayal of the "romping, reckless child," which ran until the season closed on April 12. Daly once again suffered personnel problems, when shortly thereafter another actress, Sara Chalmers, resigned from the company because of a disagreement with him.

Out of two hundred and twenty performances for the season, Ada appeared in two hundred and nineteen, missing only one performance because of the death of her father. She portrayed six new roles and repeated eight from her repertoire. Although she earned praise for her Tryphena Magillicundy and Etna, the roles offered her little challenge. Etna was merely a younger version of the coarse but charming widow Tryphena, and the plays did not contain much to recommend them to a discriminating audience. It was Ada's third new role, Rosalind, which provided the new challenge to her artistry. Her triumphant success reconfirmed her dominant position at Daly's Theatre and in New York. Her latest portrayal of a Shakespearean heroine reinforced her reputation as an actress with considerable comic power, and challenged those who might think of her as no more than a light comedienne with a charming personality. Clearly, by 1890 Ada Rehan was Daly's main attraction, and whether he approved or not she was becoming a star.

Between April 13 and May 31, before departing for England, Ada and the rest of the company toured to Washington D. C., Philadelphia, Chicago, and Boston. For her London opening on June 10 at the Lyceum Ada portrayed Floss in Casting the Boomerang (Seven-Twenty-eight) as she had done seven years earlier. But critics no longer considered her
crude and coarse or peculiar in the role; now they raved about her "rare charm," brilliance, and originality as well as her "marvellous" acting. They called her "the leading member" of the company, the "principal attraction," the "chief feature," even "the bright particular star of the Daly company," and, finally, "the greatest actress of comedy who [spoke] the English language." All agreed that the play itself had little merit, but the acting was of a high enough quality to compensate for the weak script. Several reviewers flatly stated that no actress on the English stage equalled Ada Rehan and The World critic publicly recanted his denunciation of her Floss when she first made her debut on the London Stage in 1884. Judging her one of the greatest actresses of his time, he praised her womanhood and "her voice [which was] incomparably soft and rich, with a peculiar quality in it which a daring coiner of artistic slang would perhaps call iridescence; her diction [was] admirable, and her grace so instinctive and habitual that even the ungracefulness of raw girlhood 'she [turned] to favor and to prettiness.' He regretted, however, her employment in "these pleasant but trivial farces of Mr. Daly's!" Ada did not escape some negative press which accused her of a tendency to exaggerate and to behave hysterically. For the most part, Ada captured London critics.

When she portrayed Nancy Brasher in Nancy and Company, beginning June 24, only one reviewer judged her pathos less successful than it could have been, while he praised her comedy, as unsurpassable. Few if any critical observers found merit in the play, but unanimously approved of Ada's acting. The role seemed "too crude in itself for Miss Rehan to do herself full justice;" and Ada appeared superior to
the rest of the company. One reporter considered her "the best comedian of her sex." Another declared her the "leading star in the Daly Company." In describing her "mercurial movements" and manner as "animation itself," one critic coined the term "Reanimation." As the Ladies Pictorial explained, her admirers were willing to "accept Nancy, and Floss, and Nisbe, and the rest because [they] would sooner have [had] the exquisite actress in rubbish than not have her at all." But the public was "getting impatient to see her in work more suited to her genius."

Much to the delight of her public Ada opened as Kate in The Taming of the Shrew on July 8. Once again the critics showered her with praise emphasizing "the dulcet charm of her incomparable voice," and "her distinct enunciation and perfect delivery of the lines." They pointed to her beautiful, wild-creature-like movement, describing her magnificent rage, which never demeaned her womanly grace. She used her vocal delivery, movement, hand gestures, facial expression, and emotional intensity to invest her whole nature in the character.

Perhaps the most laudatory praise came from a critic who declared her "the best Katherine on the English-speaking stage and therefore in all likelihood, the best in the world."

By the time Ada did present her Rosalind on July 15, the stallions of criticism were champing at the bit. The Land and Water reviewer expressed the general English opinion of and attitude toward Ada:

Miss Ada Rehan steps from triumph to triumph. Her Katherine in The Taming of the Shrew was splendid; her acting in the various foolish farces Daly amuses himself by pounding out of the German for the use and abuse of his company lifted them into high artistic
representations. She has established it as an axiom of the stage that she can do nothing in which she is not delicious. Little wonder, then, that the Lyceum was crowded on Tuesday when this most winsome creature, infinitely the greatest actress the Great Republic has ever sent back to Europe to report progress on her artistic civilisation, was to appear as Rosalind for the first time.

Like the New York critics, some British found her Rosalind lacking in poetry, overdone, too physically active, and frolicsome. But far more exclaimed joyously over the best Rosalind they had ever seen and the exact one Shakespeare had imagined. In addition, the Ladies Pictorial reported that Ada's art raised the story and character "from the level of prose to the heights of poetry," and the Whitehall Review reminded those who accused the leading lady of exaggeration that Rosalind lived in an ideal world created by an imaginative poet not in the nineteenth-century London of a realist.

Two different Rosalinds had developed since the eighteenth-century modeled on Sarah Siddons' serious portrayal, which reportedly "lacked in wit," and Mrs. Jordan's rather "undignified hoyden of pure comedy." While tending toward comedy, Ada reconciled the two readings, not losing sight of the serious intellectual side of the character. One reviewer believed her "ringing laugh," "arch expression, and the scintillating brightness of her playful humour" recalled descriptions of Mrs. Jordan, and another critic was sure no one superior to Ada had been seen in the part in the hundred years since Mrs. Jordan's success. Although The World preferred Mrs. Langtry's refined Rosalind, the magazine Judy judged Ada's portrayal better, an opinion with which the Kountry Fair concurred and added Mrs. Kendal to the list of her inferiors. The Topical Times
reviewer had witnessed "Miss Neilson, Mrs. Kendal, and last and very
much least, Mrs. Langtry" in the role of Rosalind, but he only saw Ada
Rehan succeed in the part. Ada's success was so great that Daly
extended the run of As You Like It to accommodate the large numbers of
people desirous of admission.

The British praised Ada's acting much more enthusiastically than
Americans. Some particularly appreciated the opening scenes of the
play which went relatively unnoticed in the United States. In his
reminiscences, Sir George Arthur expressed his admiration for the
spirit, sense, and meaning Ada imparted to Rosalind. "Ada Rehan rose
to her highest point . . . with the denunciation of the Duke; it was an
overflow from a proud woman's heart which had for its reaction a burst
of humour and madcap dare-devilry." Likewise, the critic for the
Telegraph, Clement Scott, remembered that Ada wisely used the early
scenes "to show her womanly nature, her pride and her independence."
After congratulating her backstage on opening night for her whole
performance, the great actor Henry Irving wrote to Daly saying Ada's
Rosalind was beyond praise. Her friend and Daly's costumer, W.
Graham Robertson also greatly admired her Rosalind, but puzzled over
some "passages of frankly vulgar clowning" that appeared out of
keeping with the character. Upon questioning her he learned that she
followed Daly's directions and concluded that she was more a mouthpiece
for Daly than "a great original actress." Perhaps Ada's most
cherished complement came from Ellen Terry who wrote to Ada to
congratulate her on her Rosalind and to give her feathers for her hat
that came from a costume worn by Henry Irving when he portrayed
Mephistopheles in Faust. Because she had been ill, Terry had only seen
After three weeks of *As You Like It*, Ada opened as Etna in *The Great Unknown* on August 5. Although the critics praised her acting, they disliked the play and Daly replaced it with *Casting the Boomerang* on August 11. Five days later the season closed on August 16. Ada left for Paris on August 19 with Daly and his wife; while there she wrote a thank-you letter to Terry expressing her gratitude for the feathers and her exhaustion from "the great excitement of the London season." Ada sailed for home three weeks later assured that she had won the approval of the British press and public.

Upon arriving in New York on September 20, Ada told reporters that her recent tour abroad "had been the pleasantest of all her trips to Europe because she felt that her reception in England this time was unusually enthusiastic." During her vacation she had included her usual trip to Paris to buy gowns as well as a visit to Rome, and to Germany with the Dalys where they all attended the *Oberammergau Passion Play*.

Although both Ada and Daly were tired when they disembarked from the *Umbria* in New York, they traveled to Boston the following day where Ada began a week's run of revivals on September 22. The *Town Crier* described her characteristic behavior on stage: She paraded "the stage with an odd little short-length glide" and gazed "up coyly from under the quickly dropped eyelashes," standing with "her pretty rounded chin far nearer her lover than was her rosy mouth (a charming saucy attitude)." Finally, she talked with the soft purring tones that "no voice but Rehan's [could] produce." The reporter also commented on Ada's status with the company and with Daly. Estimating her salary
at three hundred dollars a week, he believed Ada realized that her power to eliminate any competing actresses at Daly's Theatre was far more advantageous than starring would be for her. No evidence exists, however, that any other company or manager was attempting at that time to hire Ada away from Daly. With her usual dedication she continued to play her old roles the following week and to rehearse in Philadelphia for the upcoming New York season.

1890-91

By the 1890-91 season, opening night at Daly's had assumed the function formerly performed by the grand opera in signaling the beginning of the social season in New York. As the prima donna of Daly's Theatre Ada assumed the lead in her profession. People attended Daly's productions specifically to see her. A list of prominent audience members for first nights included such national figures as General William Sherman, Edwin Booth, and Joseph Jefferson, all of whom occupied a box for Ada's debut as Elvira in Jerome K. Jerome's New Lamps for Old on October 7. Unfortunately not even the great popularity of the leading lady and the rest of the company could make the play a success. Nevertheless, Ada won critical endorsement as a result of a serio-comic speech in the play expressing her reflections on marriage and describing a fading romance. Calling it one of the most delicious bits in the drama, reviewers found little else to praise in the production. A satire on a discussion that had arisen in reaction to Mona Caird's book condemning marriage, the play depicted a young couple, played by Ada and Drew, who swapped partners with another couple and ran away with their new partners after being convinced
marriage was a failure; but before the end of the play they realized their mistake and reconciled. Even Daly himself recognized that the slender nature of the play would not permit a very long run and he began rehearsals for his next production in the first week of performances of New Lamps for Old.

But once again the German playwright Franz Von Schonthan came to Ada's rescue when he enabled her to present Baroness Vera Von Bouraneff in Daly's adaptation of The Last Word on October 28. Mingling sparkling wit with deep emotion, the role showed "the magnetic personality and wonderful art of Miss Ada Rehan" to great advantage. Ada portrayed a young widow whose brother, an attache to the Russian legation in Washington, D. C., incurs the disfavor of the Secretary of State and then wins his daughter's heart. Interceding for the young lovers, the Baroness effects a reconciliation between the young couple and the Secretary while falling in love with his son. As The Sun reported: "Any play which [set] Miss Rehan forth as a witty, brilliant, elegantly dressed and fully employed woman [possessed] a prime factor of success with Daly audiences." In addition to using a Russian accent successfully, Ada carried "the greater portion of the work," which did not include Mrs. Gilbert and showed James Lewis and John Drew to be lacking in pathetic power. More than one reviewer credited her with saving the play from failure, and Town Topics described her speech as falling "from her lips with a cadence that would make a babbling brook dry up from envy."

With obvious pleasure The New York World reviewer noted that the actress had dropped her babyish intonation and drawling of words in an infantile fashion, and he predicted the end of the drawl "except in one
or two of her baby roles." The portrait of a mature woman, the Baroness required the expression of a wide range of emotions and Ada "was everything by turns—pathetic, imperious, coy, dainty, buoyant, coquettish and altogether entrancing. Her flashing eyes when simulating anger were in marked contrast to the sly, roguish look beaming in them in her scenes with Harry Rutherell (John Drew). Her svelte figure . . . showed to splendid advantage as she strode the stage, posed carelessly or lounged—gracefully." Several critics seemed to prefer the actress in the role of a woman, not a girl, because it allowed her "full scope for her talent" and showed her "ability as an actress" better than any role she had presented for a long time.

The numerous newspaper articles about Ada that continually appeared in print reflected her ever increasing popularity and influence on fashion. Although the Woman's Illustrated World praised the whole company, it also conceded that Ada was a star of "no mean magnitude." The New York Times reported that society women were inundating a prominent dressmaker with orders for copies of the gowns Ada wore in the play. In November her fortunate financial state enabled the actress to buy and decorate a house on West Ninety-third Street in Manhattan. With fans eager for personal information about her one newspaper said that she and Daly occasionally walked along Madison Avenue together unnoticed by passers-by. She talked constantly while he listened to her with a "kindly air. The pair [looked] like a retired professor who [had] been taken forcibly out of his study by one of his married daughters and who [was] being walked along in the sunlight a good deal against his will." The relationship between
Ada and Daly as well as her influence on him, must have fascinated her admirers. She attracted with her feminine charm, usually portraying an irresistible young woman who wins the love of the leading man and lives happily ever after. Yet unlike most other actresses, Ada neither married nor kept company with any man so far as her public knew, a fact that probably made her all the more alluring and fanned the fires of gossip about her and Daly. Yet few of her imitators would have recognized her had they seen her riding home just before midnight on the elevated train. With her make-up free face buried in a book, she resembled a tired business woman more than an actress.¹⁵⁸

After one hundred performances of her Baroness Vera, Ada made her first appearance as Lady Teazle in Sheridan's The School for Scandal, on January 20.¹⁵⁹ Her unconventional portrayal of the character triggered disagreement in the press over the quality of her performance. Most newspapers praised her,¹⁶⁰ some condemned her,¹⁶¹ some did both,¹⁶² and still others defended her.¹⁶³ Daly's brother, Joseph, explained that Ada's conception of the role coincided with that of Mrs. Jordan's and would not have been "in the spirit of Sheridan" had Ada not disclosed the "heartiness and robustness" of "a young girl bred wholly in the country."¹⁶⁴ She presented an artificial lady with an unmistakable strain of a country girl clearly manifesting itself in her.¹⁶⁵ As one critic put it, Ada merely individualized the part like every strong actress who played it had done. Moreover, the controversy encouraged fans to see their favorite comedienne in the comedy. Although people had to be turned away from Ada's performances,¹⁶⁶ she acted Lady Teazle for the fiftieth and last time that season on March 2.¹⁶⁷
On March 3, Ada appeared in one of her most unusual roles, Pierrot in Michael Carre, Jr.'s pantomime, The Prodigal Son. The New York Times explained that she sacrificed her good looks to perform the role, appearing in white-face and a skull cap. She portrayed a young man of questionable character who spurns the love of a respectable young woman. He chooses instead an avaricious, faithless young vixen and steals money from his parents. Realizing the error of his ways after his lover leaves him for a wealthy Baron, Pierrot returns home to gain the forgiveness of his true sweetheart and his parents. Although Andre Wormser's melodious, Wagnerian music accompanied every action and gesture, the unfamiliar and unappealing character, the unflattering costume and makeup as well as the deprivation of Ada's beautiful voice alienated the audience.

Critics differed in their opinion of her performance but most of them found her effort to present "a new novel form praiseworthy." However, Town Topics declared her unable to express emotion and meaning either through facial expression, gesture, or movement because she lacked the necessary training for the role. The same reviewer credited her with convincing Daly to allow her to show her versatility by portraying the clown. Another critic who found her actions in the role vulgar called her "a pampered pet" of the Daly Company and claimed that she only agreed to perform the part in exchange for a book written as a tribute to her by William Winter at Daly's request. But Daly's brother, Joseph, indicates that the manager presented the play for its artistic value. He points out that "Such work as Miss Rehan's had never been done by any other woman on our stage in [her] time." Perhaps the final factor in the failure of Ada in the play, which saw only seven performances, was the

Winter's book, Ada Rehan: A Study, written as an elaborate complement to the actress, purported to tell her story and had appeared in print in limited edition in January 1891. Daly had commissioned it "printed for presentation only." The French actor Coquelin was one of the people to whom Daly presented it. Justin Huntly McCarthy, a British playwright, poet, and critic, wrote the fourth chapter of the book and Winter included McCarthy's "effusive" poem in the leading lady's honor in the work as well. Upon receipt of her copy, Ada wrote the following letter thanking Daly for it:

'164 W. 93rd St.

My Dear Mr. Daly,

I have thought often of how I am to thank you & what I am to say for the beautiful tribute you have paid me—but such acts of kindness fill the heart too much. Such generosity speaks for itself, and for you & me when we are no more. I will steal a few lines of Herrick, which is something like what I wish to say:

Well may my book come forth like Publique Day
When such a light as you are leads the way,
Who are my work's creator, and alone
The flame of it, and the Expansion.

And look how all those heavenly lamps acquire
Light from the sun, that inexhausted Fire.
So all my morn & Evening stars from you
Have their existence—and their influence too.
Full is my book of Glories; but all these
By you become Immortal Substances."

Feb. 25/91

Forever gratefully yours,
Ada Rehan.

The book features twenty-one pictures and gives information about Ada's early life; describes her acting and roles she portrayed; includes reviews from some European newspapers; lists characters and plays she appeared in; and provides a chronology of her life. The book
was reprinted and expanded in 1898 to include those roles added to her repertoire during that time. Excellent publicity for Ada, the book benefitted Daly as well.

Ada's last new role of the season, the Princess of France in Love's Labor's Lost presented on March 28, surprised critics by its relative lack of importance in the play. More than one reviewer asked why the actress as well as Drew, who acted the King of Navarre, did not portray the more prominent characters, Rosaline and Biron. Nevertheless, Ada scored a hit in the small and somewhat unimportant role. For the closing night performance on April 11 the company revived The Railroad of Love in order to include Mrs. Gilbert in the cast.

Nearly thirty-four years old, Ada succeeded this season most obviously as the Baroness Vera, one of the five new roles of the several she portrayed. The lack of any new plays featuring the "Big Four" in addition to the wide variety of plays focusing on Ada's characters firmly established Ada as head of Daly's Company. Daly's commissioning of Winter to write a book honoring Ada testified to Ada's star status in Daly's mind without openly acknowledging it.

After closing on Saturday night in New York, Ada joined the company for the summer tour on Monday, April 13 beginning at the National Theatre in Washington, D. C. During her one week run in the nation's capital, she repeated her Baroness Vera, Lady Teazle, Nisbe, and Princess of France. Presenting eight performances a week in addition to traveling from city to city left the actors little or no leisure time. The following itinerary for the rest of the tour reveals the same rigorous schedule that Ada had undertaken during previous
summers. April 20 began one week at her former manager's theatre, Albaugh's Lyceum in Baltimore, Maryland; April 27, one week at the Brooklyn Academy of Music; May 4, two weeks at the Chestnut Street Opera House in Philadelphia; May 18, three weeks at the Hollis Street Theatre in Boston; and June 8, three weeks at Hooley's Theatre in Chicago, which concluded the 1891 summer tour of the Daly Company. In addition to the roles presented at the National Theatre, Ada revived Cousin Val, Floss, and Rosalind during the remainder of the tour, after which she enjoyed a much earned six week vacation.

While on tour critics typically praised Ada as a performer "almost alone on the American stage . . . as a wholly authoritative and fascinating personality in the art of acting." They especially admired her in comedy and believed only Ellen Terry exercised "anything like the same degree of fascination upon the public mind." A Baltimore reporter recalled her performance in Pinafore in 1879. Although her Hebe had been an artistic success, she had enjoyed "little opportunity to display her prowess before a discerning public." Her "star of triumph" had not begun to "shed its radiance" at that time. He also remembered that she had been very domestic. She had cooked every day with the approval and to the pleasure of the chef at her place of residence in Baltimore. At that time, she had been "light hearted, kind, considerate, and generous," qualities which she still seemed to possess in spite of her fame and an adoring public. Another newsman agreed with the Baltimore reviewer, commenting that although Ada owed much to Daly, he could not have developed her talent had she not had it in the first place. To the Boston Herald critic she was "one of the most brilliant talkers" he had ever met personally.
A reception given by the British actress, Mrs. Kendall, in London for Ada had occasioned the writer's meeting with her. Both professionally and personally the press and public alike singled her out as the leading artist of Daly's company.

All press coverage dramatically shifted from Ada to John Drew when the leading man signed a contract with the manager, Charles Frohman, for the 1892-93 season on the same day he was to renew his contract with Daly, May 2. The Truth blamed Ada's "virtual star" status for Drew's departure as well as Frohman's willingness to star him, something Daly had never done and probably would never do. While lamenting the loss of Drew as Ada's leading man, the Boston Home Journal also expressed regret at the dissolution of the "quartet of actors," Ada, Drew, Mrs. Gilbert, and James Lewis, and the consequent destruction of the ensemble with Drew's departure from the company. But the Chicago Figaro credited Daly with developing Drew's talent and declared Ada the only indispensable member of the Daly company. Drew himself revealed that Frohman had been trying to sign him to a contract for several years, but owing to loyalty Drew refused the manager's overtures until Daly rescinded a business agreement which entitled the four main artists in the company to a percentage of the profits. Frohman gave Drew a salary "much larger than Daly ever contemplated giving anyone connected with his theatre" and his new manager gave him star status and provided a company to support Drew.

Rumors abounded in the press concerning Drew's immediate dismissal by Daly, Daly's refusal to include Drew in the European tour, or, failing that, Daly's refusal to allow Drew to appear in any production. Nevertheless, Drew remained an active member of the
company, joining the troupe for its European sojourn after their annual vacation. Once again Ada vacationed with Daly and his wife in "Rome, Naples, Pompeii, Padua, Verona and Venice." But before opening as Rosalind in Paris on August 31, she spent a few days alone on the Normandy coast. After a successful week in Paris, the London public welcomed the "Ellen Terry of America" when Ada presented her Nisbe on September 12. Critic after critic condemned the play as inferior to the abilities of Ada, while celebrating her talent and recognizing her as the "most interesting member of the company," the "bright particular star" of the American stage," and "the favorite of two continents."

More articles than even the American press published about Ada appeared in British newspapers, including two interviews, one of which took place with both her sisters, Kate and Hattie, present. The three women discussed the advisibility of widows remarrying. They concluded that one marriage and one love was "the best standard for a perfectly dutiful woman." In the other interview, Ada expressed her embarrassment over the enthusiastic ovation accorded her on opening night. Ada judged the English to be much more demonstrative than Americans, and worried that her less constrained and more buoyant Lady Teazle would not meet with a favorable press and public in England. But she seemed unable to do anything wrong in British eyes. When she presented her Baroness Vera for the first time in London on September 20, the critics heaped lavish praise upon her, calling her: a great artist, a brilliant actress, "the representative comedienne of the American stage," "Sarah Bernhardt of comedy," the only exceptional member of the company, and "one of the very best artists.
now living." Several critics pointedly mentioned her Irish ancestry as if it made her "one of their own."

One of the most memorable events of her life took place on September 23 when Ada and the Dalys visited the poet-laureate of England, Lord Tennyson, at his private estate, Aldworth, where he read his latest play. The play had originally been written for Henry Irving and Ellen Terry who returned it to the author. Mary Anderson had also considered it, but her marriage ended any possible production. Then Tennyson's son, Hallam, saw Ada in The Taming of the Shrew, admired her work, and suggested to his father that he offer the play to Daly for her. During her visit, Ada enjoyed a long walk through the woods and fields with the great poet; and Tennyson agreed to allow Daly to edit the play according to the requirements for a successful production, adding and cutting lines as Daly saw fit. In addition, the poet volunteered to add ideas to the play desired by Ada and Daly. In the, as yet, unnamed play, which dramatized the story of Robin Hood, Ada was to play Maid Marian.

In the following month, on October 30, 1891, Ada officiated at the historical laying of the corner-stone for Daly's new theatre in London. Clasping the hand of the British actress, Marie Effie Wilton Bancroft, at the end of the ceremony, Ada recited Clement Scott's poem especially written for the occasion in order to dedicate the cementing of relations between English and American theatre people. A few days later, on November 3, Ada revived her Rosalind for the London public, winning an enthusiastic response from critics. At the same time, the press expressed disappointment over the cancellation of The School for Scandal and The Taming of The Shrew necessitated by lack of
time. On November 14 "The Daly Company ... terminated the most successful season they [had] yet played in London." But the hectic pace continued for Ada as she boarded a train for Liverpool with the rest of the company almost immediately after the farewell performance and the next morning sailed to the United States.

1891-92

While the company performed abroad, Daly had the theatre in New York completely remodeled, delaying the start of the 1891-92 season until November 25. Knowing that this would be her last season to perform opposite her long time friend, John Drew, must have sparked fond memories for the comedienne as well as some sadness. She revived her Katherine, Lady Teazle, Vera, and Rosalind for the first four productions of the season, which lasted until January 11. Because she did not appear in the fifth production of the season, Pinero's The Cabinet Minister, rumors of a rift between her and Daly began to appear in newspapers. Without Ada the play proved less than successful, running for only 9 performances. According to John Drew, Ada refused to appear in The Cabinet Minister when she "heard and read the part that was assigned to her," arguing "that the leading woman's role offered her no opportunity." Drew agreed with her. But Daly wrote a letter to the Era, which the paper published, denying that Ada had refused the role and any rift between himself and his leading lady. As usual Daly wanted everyone to believe that all was well with his company. But Ada's refusal of the role, if true, suggests that she was not as docile as some may have thought, nor entirely ruled by Daly. Putting rumors aside, on January 19 she revived her Nancy, which
replaced the Pinero failure. 238

Ada did not originate a new role this season until February 9 when she presented her Aprilla Dymond in Daly's adaptation, Love in Tandem, from Henri Bocage and C. de Courcy's La Vie à Deux. 239 Another domestic comedy like so many others in which Ada and Drew portrayed a young married couple unable to live in harmony, the play depicted a wife who insisted upon choosing her successor in order to insure her husband's happiness. 240 Reviewers agreed that it was not "much of a play." 241 But Ada was as "delightful as . . . always." 242 The play depended upon the skill of the players 243 and Ada redeemed it as she did many others, 244 making it a moderate success. 245

The "momentus production" of Tennyson's version of Robin Hood, The Foresters, replaced the domestic comedy on March 17. Although Odell judged it "intrinsically, a rather undramatic composition," he also acknowledged the "dream-world" effect Daly created with picturesque scenes from Sherwood Forest, elaborate lighting and costumes, music written by Sir Arthur Sullivan, and many attendants, fairies, and foresters included in the cast. 246 Tennyson allowed Daly to suggest changes in the script, which the poet then made. One such scene featured a dream sequence in which Robin Hood conjured up fairies. Tennyson switched the dream to Maid Marian at Daly's request 247 and wrote a new song, "Love Flew in at the Window," for Ada. 248 The plot focused on the beautiful lady Marian who flees from her pursuers into Sherwood Forest where she finally finds her banished lover, Robin Hood. After many trials the young couple achieve freedom, justice, and restitution of family estates and honors when King Richard returns from the wars. 249
Although the audience enthusiastically welcomed the production, several critics expressed disappointment in the presentation. Reviewers disapproved of the play, but acknowledged Ada's "winning grace." Town Topics, however, described her as drawling "through the lines of Maid Marian and on Thursday [sliding] off the key in the doleful ditty, 'Love Flew in at the Window.' But the historic production earned enough praise to continue until the end of the season, April 23. Because it was Shakespeare's birthday Ada presented her Rosalind, marking her last performance on the New York stage with John Drew as her leading man. Ada confided to W. Graham Robertson that she was ordered by Daly to behave in a "hurt and affronted" manner toward Drew, and she "did her dutiful best, but, when not under the managerial eye, [she] would relapse altogether and openly mourn for her old comrade."

The 1891-92 season had started late with revivals, but Ada still managed to perform two hundred and thirty-five times in eight productions, refusing to appear in one play for the first time since she had joined Daly's company thirteen years earlier. The fact that Daly did not dismiss her suggests that Ada had bargaining powers of her own. By this time, Ada was the star of Daly's company in the opinion of many. She had only created two new roles during the season, but the Poet Laureate of England chose her to portray Maid Marian in his play, and Oscar Wilde wanted Ada to portray a role in his play, A Good Woman. In the same spring, the famous French actor Constant-Benoit Coquelin suggested he portray Petruchio to her Katherine and attempted to arrange such a production; but nothing came of it.

As usual Ada and the company began the summer tour almost
immediately, on March 25, 1892 in Washington, D. C., traveling on to Baltimore, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco. While on tour she repeated her Aprilla, Baroness Vera, Nancy, Lady Teazle, Maid Marian, Jo, Katherine, Rosalind, and Cousin Val. Like so many tours before, critics and audiences warmly welcomed and praised her. Little out of the ordinary occurred with the exception of an open air performance of As You Like It at the estate, Fair Lawn, of Mr. and Mrs. Hobart Chatfield Taylor in Chicago on June 30.

After a three year absence from that city, Ada found San Francisco reviewers extremely enthusiastic. One noted that she had matured in her art and refined it in the last eight to ten years without losing any of her youthful vivacity. Her Rosalind outshone the brilliant Modjeska's and the sweet Adelaide Neilson's Maid of Arden. The same critic admired the use of her voice during her portrayal of Baroness Vera when he recalled that "She [told] the tale of the death of her brother--a little child--modulating her voice, raising it and letting it fall as the incidents [were] agonizing or touching."

As the tour drew to a close so did John Drew's association with the Daly Company, which greatly saddened Ada. During their last performance as Rosalind and Orlando on July 11 in San Francisco, she "had burst into tears on the stage as she placed the chain round his neck and had found great difficulty in going on with her part." She played opposite Drew for the last time in The Taming of the Shrew on July 29. She then went East with the Dalys to begin her vacation, leaving the remainder of the company to end the run in San Francisco the following evening.
After returning to New York from San Francisco, Ada embarked upon what had become her yearly European vacation with the Dalys, including a trip to Paris to buy gowns, reportedly chaperoned by Mrs. Daly. Probably just as anxious as her manager, she inspected the progress on Daly's Theatre in London, and she also visited Tennyson again while in England.

At thirty-five years of age Ada had gained recognition as one of the finest actresses of her time. It was also rumored that she was one of the richest as well. She was now faced with adjusting to a new leading man. In Drew's place Daly hired a twenty-seven-year-old British actor, Arthur Bourchier, who had appeared with such well known and respected English artists as the Hares, Lilly Langtry, and the Kendals at St. James' Theatre in London. Bourchier did not appear with Ada when she presented her Phronie and Katherine during the preseason tour of Boston, Philadelphia, and Albany.

In addition to newspaper articles about her, Ada's preeminence revealed itself when the managers of the Montana Mining exhibit at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 held in Chicago chose the comedienne as the model for their silver statue of Justice. The solid silver statue, "eight feet high, costing $50,000 and standing upon $250,000 worth of gold compressed into a pedestal" and sculpted by R. H. Park, was historically unique and meant to designate ideal womanhood as well as justice. Ada's measurements were reportedly obtained and used for the statue, which was unveiled at the Fair in late May 1893. Much to Ada's dismay, a group of speculators toured the statue to advertise dry goods stores around the country after the Fair closed. The property of the Double Eagle Mining Company of Montana,
the statue was further rented out to the Cotton Exposition in Atlanta and the Paris Exposition during December 1895 and January 1896. After appearing in Paris, its gold base was to be melted down and sent to the mint. If the state of Montana did not buy the statue itself, then it was also to be "reduced to ingot and sent to the mint."278

1892-93

After thirteen years of performing with John Drew as her leading man, beginning the 1892-93 season without him must have saddened Ada. Daly's new adaptation from Blumenthal, Little Miss Million, which inaugurated the season on October 6, featured Ada in the role of Rena Primrose, a rather hoydenish schoolgirl who falls in love with a photograph of her friend's brother whom she encounters at her father's house after running away from school.279 The role was like many others she had played, but some critics found her too mature to portray the ingenue.280 Odell described his reaction on opening night: "Miss Rehan at her entrance, almost embarrassed me, got up as an ingenue in her earliest teens with a girlish costume no young girl of 1892 would have deigned to wear. Katherine, Rosalind, Lady Teazle, reduced to the ingenue, almost the fausse ingénue! It was really too much."281 Other loyal critics, however, praised her efforts.282 But performing without her old comrade, Drew, poor press notices, and the news of Tennyson's death on opening night, must have diminished the pleasure of opening performances.283

Although Ada commanded the audience's attention, Bourchier naturally aroused their curiosity. The inevitable comparisons to Drew handicapped the new company member before he ever stepped on stage.
Drew's fans approached the performance "almost as if attending a funeral." Bourchier seems to have had little chance of success. An Oxford man with the appearance and manners of a gentleman, he was heavier than Drew and less graceful, but tall with "mobile and particularly expressive" features, and he possessed a clear, musical voice. Realizing the difficulty he faced in following Drew, most reviewers offered him positive words of encouragement. But Odell reported that he knew immediately the British actor "would not do" because he lacked that all important ingredient for success in Daly's German adaptations, "personality." Similarly, the audience found the play lacking and Daly appeased them by reviving Dollars and Sense on October 18 with Ada as Phronie and "with the delicious Jenny O'Jones scene for [her]."

Amid rumors of her departure from the company, Ada presented her second new role of the season on November 10, Juno Jessamine in another adaptation from Blumenthal and Kadelburg, A Test Case. In the minor role of the loyal but indignant wife of a philandering husband, Juno's "good heart and good sense [were] potent factors in the final settlement of all difficulties." Although critics agreed that Ada performed well, the play failed to draw an audience longer than three weeks. Odell attributes the relative failure of the first two plays to the changing taste in drama: "The old order of plays for entertainment was passing into the era of problem plays deriving from the school of Ibsen."

Fortunately Ada presented her Julia from Sheridan Knowles' sentimental comedy, The Hunchback, for the first time on November 29, prompting Odell to declare her unequalled in the role for "sheer
magnificence of speech, carriage, and plastic eloquence." In one critic's opinion, Ada performed better as the pure country maid whose head is turned by the social whirlpool of the gay city and who comes to her senses before it is too late, "than as the repentant, tearful woman at the close" of the play. But most critics agreed with Odell; and The Recorder judged her Julia a combination of the best elements of all the Julias, which included actresses "from Fanny Kemble, who created the part, in London [in 1832], to Adelaide Neilson and Mary Anderson." John Drew wrote to her after seeing a performance to say that he only now fully appreciated her art. The great dramatic actress Eleanora Duse likewise praised her profusely, according to Daly's brother, Joseph, and the success of the play allowed Daly to keep it on for four weeks rather than the one week originally announced. Since audiences in New York desired the new dramas represented by Ibsen, Odell emphasizes the significance of Ada's success in this sentimental comedy written in 1832, calling it a "triumphant 'tour de force.'"

After a revival of her Rosalind, Ada appeared in two more new roles on January 3. As Mockworld in Clo Graves' "one-act study of medieval life," The Knave, she donned breeches of a vagabond who saves a girl from the clutches of a tyrant. When the girl takes a liking to him, he sacrifices his happiness by matching her up with a young man of her own class who loves her. The audience's enjoyment of this curtain-raiser derived from Ada's delicate interpretation of the main character. Daly featured Ada's versatility by following the breeches role with her portrayal of Letitia Hardy in Hannah Cowley's The Belle's Stratagem. A young woman who wishes to marry for love, Letitia plays the awkward country rustic to alienate her
betrothed; she then masks and disguises herself, fascinating him while
winning his love.  

Cut from five to three acts, the play benefitted from the condensation and Ada's "abundance of graces." Although she earned good reviews in the two new roles, the run ended on January 16, after which she revived her Lady Teazle, Maid Marian, and Katherine before closing the season with a new Shakespearean role.

Presenting Viola from *Twelfth Night* for the first time on February 21, Ada thrilled her New York audience. Not often acted at that time, Shakespeare's comic masterpiece and Daly's leading lady in breeches clearly triumphed again. Although Ada masqueraded as a male in a similar way in the role of Rosalind, her Viola imparted more emotional depth and sincerity, according to the *Morning Advertiser*:

There was a depth of sentiment revealed in Viola's pensive moods that made the embodiment as tender as Miss Rehan's Rosalind is gleesome and ardent in her animal spirits and tone. There was too, a rich humor that never wholly concealed the pensiveness of her thought, and yet always captivated the audience. She was regal, yet never doffed entirely the manner of the page, and her carriage had more truthfulness than as the merry Rosalind frisking in man's attire. She has rarely read Shakespeare's verse with better effect than last night.

Ada portrayed Viola "full of health and spirits of buoyant vitality, [yet also] of profound feeling and joyous temperment." So well did she individualize Viola that her performance prompted *The New York Times* to report, "It seemed for the time being that Ada Rehan was born to be Viola and only Viola." While Odell admitted that she triumphed in the role "to all accounts," he found her portrayal "lacking in simplicity." J. Ranken Towse agreed with Odell, declaring Viola "outside the range of Ada Rehan, except in those phases of it denoted in the comic vein." Yet other highly esteemed critics
of the time heaped "enthusiastic praise" on her.\textsuperscript{315}

By the end of the season on April 8, Ada had added six new roles to her repertoire, and repeated five of her established characterizations in eleven different plays for a total of two hundred and thirty-six performances. Although she began the season in two new rather unimpressive roles, she dazzled the critics and public alike when she enacted her third new role of the season in \textit{The Hunchback}. Her versatility emerged in the different roles she created this season and her final portrayal of a "buoyant" yet "tender" and "joyous" yet "pensive" Viola. Ada's success without Drew demonstrated her supremacy in the company and her importance to its success.

With the London theatre not scheduled to open until the first week in June,\textsuperscript{316} Ada and the rest of the company traveled to Boston to begin a short spring tour immediately. She spent two weeks each in Boston and Philadelphia, one week in Washington, D. C., and three weeks in Chicago, where she repeated Miss Million, Viola, Letitia Hardy, Phronie, Aprilla Dymond, and Baroness Vera.\textsuperscript{317} Daly and his wife left for England on May 6 to supervise the completion of the London theatre, while Ada remained in America to finish the tour.\textsuperscript{318} She was in Chicago when the Montana exhibit at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 unveiled their statue of Justice; and she reportedly attended the ceremony, quietly slipping in among the spectators unknown to anyone.\textsuperscript{319}

Sailing from New York on June 3,\textsuperscript{320} Ada arrived in England on June 11. Because the opening of the theatre was delayed and in order to "escape the festivities of the London season," she proceeded to a favorite resort on the Sussex coast after settling herself in
London. At the same time, the New York Herald reported that she would star when she returned from London, something she had wanted to do since a nameless manager had offered to star her.

Daly's Theatre on Cranbourne Street in Leicester Square, London, finally opened to a full and distinguished house of spectators on June 27, 1893. Overwhelmed by the enthusiastic welcome accorded her that lasted two or three minutes, Ada nervously recited Clement Scott's poem, "A Song of Union," written in honor of the new theatre. Immediately following the poem, a chorus sang the British National Anthem and then the "Star's Spangled Banner." Much to the delight of everyone in attendance, Ada presented her Katherine from The Taming of the Shrew to celebrate the gala occasion. Critics again raved about her portrayal, calling it "one of the best Shakespearean portraits of the day," a Shrew of "infinite variety," whom "time [could] not stale," and the measure by which the present generation would judge the Katherines to come. Reviews report she had added attention to detail to her creation, seeking to impress by a carefully studied portrayal rather than by personal fascination alone. Although "upon Miss Rehan's rendering the highest praise [had] been lavished, yet not a syllable [had] been said in excess of its merits." The Penny Illustrated reviewer had seen "scores" of actresses portray Katherine "but never with such brilliancy and truth to nature." No other actress had conveyed the idea that Katherine's arrogance, anger, and scorn did not result from her nature but sprang from her disgust with the artificial manner of her sex and the men who were supposed to court them as well as the rules governing the whole procedure laid down by her father. In addition with her beautiful, musical voice...
of her caustic lines [rang] like sweet-toned bells. Her eyes [flashed] fire—her looks were daggers." What this critic once considered a mechanical play, Ada's genius had turned into a dramatic masterpiece, prompting him to say: "This is the shrew that Shakespeare drew." And according to the critic of The Theatre, Clement Scott, people went to see Katherine's "splendid battle for mastery;" it was "the undaunted fighter in her that they [loved]." It reconciled them "to the silly secondary plot, the repellent view that a wife should live in slavish subjection to her husband." Ada inspired William Archer to write a two-page article in The Sketch titled, "Miss Ada Rehan: An Appreciation," in which he sang her praises while pinpointing the superior quality of her acting that lifted even the trivial German farces out of the realm of the ordinary. Poetry raised her acting to the highest artistic level and enabled her to give rare, delicate, and memorable performances. With her eyes and facial features she could express every conceivable emotion; she moved her body and gestured so well that even the extravagant was graceful; and she possessed a unique voice that was less artificial and more various than Sarah Bernhardt's. With a great range, it was mellow and flowed with pure beauty. "There [was] something characteristically Irish in Miss Rehan's voice." But "above all, Miss Rehan [was] one of the very few consummate artists in diction on the English-speaking stage." She could infuse "light and shade, variety and vitality" into her speeches and had a perfect "ear for verse," according to Archer. Katherine's great speech, "'Fie, fie!, unknit that threatening, unkind brow,'" [was] the most exquisite piece of verbal music [he] ever heard."
Ada portrayed Julia in the *The Hunchback* beginning July 11. None of the critics liked the play, although most praised her Julia. The following day she received the sad news that her old friend, Georgie Drew Barrymore, died suddenly. John Drew sent W. Graham Robertson to her hotel to tell her before she read of it in the paper. The exchange between the actress and Robertson, as he recalled it, reveals a curious side of Ada's personality. Robertson chatted with her awhile before breaking the news, during which time they both heard a strange sound, "rather like the snapping of a violin string." Ada asked him if he had heard it and he nodded. Then she asked who had died, and told him he had come to deliver the news. After he informed her of Georgie's death, she said she knew it was an old friend because she had only "heard that sound several times" but it was always "followed by the news of an old friend's death." It had become a sign for her.

On July 18, Ada presented her last role of the short summer season in London when she portrayed Aprilla Dymond in *Love in Tandem*. When the original French play, *La Vie à Deux*, had been at the Odeon, featuring Mdme. Réjane, the famous French comedienne of the day, several British critics had seen it. The inevitable comparisons between the two artists' performances resulted in favorable reviews for Ada. The *Pall Mall Gazette* judged her portrayal to be more distinct and charming than Réjane's. Furthermore, Ada exhibited a deeper and richer humor than her sister-actress as well as an ability "to strike strong notes of passion and full notes of pathos" even in the funniest scenes. Critics who had not witnessed Réjane's performances also praised Ada's acting, but most of them disliked the play and judged the role unworthy of her abilities. The curtain rang down on Aprilla
Ada retreated to the Cumberland and Westmoreland Lakes for a brief holiday. She also traveled to Paris with the Dalys for ten days during the beginning of September, after which she returned to her bungalow in Cumberland. "Lord and Lady Muncaster, with whom she [was] an especial favorite, built a bungalow for her on their estate in Cumberland, just below their castle walls." Located on the Irish Coast of England, the estate and Ada's home faced a beach that stretched out for many miles, affording her any privacy she might desire.

1893-94

When Ada returned to London, she repeated her Phronie in Dollars and Sense on September 19 to begin the 1893-94 London season at Daly's Theatre on September 19. She received a much warmer critical response in the role than she had when she first presented it to Londoners nine years earlier; but most reviewers judged her talent wasted in a bad play and an insignificant part. However, one commentator preferred "to see Miss Rehan in anything than not to see Miss Rehan at all." Everyone anxiously awaited Ada's Maid Marian in The Foresters and The London Daily Chronicle conceded that Phronie would serve while the actress prepared for the next production. When Maid Marian appeared on October 4, the audience welcomed her with profuse applause. Although the majority of critics showered her with praise, they found the play undramatic. But even the one critic who disliked her singing and the other who found her "not so careful either of metre or emphasis as she ought to be," complimented her character.
development. But audiences stayed away from subsequent performances.  

In an attempt to minimize his losses, Daly began running The Last Word alternately with The Foresters the following week on October 13. Ada "enthralled" her public again with her "exquisite acting" of Baroness Vera. As if trying to out-do each other, critic after critic praised her "varied talents," humor and pathos, as well as her rich, flexible, velvety, and caressing voice. "No living actress could give equal effect," according to the The Daily News. As a woman of spirit and energy in the character of Baroness Vera, she "surpassed herself." One reviewer related the following graphic description of her method:

She took the stage and conquered it. . . . Those splendid sweeps and clever half-turns . . . unexpectedly brought her face to face with her aggressor. . . . We saw here the technique of acting as it is seldom seen in these drawing-room days of pretty lifelessness. And Miss Ada Rehan was right, if acting is to be acting and the acting, as it never fails to do, woke to real enthusiasm an audience just prepared to be sent to sleep in the usual inanimate and polite fashion.

On October 25 she presented her first new role of the season, Hettie Featherston, in Daly's adaptation from the German of Blumenthal and Kadelburg, The Orient Express. As Mrs. Featherston, she portrayed a wife who believes her husband has betrayed her. Although several papers printed positive reviews, the general critical community expressed disappointment in the play and the role Ada played in it. The Pall Mall Gazette clearly expressed the majority opinion:

Here we have the ablest English-speaking actress now known to us wasting her time and disappointing the
public by dissipating her energies, her variety, and her rare humour in parts like her part last night—the part of a common-place jealous woman, whose jealousy is not even emphatic enough to allow the stormy emotions of a Katherine and whose feelings and actions would be absolutely uninteresting if they were not for the moment assumed by Miss Rehan. It is a pity, and more than a pity, to see an actress who has earned the right to be called a great actress squandering her intelligence and her charm upon a colourless character in a minor German farce.

The English press added another refrain to the chorus of critics who disapproved of Daly's choice of plays as unworthy of a great artist's talents.

The reception of Ada's next role, Lady Teazle, in Sheridan's School for Scandal on November 13 was mixed. The Times paid her the tribute of calling her portrayal a triumph in the tradition of Mrs. Jordan and Madam Vestris. As a country girl carried away by her first experience of fashionable life, The Dramatic Review frowned on her "eccentric skips and hops," finding them unsuitable for Lady Teazle. Nevertheless, the play ran for more than a month and when she portrayed Peggy Thrift the first week in January, she won unanimous approval of another country girl. Likewise, an enthusiastic as well as excited audience greeted Ada's Viola on January 8. Adopting a more subdued demeanor for Viola than Rosalind, she focused on "womanly tenderness and delicacy," as well as "maidenly devotion and passion." And the conflicting emotions showed in her face and voice, her "'voice of gold,'" which prompted The Times to declare her "true line" to be Shakespearean comedy in which she stood alone. Even compared to Ellen Terry her Viola was as near the ideal as possible partially because she was more at ease in the male attire than Terry. Her merriment, too, was more evident "and the serious
features of the character ... more strongly accentuated." As one spectator exclaimed: "she flits through the play like a bird against the summer sky." As far as the British were concerned, Ada's Viola held a "high rank among all Shakespearean heroines of the latter part of the nineteenth century."

The one complaint a few critics noted was slowness of delivery, which may indicate a possible indulgence on Ada's part to show off her lovely voice. Ada's exaggeration of her pauses and lengthening out of her vowel sounds, "caressingly, beautifully," gave "a peculiar, dreamy, languorous charm to many passages of her Viola;" a good effect that became an error "when carried to excess." She also had a tendency to omit words and letters at times such as saying I'm for I am and discarding the he in the sentence: "'My brother, he is in Elysium.'" Yet "her diction [was] admirable" and next to her attributes, "these were] trifling defects." She seems to have taken heed of such remarks because by January 24 the Western News reported that she was "not so tediously deliberate" as she had been on opening night. Because she was the hit of the season, playgoers had to purchase tickets a month in advance to insure a seat. By the middle of February, she still drew full houses with the Prince and Princess of Wales, as well as the Princesses Maud and Victoria, among her audiences. By April 19, her hundreth portrayal of Viola, she had inspired no less than three poems.

The season culminated in eight performances of her newest highly acclaimed role, Rosalind beginning April 30. They brought "the very wildest cheers of her London audiences and the enthusiasm of her London critics."
The London season confirmed Ada's international success. Like their American cousins the British came to see Ada, but they were less willing to tolerate her in inferior roles. Her one new role of the season, Hettie Featherston, they dismissed as insignificant and common. The changing tastes in drama represented by the depiction of women like Ibsen's Nora, partially accounted for the public's rejection of portraits like Phronie. For although comic characters such as Phronie seemed to rebel against the subjection of women in society, they invariably reinforced it by acknowledging the error of their ways and insuring that they would never be taken seriously. The famous critic, Clement Scott, believed the idea that women subject themselves to their husbands to be a repellent view as well as a weakness in the plot of *The Taming of the Shrew*. And only Katherine's rebellion as acted by Ada reconciled the audience to this dramatic vision. In fact, Daly had made a significant change in the text of his adaptation:

To bring out Ada Rehan's best talent—a certain archness—Daly inserted for her, following Petruchio's "That she shall still be curst in company," the lines, "A plague upon such impudence! O, for revenge! I'll marry him—but I will tame him!" And thus for the moment, the whole play was metamorphosed into the taming by the shrew.

This change neutralized Katherine's final surrender and perhaps made it questionable at most, and therefore more acceptable to some.

Playwright Edgar Fawcett, who had known Ada for some twenty years, described her off the stage as "the essence of simplicity and self-effacement." In conversation she was bright and refined, but did not display the sparkle and magnetic quality characteristic of her performances. Yet when meeting her in private, anyone who did not know her identity would not "have dreamed she was fitted to adorn [the
stage]." Even Ada admitted the applause and enthusiasm of the audience enabled her to perform at her best.

With the success such highly acclaimed London performances as Rosalind and Viola brought, it is not surprising that "she had received an offer from [Ernst Von] Possart to appear with him at his theatre in Munich, another from [Oskar] Blumenthal [Germany], a third from Sarah Bernhardt, and still another from a syndicate in London to manage and head a company there." But she declined all offers.

Instead she accompanied the Dalys on a long holiday tour of Italy and Spain, and then returned to England in the middle of July. Mrs. Catherine Whitin, one of Ada's few close friends, joined the trio in their European sojourn and commissioned John Singer Sargent to do a portrait of Ada in 1894. Ada rested "at her seaside residence—a cozy and lonely retreat, near the little town of Drigg, in Cumberland—just at the entrance of the lakes region," until she sailed to New York with the Dalys on August 4.
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391 The following poem appears in an unidentified newspaper clipping titled "Moonshine," 27 Jan. 1894, DTS 34.
Miss Ada Rehan as "Viola"
An old play-goer, witnessing such art,
Delightedly recalls the palmy days,
And sadly hears the actress must depart,
Returning home crowned with the highest praise.
Events must change, but we have still a hope
Her art, so exquisite, will soon be seen
Again to charm us by its varied scope.
Noble in tragedy, in humour keen.

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To Miss Ada Rehan as Viola
Happy the world, when pages, such as she,
Set little feet upon Illyria's shore
And from Orsino to Olivia bore
Hot notes of love. What visionary he
E'er made of words so rare a melody
As love-lorn Viola, or, haply, wore
Habit of man with freer grace before--
From jewell'd cap to garter at the knee?
We cry no marvel that her glorious voice
Waken'd no love, in fair Olivia's ear,
Far absent Duke;—her sweet proximity
Gave eye no fairer, heart no other choice.
And we, who 'neath thy player's garland peer,
See thee in Viola and her in thee.


Ada Rehan
I
Ada the incomparable: The queen
Whose presence dominates the mimic scene,
With art so rare and perfect of its kind
That it appeals alike to heart and mind.

II
An actress of a by gone century.
The fair Peg Woffington again we see:
Touching with subtle power every heart.
Thus reaching to the highest plane of art.
392 The New York Tribune 8 May 1894, DTS 34.


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ADA REHAN: AMERICAN ACTRESS
(1857-1916)
Volume II

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
The Department of Speech Communication,
Theatre, and Communication Disorders

by
Aileen Hendricks-Wenck
B. A., Texas A&M University, 1971
M. A., Texas A&M University, 1974
May 1988
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Upon arriving in New York on August 11 Ada referred the throng of reporters to Daly and quickly absented herself, leaving Daly to announce what was to be a momentous turn in her career. She drove directly home where she refused all visitors, settled herself in, and rested for a few days before leaving for the country to visit friends. At the docks Daly announced the division of his actors into two road companies, one of which would include James Lewis and Mrs. Gilbert. Ada would head the other segment and, now, she would debut as a star on tour before opening the season in New York. Daly was finally billing her as a star, a change in his company policy and her place in the company. It also meant she would tour more, giving the entire country the opportunity to see her more frequently.

Initiating the star tour with a two-week run in Boston on September 29, Ada next played in Philadelphia for two weeks, Washington, D. C. for one week, Louisville, Kentucky for one week, Chicago for two weeks, and St. Louis for one week. Baroness Vera, Lady Teazle, Viola, Annis Austin, Rosalind, and Katherine comprised her repertoire. Along with unrestrained praise for her acting, the Boston Journal noted that she had already been a star for at least a decade as far as the public was concerned.

At the end of Ada's first week of "star" performances in Boston, Daly sent her the following letter of congratulation, expressing his pride and happiness at her success:
Daly's Theatre,
New York, Sept. 29, 1894

My dear Ada

On the back page of this letter I am sending you a brief summary or statement of your first weeks business as "A Star". I know that the contemplation of these very satisfactory figures cannot make you any happier nor any prouder than when you received your first most modest salary at my hands ($35.) in the opening week of the season of Daly's Theatre. But it is worth preserving as a token of the just Recompense [sic] which really does come at rare intervals, in this world of Frequent [sic] Inequalities [sic]; and it may console you many an hour when you struggled against discouragement, sickness, and heartache, and conscientiously did your duty with all your heart and soul proving yourself the most faithful, loyal, and unselfish Helper that man or manager ever had.

With all my heart I congratulate you on this glorious outcome of my plans for you; and of this realization of a dream I have long cherished about your artistic career, and its just & proper culminatory mid-life. And I assure you I am more proud of your present success than of any other event in my 25 years of Managerial life towards which I may have personally helped. God bless and prosper you - ever & ever.

Sincerely
Augustin Daly.

Daly's genuine affection for Ada clearly emerges in his praise of her loyalty, while his accounting of the week's business reveals Ada to be a full partner in the venture. The figures show Ada and Daly both earning a substantial profit. After deducting all expenses, Daly records a net gain of $4,926.32, half of which he designates "your share." Her $2,463.16 salary for the week provides a measure of her popularity and earnings for the entire nine-week tour.

Noticing Ada's improvement since her last American tour, critics commented that her art had "deepened and mellowed with time," and her Vera had grown "freer and more varied than before. It [had] gained in
finish and there [was] a more skillful distribution of light and shade throughout the performance."^7 Lady Teazle no longer "betrayed certain touches of artificiality; she now [showed] only graceful ease and artistic fullness."^8 Ada also added to her Viola a "beautiful reserve and delicacy of style which [were] almost beyond praise."^9 Her Rosalind fully displayed "the underlying lightheartedness of the character."^10 The Herald now ranked her with "actresses already immortal," and believed that "among living women [she had] a place in the affection of her generation rivalled only by Ellen Terry or Sarah Bernhardt."^11

Ada's more refined Katherine drew criticism which reflected one of the prevailing views of women of the period. Infusing more dignity into her portrayal, she earned the censure of H. A. Clapp of the Boston Advertiser. He preferred the "spoiled, petulant, irritable and very hot tempered naughty girl"^12 who required "a gentle corporal punishment and continuous--early bed times"^13 to convince her to mend her ways. Clapp believed the audience's delight in the play indicated society's rejection of "the confident suffragist" assumption that female submission was medieval or that "the equality of the sexes" was imminent.^14 On the other hand, the British critic, Clement Scott thought Katherine's strength attracted people; and they only tolerated "the silly secondary plot, the repellent view that a wife should live in slavish subjection to her husband."^15 The star could not please both critics, nor could she please all members of her audience. In spite of Clapp's criticism the representation of a dignified Katherine drew considerable praise from the other critics and one of the largest audiences ever in the history of the Hollis Street Theatre.\(^1^6\) The
Boston Herald considered her performance an historic occasion:

If Miss Rehan had done nothing else, this one impersonation would have given her a lasting fame and an honorable rank in the limited list of those who have won a prominent place in the history of the stage.

In dividing his company into two units Daly seems to have assigned Ada to the weaker half since several critics noted the poor support the star received. Nevertheless, the public poured into the theatre and one Philadelphia critic declared Ada "the greatest English-speaking actress of to-day in comedy roles." During her two-week stay in Boston she set a new record for the Hollis Street Theatre by drawing receipts totaling twenty-seven thousand dollars; "And in nine of the sixteen performances the orchestra was forced under the stage in order to give its seats to the public. It [was] said also that at the final matinee more than 500 women paid for standing room." An editorial in the Philadelphia Inquirer lamented the passing of great stars and artists of the first rank such as Edwin Booth, but it rejoiced "that out of this wilderness of mediocrity Miss Ada Rehan [shone] forth as a star of real magnitude." The American stage had no woman who could compare to her "and the present season was one of the most important of the decade."

Although Julia Marlowe was not performing in Philadelphia at the same time during the preseason tour, critics' comparisons of Ada's Viola to Marlowe's characterization provide additional insights into Ada's portrayal. While Ada exhibited more vigor and strength than the younger actress, she lost just a little sweetness. Julia Marlowe's portrayal was described as a female impersonating a male with her "girlish charm." Her portrayal contrasted sharply with Ada's Viola who
was at ease in male garb and seemingly enjoyed "its freedom."
Yet Marlowe's youth with its "ingenuousness" gave her an advantage, but Ada's "finished bearing" as well as her "absolutely clear rendering of her lines" pleased her audience. The ideal Viola, in one reviewer's opinion, would be a combination of Julia Marlowe's portrayal and Ada's creation. But most critics agreed that Ada's Viola was "probably what Shakespeare pictured" when he created his character.

1894-95

After almost two months on the road, Ada opened the 1894-95 season in New York with her Viola on November 27, 1894. Prolonged applause greeted her homecoming. Her "more feminine" impersonation of Viola prompted the opinion that she had benefitted from the long run in England as well as the advice of London critics. She also repeated her Annis Austin and Katherine before presenting her first new role of the season, Justin Huntly McCarthy's adaptation of Judith Gautier's Heart of Ruby, on January 15. As the Voice of the Poet, she merely narrated the Japanese melodrama, which failed to draw an audience, forcing its closure by the end of the week. Poor health may have accounted for what one reporter described as "a monotonous sing-song way" of reading her lines, and the substitution of a "less expert actress" for Ada in the leading role at the last minute. She also repeated her Val Osprey, as well as her Tilburnia, and presented her Hettie Featherston in The Orient Express to the New York audience for the first time on January 31. Audience and critics approved of her Tilburnia and Hettie, but the Evening Sun agreed with British critics that Ada had outgrown such roles. She was "too good an artist to have
her efforts thrown away on such poor farcical stuff." And the critical American public's willingness to see so much genius wasted on farce amazed British critic Justin Huntly McCarthy. In his opinion, Ada did for the English speaking race what Sarah Bernhardt and Eleanora Duse did for their respective countries.

"The less expert actress," Maxine Elliot, who portrayed the heroine, Omaya, in *Heart of Ruby*, joined the company after the New Year of 1895. She found Ada warm and friendly without any pretensions to superiority or "leading-lady airs." Ada was "to be feared only for the contagion of her wicked humor, and in the *Heart of Ruby* it was easy to be overcome by giggles." She, too, described Ada as "a shy woman with no interest in social life, happy to live as a recluse in her nonworking hours." Elliot related an incident which reflected the compromising relationship of Ada and her manager. Daly had become fond of a little girl, Mercedes de Acosta, whom he had first seen in church, and soon gained permission to take her for rides in Central Park. However, when Madame de Acosta discovered that Ada accompanied them, she forbade the excursions, believing as the rest of society did "that this was an illicit affair and acted accordingly."

Other incidents mentioned in the press added to the evidence of Daly's more-than-professional interest in his star and supported the contention that Daly protected Ada "personally like a tiger." During her first starring tour an expensive hotel in St. Louis refused to allow her brindle bull pup in her suite of rooms. Daly, who was escorting her, refused the elegant rooms, and moved to another hotel which permitted her dog to stay with her. Although Daly treated Ada in the same autocratic manner as he did all members of his company,
"she was the only one who ever succeeded" in forcing "star status," and the appropriate salary out of him without being pushed out herself. "She had become his theatre, an embodiment of a single-minded passion for his ideas of management," according to Maxine's niece.

Ada had become such a public figure that Olive Muir, a nineteen-year-old Brooklyn woman, wrote and had published a three-hundred-page novel, *Thy Name Is Woman*, with the star as the heroine. With unmistakable similarities to Ada's career the book depicts Aileen Crohan, who becomes Kathleen Rohan, working her way to leading actress at Daniel's Theatre. She even portrays Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew*. While it did not receive a good review, it is not known what Ada thought of the book.

On February 25 Ada introduced another Shakespearean heroine to her repertoire, Julia in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. As the deserted sweetheart of a disloyal young man, Ada once again disguised herself as a page, Sebastian, in order to be close to her beloved Proteus. Like Viola, Julia intercedes on behalf of the man she loves for another. Ada's vibrant Julia, brimming with charm, drew praise: "Julia was now the impulsive, forward maiden and anon the gentle, tender, sympathetic woman." Her graceful Julia joined her other successful Shakespearean heroines although some considered it "a slight role for an actress of Miss Rehan's rare powers." The *Herald* praised her performance but suggested that "the spasmodic gasp which [accompanied] Miss Rehan's respiration might with advantage be toned down." The *Commercial Advertiser*, on the other hand, commented that "her trick of catching the breath . . . and her entire method of enunciation," suited
Julia. Apparently she tried to conquer this mannerism, however, because three weeks later The Boston Transcript reported that she purred little and gasped still less. "Throughout she [showed] unwanted self-repression, and yet everywhere she [caught] the spirit of the part." Nym Crinkle (A. C. Wheeler) of The World compared Ellen Terry and Ada Rehan, warning them of the need to adapt to the changing tastes of the public. Both actresses were "mere reflections of the system.... No one ever saw them break away from the masculine domination with a conviction, an impulse, an inspiration or a desire for freedom." Ellen Terry's function on the stage was to focus on Henry Irving and enhance him. According to Wheeler, "Both actresses [represented] a code established by a man," and what the theatre audience wanted on stage was "a woman who represented woman in her own intuitions and feelings and her full liberty of spiritual apprehension." Neither actress seems to have heeded his advice.

When Ada repeated her Nancy Brasher on March 19, the critics approved. But the following day the Tribune announced that due to demand Two Gentlemen of Verona would be replayed several times. And the following week Ada took a brief vacation while Daly presented A Bundle of Lies. Then on April 5 she portrayed a new role, Juliana, in John Tobin's The Honeymoon. Based somewhat on The Taming of the Shrew and Fletcher's Rule a Wife and Have a Wife, Tobin's play presented characters similar to Shakespeare's personages. Ada's Katherine had "furnished a standard by which it was inevitable that her personation of Juliana would be tried." Lacking the depth of Katherine, Juliana exhibited more "detailed forwardness and [showed] an
homelier devotion in her hour of submission." Ada succeeded in winning the audiences partially through the addition of her performing a Spanish dance. She finally concluded the season on April 20 with another Shakespearean character, Helena. To one reviewer she appeared to need a very long rest. Although the Herald mentioned the "eradicable" singsong of her speech, the Sunday News said she had "never done better" and The World found Ada "full of beauty, authority, grace and charm.

Of the eleven roles that Ada enacted during the season, three were new and one of these was simply narration in verse. The other two roles bore striking similarities to three of her best Shakespearean women, Rosalind, Viola, and Katherine. Shakespeare's Julia bears characteristics of Viola and Rosalind but lacks their vitality and strength; however, Ada enlivened the lovelorn maiden as well as The Two Gentlemen of Verona turning a seldom performed play into a hit. Although the season had begun almost two months later than usual she performed one hundred and sixty-six times.

At thirty-eight years of age and at the height of her powers, Ada could finally enjoy the only star billing within the company. At the same time, however, twenty years of grueling schedules had begun to detract from her appearance.

Having become one of the most praised and admired actresses of her generation did not eliminate criticism. Critics noted her lapses into a "sing-song pattern of delivery" and her manner of "gasping spasmodically." And complaints about her repertoire continued. Her fame now brought with it a need to surpass herself in order to maintain it. But Daly refused to feature her in roles he deemed unfit. On
closing night, he expressed his frustration in finding plays with clean and worthy themes suited to old and young alike, plays fit for a family theatre that did not exploit the new woman and the woman with a past as European playwrights were doing. However, H. C. Wheeler of The World seems to have been referring to the very plays that Daly rejected when the critic said that people wanted to see real women on the stage, not those created by a male dominated system out of which Ada's characters grew. Clearly, adding to her repertoire had become a serious concern for her.

Two days later Ada began her spring eastern tour, opening in Washington, D. C., after which she played a week each in Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Buffalo, presenting the same roles she had just enacted for her New York audience. Having her brother, Arthur Rehan, manage the tour must have been an added dividend for her since she did not often have the time to spend with her family.

Ada closed in Buffalo on June 6, and sailed for England six days later. She opened in London at Daly's Theatre on June 25 as Val Osprey. Her eighth season in the British capital, she was still the charming Cousin Val despite her "more opulent" contours; George Bernard Shaw credited her with saving the play from "utter impossibility" and "hopeless failure." She repeated "her old feat in this play of seizing the author's silly idea, sillily expressed, of a superlatively fascinating woman, and substituting for it her own idea, beautifully expressed." Shaw believed her style was growing nobler and moving away "from the skittish hoyden of Mr. Daly's dramatic imagination."
The rest of the season in London consisted of only three more plays and the entire season lasted but five weeks. Ada presented her Julia and Helena for the first time and repeated her Nancy Brasher for only two days, ending the season on July 31. Although Shaw and other London critics in general showered her with praise, Archer disagreed. He criticized a "peculiar and seductive staginess" in her Julia. She baffled "the ear with inarticulate interjections," and imperfect verse phrasing. But he acknowledged that she crooned "her verses very beautifully when she presented her noble and memorable Helena."

The week before Ada arrived in London, Shaw publicly warned Sarah Bernhardt that Ada would "expose the musical emptiness of Madame Bernhardt's habit of monotonously chanting sentences on one note." He thought Daly's production of A Midsummer Night's Dream lapsed "into mild tedium" when Ada was not on the stage. But when the star entered upon the scene the play asserted its full charm:

Her treatment of Shakespearean verse is delightful after the mechanical intoning of Sarah Bernhardt. She gives us beauty of tone, grace of measure, delicacy of articulation: in short, all the technical qualities of verse music, along with the rich feeling and fine intelligence without which those technical qualities would soon become monotonous. When she is at her best, the music melts in the caress of the emotion it expresses, and thus completes the conditions necessary for obtaining Shakespear's effects in Shakespear's way.

While Shaw obviously admired Ada, recent developments in her style disturbed the critic. He compared her to Barry Sullivan, an actor who did not adapt his acting style to his passing years and the changing times. Unless Ada took to playing women's roles "instead of such comparatively childish stuff as Julia or even Helena, and unless she" joined "the contemporary movement by identifying herself with
characteristically modern parts of the Magda [Magda] or Nora [A Doll's House] type," she might find herself left behind by people of less talent. Shaw believed that Ada could force Daly to cast her as Imogen in Shakespeare's Cymbeline rather than Julia or Valentine Osprey. In five years he feared she would be "more rhetorical and less real." According to Shaw the only way to remain young was to adjust to the changing times:

There is only one way to defy time; and that is to have young ideas which may always be trusted to find youthful and vivid expression. I am afraid this means avoiding the company of Mr. Daly; but it is useless to blink the fact that unless a modern actress can and will force her manager, in spite of his manly prejudices, to produce plays with real women's parts in them, she had better, at all hazards, make shift to manage for herself. With Grandfather Daly to choose her plays for her, there is no future for Ada Rehan.

Heeding Shaw's advice to portray Ibsen's women may have made her a critical success with one faction of her audience at this time; but she may have also alienated another portion of the public. Perhaps the one thing that Shaw suggested which Ada was unable or unwilling to do was to manage without Daly.

During the same London season, the beautiful young Maxine Elliot, who had joined the company early in 1895, won the hearts of Londoners whose newspapers and magazines filled their columns with praise for the actress. Diane Forbes-Robertson believed both Ada and Daly enjoyed her success, assuring "Maxine that her personal success did the company good as a whole." At the closing of the season in London, Ada must have welcomed the opportunity for rest at her bungalow. The Dalys stayed with her at the seaside residence, Sandhills, during the first three weeks of August,
then returned to London leaving Ada to the solitude of the sea. Ada's holiday must have benefitted her, for she looked better to reporters when she arrived in New York on September 21 than she had when she went abroad a few months earlier. Disembarking from the steamship Paris with the Dalys, her dog, and two maids, she declined to be interviewed as usual; the same evening she departed for Chicago to begin her fall tour before opening the season in New York.

Unlike the previous year, the regular company, which included James Lewis and Mrs. Gilbert, supported Ada on her starring tour. Beginning with two weeks in Chicago, they continued east to Washington, D. C., Philadelphia, Boston, Montreal, Toronto, and Brooklyn. In addition to her Shakespearean heroines Ada enacted Lady Teazle and Val Osprey. This, Ada's first visit to Canada, proved a disappointment because of poor business and "miserable" lodgings.

1895-96

On November 26 when she opened the 1895-96 season in New York with her Lady Teazle, "the usual Daly contingent" was "out in full force" as well as a full house to greet her. On December 10 she created the new role of Leo in Daly's adaptation from the German, The Transit of Leo. As a rich young woman who argues with her penniless bridegroom over the suitability of the word "obey" in the marriage service on their wedding night, Ada portrayed a vivacious, charming young woman like many others already in her repertoire. While most reviewers praised her "humorous powers" as well as her "strength in more exacting situations," The World doubted the role would add "to her laurels;" and The Herald judged her too old for the part of a young
bride but admitted that she did achieve some success. The most negative report came from *The Sunday Mercury*, which claimed that "it was the general comment of all about the house that her day was declining." The Press' interpretation of the plot, however, contrasted with other critics' understanding of the play. While his colleagues saw Leo as a spoiled child and her bridegroom as the injured party, the Press critic characterized him as "a cad, pure and simple," claiming that the audience's sympathies lay entirely with the bride. Ada achieved "a triumph of art" in the confusing and illogical series of incidents. But whatever the actual point of view of the production, it failed to draw an audience and Daly replaced it with *Twelfth Night* on December 20, while rehearsing Ada in a new play.

On January 7 Ada presented her second new role of the season, Mary Foster, in Sydney Rosenfeld's adaptation of Blumenthal and Kadelburg's, *The Two Escutcheons*. Ada portrayed a young married woman whose father, a successful meat packer from Chicago, clashes with her new father-in-law, a European aristocrat. Another of her "girl wife" roles, the character, Mary Foster, afforded Ada little opportunity to distinguish herself. The adaptor, Rosenfeld, intended the role of the lively widow, who chaperoned the young girl, for Ada. "But both Miss Rehan and Mr. Daly had decided that the girl was 'more in the plot.'" Rosenfeld judged the star "too mature for the young girl." At least three critics agreed with the playwright, suggesting that the Widow Stevenson, portrayed by Maxine Elliot, would have been more appropriate for Ada. The Recorder declared Elliot "flaccid and insincere" in the role and the Boston Herald considered her "relegated to second place [in skill] by Miss Rehan." Rather
than switching the women in their roles, Daly replaced the play with an adaptation from Von Schonthan, *The Countess Gucki* featuring Ada in the title role, after only three weeks. Maxine Elliot and Frank Worthing responded by simultaneously submitting their resignations and leaving the Daly company on January 27, 1896.116 Worthing had joined the company about the same time as Maxine Elliot. Both performers considered themselves successful in the play and were angry to be sacrificed for Ada's sake. "Sydney Rosenfeld was also incensed, feeling his play had not been given a fair run."117 However, when Rosenfeld produced the play himself a month later with Maxine Elliot in the same role, it failed as did Rosenfeld's *A House of Cards* in which the actress and Worthing both next appeared.118 *The Two Escutcheons* may have been a success under Daly precisely because Ada's fans willingly endured seeing her in a minor role in lieu of not seeing her at all.

When Ada debuted as Countess Gucki on January 28, 1896, she delighted her public and critics alike. Supposedly written especially for her, the role represented a twenty-six-year-old Russian widow pursued by a young Russian officer. Much to the satisfaction of critic Alan Dale, the star no longer attempted to portray a teenager.119 The Countess plays a game of cat and mouse with her rather impertinent suitor, using him as a foil for her banter and jest. She gradually succumbs to his charms and surrenders her heart.120 Ada portrayed the part with a charm "no other and younger actress could have" achieved,121 expressing a spontaneous gaiety and "honest womanly feeling."122 She was "dainty and delicious in an unaffected way."123 An undisputed success, the play proved so popular that Daly ran it
until the season closed on February 29.124

In spite of her success as the Countess two newspapers printed negative reviews using the terms "archaic" and "antiquated" to describe the play.125 Other critics enjoyed her creation but expressed disappointment at the lack of opportunity the role afforded for her talent.126 But Daly knew his audience; he "catered to a strict and respectable" public who wanted light comedy and farce.127 As a result Ada "twittered girlishly" in farces while her artistic achievements lay in her Shakespearean triumphs.128

Lasting only fourteen weeks, the 1895-96 season was the shortest one the Daly Company had played in their home theatre in New York. Ada played only one hundred and nine performances. Daly blamed "public apathy toward high class entertainments" and too many theatres as well as too many amusements in New York.129 That Ada initiated only three new roles for the entire season, and two of them failed, may also account for Daly's reaction. He was also finding it difficult for Ada to portray ingenues without incurring criticism. Her first two roles of the season partially failed because the characters were at least fifteen years younger than she. Even her successful new role of the season did not coincide with her real age, thirty-nine. Moreover, the characters and plays bore striking resemblances to each other as well as to many pieces already in her repertoire. She neither added anything new to her reputation nor did she make any new demands on her abilities. Instead she was continuing to portray women of personal charm and magnetism that men found attractive and women tried to emulate. Like some of the young actresses in the company, a group of young fans, dubbed "matinee girls" by the press, faithfully attended
Ada's performances, copying her mannerisms and behavior. Ada presented a romanticized "fantasy female" on stage to the public, while the secrecy surrounding her private life fulfilled their private fantasies as well. But, the romantic female with a magnetic personality that she projected was something Ada, nor any actress, could possibly sustain. Although her voice remained a "wonderful instrument," inspiring adoration among even distinguished members of the British Parliament, Ada was, nevertheless, showing her age. The difference in age between Ada and her characters prompted severe criticism. One supporter wanted "to rap [detractors] on the knuckles for dwelling so constantly on Miss Rehan's age and 'maturity'" since she was still able to embody the other qualities of the characters she portrayed almost to perfection.

Ada must have felt some disappointment at her shortest and least successful season since she had joined Daly's company. Probably referring to the first two comedies of the season in his farewell speech on closing night, Daly announced that he preferred the farces to go to other houses but that he would "continue to present the higher class of the drama."

Ada and the company left immediately for Pittsburgh to begin a spring tour which would be longer than usual and include exhausting "one night stands." After opening in Pittsburgh on March 2 for one week they performed for one night in Toledo and Columbus, Ohio; Louisville, Kentucky; Nashville and Memphis, Tennessee; and then traveled to New Orleans for one week. Heading back East she performed for two nights in Mobile and Atlanta; one night in Richmond and Norfolk; one week in Washington, D. C. and Philadelphia; two weeks in
Boston; and finally returned to New York where she spent one week beginning April 27. Ada gave only one performance in New York, resting before beginning a western tour. On May 4 she and the company on schedule resumed her tour in St. Louis, performing for one week and continuing on to Kansas City, Omaha, and San Francisco where she stayed three weeks. She also played in San Jose and Oakland before appearing in Chicago for three weeks on the return to New York. She alternated between performances of Countess Gucki, Mary Foster, Viola, Lady Teazle, Katherine, Baroness Vera, Letitia Hardy, Helena, and Annis Austin.  

Everywhere Ada appeared the audience responded enthusiastically. San Francisco's reception typified that of other cities. Although it was four years since she had appeared in San Francisco, the audience "listened enchanted to Ada Rehan's liquid tones and watched the fascinating play of expression that made her face more charming than the prettiest face on the stage."  

A tired and rushed comedienne barely managed to reach the steamship, St. Paul, on July 1 before it sailed for England. After a successful sixteen-week tour of constant performances, many "one night stands," and only about five free days in New York, Ada told reporters at the dock that she was looking forward eagerly to the sea voyage. The London season would last only six weeks after which she would "take a run over to Paris and then take a trip to a small place on the Irish coast which [she] discovered accidentally and [called her] home."  

There she would rest until her return to New York for the fall season.  

Because Daly's Theatre was occupied, Ada opened in London as
Countess Gucki at the Comedy Theatre on July 11, only three days after her arrival in England. By putting "spirit and sparkle" into everything she touched and adorned, she "conquered almost single-handed" as the Countess. Alan Dale of the New York Journal concluded that Ada was more popular in London than in New York. As fond of her as they were of Ellen Terry and a few other English actresses, the audience delighted in her performance. An English reviewer reassured her that unlike her New York followers, who were "fickle and forgetful," loving her only until someone younger and prettier came along, the British would support her for as long as she wished to act. William Archer conceded that she "scored a success with the emptiest play on record." The Countess Gucki belonged "to a known class—the class of Rehan-heroines." According to Archer, Daly presented a certain personality to an audience through Ada rather than a real woman, just as Sardou created women supposedly indistinguishable from Sarah Bernhardt. In Archer's view, Ada "Rehanised" "irresistibly" rather than acted in this role. Yet "few things [delighted him] more than Miss Rehan Rehanising, when (as in this case) there [was] no reason why she should do anything else." In other roles such as Katherine, Viola, and some modern characters she did "much more than merely Rehanise, and [proved] herself a great artist." As the gay and bright Countess Gucki she laughed and frolicked and languished exquisitely, triumphing in a manner "peculiar to herself."

Critics disliked Love on Crutches, which opened July 11, because it lacked "real scope" for Ada's "genius." For Archer the play mildly amused, but the "great comedienne" was not able to mask its
defects. He especially admired Ada's "haunting voice," which encompassed two or more strains to form an harmony. One was "thinly metallic, vibrant, almost sharp; the other (or others), soft, mellifluous, almost luscious. The image suggested to me is that of a silver zitherstring muffled in deep-piled irridescent velvet."  

At the close of the season in London on August 8, Ada remained in Great Britain relaxing and resting at her bungalow on the Cumberland coast even after Daly and the rest of the Company left for New York. In addition to studying her new roles for the fall season, she spent her vacation horseback riding, swimming, fishing, and walking.

Before returning to America Ada received word of James Lewis' death from a heart attack on September 9. Lewis' death awakened a fear in Daly that he might lose Ada, too. Joseph Daly reported that his brother truly worried about Ada's health. When Daly wrote to William Winter expressing his grief at the loss of Lewis, he also expressed his deep attachment to Ada:

Thank God, Ada Rehan is still spared to us! When she is no longer here, I shall retire,—unless God elects to take me first. But Lewis was such a dear and lovable and most loyal man—beyond all his great worth as an actor: and as associate and friend I shall miss him as greatly as in other ways, above all others, except dear Mrs. Gilbert, and her who is ever and above all others in my thought and hope and pride—Ada Rehan.

On October 3 Ada arrived back in New York, appearing well rested and with her bulldog, Fun, in tow, the star accepted the waiting Daly's embrace. She expressed to reporters her sadness at the loss of Lewis and left with Daly in a carriage driven by her brother, Arthur, to stay with her mother in Brooklyn until Monday. That evening she attended a performance of a musical, The Geisha, that Daly
was producing at his New York Theatre. Theatregoers could observe her in Daly's box, commenting on the performance to him now and then and looking very pleased with the spectacle. The following week Ada and Daly again shared a box, at the Herald-Square Theatre, an unusual sight for the New York public since Ada's own performance schedule rarely allowed her to attend other productions.

Because of the popularity of The Geisha, Ada postponed the start of her fall season in New York with a preseason tour. Opening in New Haven on October 17, she and a supporting company presented what had become her most famous role as well as "the most brilliant Katherine of the century." Her tour also included Scranton, Pennsylvania, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and Brooklyn. In addition to her Katherine, Rosalind, Lady Teazle, and Annis Austin, she presented a new role, Lady Gay Spanker, in Boucicault's London Assurance in Baltimore on October 27.

If Daly produced London Assurance out of town to test its potential for success as a vehicle for Ada, he must have been encouraged by its reception. As the dashing horsewoman, Lady Gay Spanker, the comedienne portrayed a gay, frivolous, outspoken woman who hen-pecked her husband, encouraged the amorous advances of an old gentleman, and engaged in an intrigue in order to match up a pair of young lovers. With traits of several characters she had previously played embodied in Lady Gay, Ada earned enthusiastic approval of her breezy and charming performance.

1896-97

For the opening of the 1896-97 season in New York on November 23,
however, Ada presented her Rosalind to the usual gala and receptive audience of first-nighters. One German paper called her the greatest American actress as well as "the ideal of Rosalind." But because of the success of The Geisha Daly alternated performances of the two plays, presenting As You Like It one night and The Geisha the next night. He continued this arrangement the following week when Ada presented her Lady Gay Spanker for the first time to the New York audience on November 30. She also performed out of town when The Geisha held the stage at Daly's theatre. For instance, on December 3 she performed her Katherine in Bridgeport, Connecticut. After the failure of his New York season the year before, and the success of The Geisha this season, Daly evidently was unwilling to depend solely on Ada's repertoire to bring in the needed revenue to his theatre. As Daly may have anticipated, several New York critics expressed their low opinion of London Assurance, but agreed that Ada saved it from failure through her extraordinary ability to create a lovable, highspirited, vibrant woman with an infectious humor and feminine charm. Daly had produced the play seventeen years before with Fanny Davenport as Lady Gay Spanker but Ada's Lady Gay did not suffer by comparison.

The critic for the Sunday Advertiser preferred Ada's performance over Mrs. Drew's and that of other actresses. The Sunday Mercury also approved of Ada's performance:

Her Lady Gay of last night was a dashing, insinuatingly fascinating, flyaway Lady Gay, with the innate devilry of the character flashing out from the eyes and seemingly coming from the very tips of her fingers. Miss Rehan's truly high comedy method was never seen to better advantage.

Another reviewer took the opportunity to express his dislike of her
performances when she tried to be "skittish and sixteen," but he thoroughly admired her "in such a part as Lady Gay Spanker, and in her Shakespearean impersonations."  

After repeating her Lady Teazle the week of December 14, Ada appeared in her second new role of the season, Beatrice in Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing, beginning December 23. Another triumph, Ada created a Beatrice of "high excellence," possessing an "electric wit." She rose to "royal heights;" she was "so touching, so pleasant that the critic [found] no more courage to criticize." Ada created a very different Beatrice from that of Ellen Terry's character. The New York Times reported that in the lighter scenes she expressed "piquancy," "archness," "vocal eloquence, plastic grace, and personal charm. Yet [Beatrice had] little of the sweetness and daintiness of Miss Terry's portrayal." Ada infused an extraordinary variety of mood and tone into her creation. Alan Dale explained that the difference in interpretations resulted from the fact that Ellen Terry subjugated herself to Henry Irving on stage while Ada deferred to no one. "She was a dominant, regal and magnetic Beatrice, very unlike the clinging, buoyant, vivacious creature shown to us by Miss Terry." He believed both actresses were consistent in their performances, but Ada's Beatrice was "more impressive." Likewise, the Commercial Advertiser declared Ada's Beatrice an improvement over previous enactments of the character because "The repartee that we know by heart actually seems to be heard for the first time when it comes with the sharp staccato of unpremeditation. It is in this quality that Miss Rehan excels, and there is ample opportunity for her to exhibit it in this character." In an instant her Beatrice changed from a
"spoiled child" into a "superb woman." The Mail and Express concluded that "of all the Beatrices of the generation, this one [would be] remembered as a consistent character."  

Negative reaction to Ada's performance came from The World's reviewer who saw no subtlety, wit, or charm in her performance or in Daly's adaptation of the play. But he was in the minority. Although Much Ado About Nothing continued to draw large audiences, Ada revived her Agatha Posket in Pinero's The Magistrate on February 8. First produced nine years earlier, it still attracted audiences. The Geisha also continued to draw the public and play every other day at Daly's Theatre. In addition, Ada continued to play out of town dates as well as rehearse for her next new role of the season, leaving her less free time than usual during the regular season in New York. 

In a new undertaking, Ada presented Meg Merrilies in Guy Mannering, adapted from Sir Walter Scott's novel by Robert W. Chamber, on March 12. As the Witch of Ellengowan Ada portrayed the queen of a band of gypsies in Scotland, who are driven from their ancient campground by the landowner whose young son is abducted by a smuggler in the confusion of the move. When the rightful heir returns seventeen years after the kidnapping, Meg foils a plot to kill him. In the process of saving him Meg gets killed. Although Ada created an impressive, picturesque, and earnest gypsy queen, "Commanding in manner, . . . she failed to express the uncanniness and sordidness of Meg Merrilies of the novel." Moreover, Chamber's adaptation seems to have left a confused impression on the audience because it incorporated "suggestions of melodrama, of old-fashioned comedy and of comic
The general critical assessment of Ada's portrayal was positive in emphasizing the quality of her acting in the prologue. Likewise, reviewers blamed her lack of strength in the role on the gradual disintegration of the play amid wild melodramatic elements, singing, and dancing. Inevitably compared with the famous American actress, Charlotte Cushman, who successfully used the play to display her tragic powers between 1845 and 1857, Ada created a Meg totally different from her predecessor's enactment. She appeared handsome and grand rather than haggish; she lacked Cushman's supernatural quality; and "the music of her voice dispelled the gruesomeness of the curse she pronounced."

After only a week of Meg Merrilies one night and The Geisha the next, Ada portrayed her fourth new role of the season, Donna Violante, in Mrs. Centlivre's The Wonder on March 23. As Violante, Ada portrayed a young woman who gives shelter to Donna Isabella who injured herself jumping out a window to escape an undesirable marriage. Ada brilliantly enacted a range of behavior: "she was arch, she was capricious, she was impetuous, she was diplomatic, she was winsome, she was stern." First her lover, Don Felix, who is Isabella's brother, suspects her of hiding a rival; then her father pays her a visit and she must hide her lover from him. Throughout the predicaments of the heroine Ada "created the mischievous, true-hearted, teasing, tender, passionate, careless, quick-witted woman" of high comedy whose "keen repartee" and "lightening changes of mood" she enacted so well.

The hectic schedule of traveling to other cities every other day, learning new roles, and rehearsing revivals of old ones evidenced itself in the leading lady's performance on opening night.
Believing the other actress in the scene with Ada, Marie St. John, to have forgotten her lines, the Press blamed her for Ada's confusion. However, the fault seems to have been Ada's and the same newspaper reported that Ada appeared to have been crying when she answered the curtain call. Concerned that the younger, lesser known actress, Marie St. John, would receive the blame for her mistake Ada reportedly apologized, assuring Marie that she was not to blame.

Ada's relationship with the rest of Daly's company during the season has been recorded by Isadora Duncan. Only seventeen years old in 1895, the famous dancer joined the company as a minor player this season. She found Ada "very proud and reserved and [Ada] seemed to feel that it was an effort even to say good day to us." Duncan said that a notice informed the company one day that they need not bother to "say good-day to Miss Rehan." In another instance, while being "kept waiting by some grouping of Daly's, she [Ada] swept her hand over the heads of us all and exclaimed: 'Oh, Guvnor, how can you keep me waiting for these nonentities!'" Duncan attributed the star's behavior to resentment over Daly's habit of "picking out of the company some pretty girl who would be for two or three weeks—or two or three months—suddenly lifted into leading parts for no apparent reason whatever." While it is difficult to determine from the records the accuracy of Duncan's observations, Daly seems to have consistently cast the same performers in lead roles in the dramatic company. But he did employ different young actresses frequently in minor roles and many actresses left his employ. In addition, Duncan speculated that Ada's behavior might also be due to her age, which Duncan incorrectly placed
at nearly fifty, but called the comedienne "the adoration of Augustin Daly."\textsuperscript{216}

Approaching forty, Ada's age had become a topic for discussion by journalists. Reporters began calling her a spinster. One such writer, Harriet Hubbard Ayer, devoted an entire article to what she considered Ada's saddened, embittered life of loneliness because "Spinster [described] her status at her present age."\textsuperscript{217} She believed that "A woman's biography [was] after all, but a record of her love-life"\textsuperscript{218} and because Ada neither married nor bore children, her pain and sadness showed in the "droop of her mouth" and "narrowing of her eyes."\textsuperscript{219}

At the same time, Alan Dale also criticized the New York public's adoration of youth and urged the coronation of Ada as histrionic queen. Sarah Bernhardt had just been crowned queen of the stage in France at fifty-four years of age. Had Bernhardt been an American, Dale contended, she would have had to retire because of constant reminders of her age and because nobody would go to see her perform, replacing her with a younger, prettier actress with attractive legs. "A sensual public," the American audience clamored for physical rather than intellectual enjoyment, Dale contended. Unlike Americans, the British would allow Ada to perform for as long as she wished, in Dale's view, for the queen had just knighted Henry Irving who was nearly sixty years old. Moreover "In London Ada Rehan [was] adored,"\textsuperscript{220} declared Dale. Her age was of no consequence to the British; only her talent as an artist impressed them. Yet, in her own country, the finest Shakespearean actress of the day, who had defeated her rivals, held her own with Sarah Bernhardt and Ellen Terry, and had also succeeded in high comedy roles, was taken for granted: "a woman is not necessarily
incapacitated because she is ten years older than she used to be." Dale believed Ada was at the height of her powers and deserved a crown for her accomplishments, but having sacrificed herself for her art, Dale, too, believed she "lived a barren and deserted life for it." The 1896-97 season in New York took its toll on Ada's health. When the next Shakespearean play, *The Tempest*, premiered on April 6 at Daly's, she was conspicuously absent from the cast due to illness. She did attend the opening night performance, however, as well as present her Katherine out of town the following night after which she rested for about a week in preparation for the company's annual tour. The week of April 19 she finally appeared in her last new role of the season, Miranda in *The Tempest*. Although Nancy McIntosh had received mixed reviews for her Miranda, Ada's reception was far superior; critics called attention to her age again by noting that she lacked the necessary buoyancy of youth. Also, the music had to be adjusted because the star lacked McIntosh's singing talent. However, the receipts went up from three hundred and fifty dollars a night to four hundred dollars a night when Ada replaced the younger actress in the role.

When the season ended on April 24, Ada had portrayed seven roles, five of which were new and two more than her previous season. Although she gave about twenty-one fewer performances at Daly's Theatre in New York than she had presented the year before, she had enlarged her schedule outside of New York. Her attempt at Meg Merrilies, a notable experiment in unusual casting, was less than successful. Daly's attempts to find appealing roles suitable to Ada's age continued to be a problem. Forced to travel more frequently than before to
cities surrounding New York where she could draw a crowd, her health suffered. Not since she had acted with John W. Albaugh's company nearly twenty years earlier had she followed such a rigorous touring schedule. Her exhaustion and resulting sickness may account for irritable behavior; and Daly's flirtatiousness may have exaggerated her distress. Nevertheless, her work inspired Alan Dale to state: "Ada Rehan is to-day the finest Shakespearean actress on the stage. There is not the least doubt about that." 232

Beaumont Fletcher agreed with Dale, calling Ada "one of the greatest living actresses" in Godey's Magazine. 233 Since she joined Daly's Company eighteen years before, Fletcher reported, she had acted roles by Shakespeare, Sheridan, and modern authors. She succeeded in the broadest burlesque roles such as Jenny O'Jones, domestic roles such as Phronie, dashing roles such as Katherine, Beatrice, and Lady Gay Spanker as well as those requiring the more subtle humor of Viola and Rosalind. Fletcher judged her beauty to be of a "heroic sumptuous type;" she carried herself nobly; she was still "statuesque" with "magnificent shoulders"; and she wore the doublet and hose with "superb grace" as well as "vivacity." She possessed an infectious and sincere humor with mannerisms all her own. He conceded that sometimes she may have pointed her chin too much, audibly inhaled her breath, sarcastically drew out an "O," and looked out of the eye in a peculiar way; but to require a complete change of personality for every role was demanding the impossible of the actress. Every famous player had been "a repeater of himself after a certain period in the public favor." 234 Ada had portrayed difficult roles made great by the genius of past actresses, in his opinion, and her impersonations went "into the
archives of stage history." They included Katherine, Rosalind, Viola, Beatrice, Lady Teazle, Julia, and Lady Gay Spanker.

Fletcher believed the role of Beatrice typified her powers. She maintained her bantering spirit in spite of her compassion for Benedick. According to Fletcher, "when Hero [sank] under the brutal malignment of her lover," Ada 'as Beatrice' wept a little then turned into a very "tigress of fury," telling Benedick to "Kill Claudio!" She vividly showed her perfect willingness to "eat his heart in the marketplace." Her "heroic statue and power saved her from the look of over-acting [and] revealed a bit of tragic genius" that Fletcher had not even suspected in her.

Metropolitan Magazine also asserted Ada's dominance on the American stage, declaring her "the leading exponent of dramatic art as represented by the American Theatre of her day. She reportedly proved her versatility and uniqueness in having portrayed one hundred and fifty characters in the twenty years between 1877 and 1897. Moreover, the roles differed widely and included "a frolicsome and demurely mischievous Miss Hoyden;" a willful, passionate, and tender Katherine; and an arch, graceful, and womanly Rosalind. With her "richness of Irish temperament, refined and sharpened by the finesse of American influences and education" added to constant work and study, Ada distinguished herself among other actresses. No one had been "so productive in talent and genius when it came to an extended repertoire." Unlike Sarah Bernhardt, she was still young and "in the fullness of her powers;" and as fine as they were, Julia Marlowe and Mrs. Fiske could not touch Ada "in breadth and sustained power."

For the critics of the day, Ada was in the forefront of her profession
On April 26 Ada and the company began the annual spring tour in Philadelphia; it also included Boston, Harlem, and Chicago where it ended on June 5. She earned a warm response for her Beatrice, Lady Gay, Miranda, Agatha Posket, and Violante. Some critics noted, however, that her Miranda was rather mature for a sixteen-year-old. As the tour drew to a close newspapers began to report that she looked weary; and on closing night she seemed to be visibly suffering, yet she played with animation. Due to her failing health nearly every night of the last two weeks of the tour a physician attended her backstage. Nevertheless, reviewers praised her as an actress without parallel on the American stage. Her total receipts for the two week run in Chicago at Hooley's Theatre exceeded any season since the World's Fair. A few days after returning to New York Ada sailed for England with the Dalys on June 9 where they would all attend Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebration in London. Ada then went to her cottage in Cumberland for a much needed rest until the beginning of the season in London.

Ada's ocean voyage must have refreshed her because when she portrayed Rosalind for the first time at Stratford-Upon-Avon on August 26 no mention was made of poor health. The receipts of the open-air performance benefitted the Fund of the Shakespeare Memorial. Special trains from London and other parts of England bore carloads full of people eager to see Ada's Rosalind. The assemblage included the Mayor of Stratford-Upon-Avon, lords, ladies, colonels, and socially prominent people. Unfortunately, shortly after the performance began rain forced actors and audience alike into the theatre. But neither the
rain nor the overcrowding dampened the audience's spirits. They enthusiastically broke out into applause throughout the play in response to Ada's "merry, arch, and graceful Rosalind." She performed with a playfulness, lightness of touch, spontaneity, and intonation that inspired the Pall Mall Gazette reviewer to call her Rosalind the best he had ever seen or could imagine. He recalled that two years earlier when she had enacted the same role in London she was fine but stouter; her passion was less profound, and her byplay was less complete, less significant. The critic noted that among the onlookers at Stratford-Upon-Avon was the well known retired American actress, Mary Anderson, who had debuted as a star when Ada played as stock actress with Macauley's company in Louisville. The same critic judged Anderson's Rosalind before she retired too cool and contracted in temperament to give the warm, lovable, feminine performance Ada rendered. Moreover, the Musical Courier's reviewer believed that only Adelaide Neilson could have equalled Ada's impersonation. The local Stratford paper reported that Ada exceeded the highest expectations of the audience with her perfect naturalness of style; and she was most successful at alternately expressing humor and pathos without exaggerating either. "Her representation [made] the impression which only the best acting [could] make--that of not being acting at all."

Three days after her Stratford appearance Ada began her first nine-week tour of the British provinces, beginning in Newcastle on August 30. She also played in Nottingham, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Islington, Liverpool, and Manchester, before concluding her tour. She included Katherine, Lady Teazle, Violante, and Viola in her repertoire, earning the usual praise. Fascinated by her "resonant"
voice, one critic returned night after night to see her, concluding that her voice had an ecclesiastical quality to it that would allow her to lead the community in prayer. But one reviewer did "cling to the opinion that Miss Ada Rehan as Rosalind [lacked] something of the suavity and feminine sweetness suggested by the drawing of Shakespeare's most delightful heroine, and that the impersonation [was] inferior to . . . [her] Katherine." Nevertheless, most commentators marvelled at Ada's creations, such as the reporter from the Daily Record in Glasgow who wondered how he could have understood Twelfth Night before seeing Ada's Viola. Similarly, a Nottingham newspaperman described her embodiment of Katherine as "comedy in its highest and noblest sense." She never exaggerated but "frequently suggested more by a pregnant look, a sign, or a gesture than she [expressed] by so many words." Another critic noted her ability to infuse light and shade as well as vitality into Lady Teazle, which made her enactment a masterpiece. Even Ada's Baroness Vera, which some dismissed as an impossible character in a "colourless," uninteresting play, possessed some "delightful" qualities. The English critics did not hesitate to place her "in the first rank of contemporary actresses. . . . [Ada had] achieved a popularity as great as Bernhardt, Duse, and Ellen Terry." More than one English critic took pleasure in announcing that by birth she was an "Irish Lady." Another reviewer praised her slimmer figure which made her look ten years younger than she had during her appearance two years earlier. A New York newspaper claimed that the prominent actor/manager Beerbohm Tree was so impressed with Ada that he reportedly offered her twice the salary that Ellen Terry got from Irving to leave Daly's company and
join him; Ada, however, declined. As artistically successful as the tour appears to have been, Daly told his brother Joseph that it was not overly profitable.

After the provincial tour closed on October 30 in Manchester, Ada accompanied her friend, Mrs. Eric Barrington, to the Hotel Continental in Paris where she stayed until sailing for New York on November 6. Arthur Rehan and some friends greeted Ada and Daly when the ship docked in New York on November 13, thirty hours late due to stormy seas. As usual, Daly discussed the upcoming season with reporters waiting at the pier: Ada would not appear in the first new play of the season; and when she did perform Daly intended to alternate her plays with The Geisha again because he wanted Ada to rest more "this season than she did last." He also spoke indignantly of Beerbohm Tree's offer to Ada and the British actor/manager's audacity in trying to "tempt" his star.

1897-98

Before Ada opened the 1897-98 season in New York on November 29, she portrayed Beatrice, Viola, and Lady Teazle in Hartford and New Haven the weeks of November 14 and 21. At the "Zenith of her power," Ada received a warm welcome from the New York audience on opening night when she repeated her Katherine. However, when she repeated it the following night, business dropped drastically. The Press declared that public taste had changed; yet Ada had maintained her popularity where others such as Edwin Booth, who had "possessed the finest art ever known in this county," had fallen out of favor in New York amid "a decay in taste in fine art." The Criterion hoped
that Daly would not "be driven out of theatrical management by the Theatrical Trust before the public [regained] its sanity and [left] the husks [to come] back to the good things of the stage." The newspaper testified that only hard work had kept Daly's Theatre open and Ada before the public the last "two or three seasons, and without the aid of the musical plays it might have been impossible." But the travel back and forth between the New York theatre and out of town engagements during the last season had seriously damaged Ada's health; Daly faced a dilemma.

The Theatrical Trust consisted of a small group of men who effectively created a monopoly on artists and theatres. Formed in 1896, it consisted of the booking agents, Marc Klaw and Abraham Erlanger; the theatre owners, Charles Frohman and Al Hayman; and the theatre managers, Sam Nixon [Samuel F. Nirdlinger], and J. Fred Zimmerman. It provided a centrally located and efficiently run booking organization that replaced a haphazard system of many managers and/or actor-managers individually arranging tours with many different theatre owners throughout the country. By controlling key theatres all over America, it could force performers, managers, and theatre owners to conform to its terms. The syndicate tended to avoid "risk by accepting only dramas already tested abroad or the work of playwrights already established." It fostered mediocrity in the theatre by its unwillingness to produce new plays with high artistic value but uncertain commercial potential. In addition, successful foreign and American playwrights yeilded to the power of Frohman and his associates, giving them a monopoly on new plays as well. Such competition handicapped Daly forcing him to produce musicals with a
popular appeal in order to survive, and Ada to perform out of town despite the strain on her health.

Although Ada seemed healthy and robust in her rendering of Katherine, she did not perform between December 7 and December 21, when Daly presented F. C. Burnard's new musical adaptation, Number Nine, or The Lady of Ostend, from Blumenthal and Kadelburg. Then she only presented her Katherine every other night as Daly had announced earlier.

Usually unrivaled, Ada faced a new challenge when she repeated her Rosalind for the entire week of January 3. Thirty-one-year-old Julia Marlowe, under the management of Charles Frohman, opened as Rosalind the very same night at the Knickerbocker Theatre in New York, creating almost as much drama in the newspapers as on the stage. Beaumont Fletcher of the Criterion titled the battle, "Miss Marlowe and Miss Rehan Fight a Notable Dramatic Duel in the Forest of Arden." According to Charles Edward Russell, Marlowe's biographer, Daly purposely produced this play to discourage Julia Marlowe from acting in New York City and competing with Ada. Russell contends that the public favored Marlowe's Rosalind over Ada's. The New York World, however, reported that the "Commanding style" of Ada's Rosalind appealed "strongly to the tastes of a large percentage of theatre-goers;" nevertheless, "the truly critical [went] in turn to each house and enjoyed the play immensely, admiring each actress while not unduly preferring one above the other." The two women were different physically. Ada was tall and slim, while Julia Marlowe was about five inches shorter but about six inches larger in the bust, and four inches bigger around the waist. The New York World gave other
specific comparisons: Ada walked and looked more feminine in the
doublet and hose than Marlowe who seemed "a brisk young fellow." In
general, Ada expressed more passion than Marlowe. Ada had obvious
difficulty keeping aloof in Orlando's presence because she yearned for
him; but Marlowe seemed at ease and mischievously merry. Another
reviewer described Ada's Rosalind as more vigorous than Marlowe's
characterization because mischief "danced" in her eyes and "vibrated"
in her voice. Beaumont Fletcher asserted that both Rosalinds were
consistent with themselves and one's preference depended on one's
personal ideas concerning the character; but different interpretations
could be justified. The main difference he observed in the two
interpretations was in technique: Ada's was more studied and elaborate
where Marlowe's was more spontaneous and realistic. But Fletcher, too,
noticed the greater emotional depth to Ada's Rosalind; he detected "a
gentle pathos" in one scene and melodramatic acting in another scene.
Ada's vigorous comedy broadened into "plain farce" in some instances in
his judgement. "Miss Marlowe's personality . . . [was] one that [made]
er, to [his] thinking, the ideal Rosalind." But the Toronto Globe
preferred Ada's more poetical enactment with its undercurrent of deep
feeling, spontaneity, vigor, and vitality. Her "sparkling vivacity" as
well as her quick changes from grave to gay deserved the highest
praise. Similarly, the fainting in the hankerchief scene, which
Fletcher had judged melodramatic, the Canadian critic declared "just
enough and not too much;" to him it was indicative of her aptitude
for both comedy and tragedy. Neither actress won over the other in
the press. But Ada met the test of competition with the younger
actress sponsored by the powerful Theatrical Syndicate.
The remainder of the season consisted almost entirely of roles already in Ada's repertoire beginning with Mrs. Ford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, which opened on January 11. Twelve years since Ada had enacted the role, she still performed it so well that the play had to be continued through the following week. On January 25 she repeated her Viola for about a week, replacing it with her Peggy Thrift on February 1. Included on the bill was a one-act play adapted from the French of Edmond Pailleron by Rosenfeld titled *The Subtleties of Jealousy*. Presented before *The Country Girl*, the play focused on a young wife, Nell Yearance, who broods over jealousy and almost causes her husband to fulfill her worst fears. Although a trivial piece, the audience enjoyed it. Surprisingly Ada's Peggy Thrift proved so popular that it was not replaced until March 15 when she repeated her Lady Teazle. But she was forced to announce on March 19 that she would take three weeks to rest before ending the season and beginning her spring tour. Returning the week of April 11 with her Katherine, Peggy Thrift, and Rosalind, Ada concluded her season on April 13.

The end of her nineteenth season with Daly, Ada had performed one hundred and six times in nine different roles. She and her public must have been disappointed that she created only one new role during the entire season. She continued to be plagued with illness that one newspaper described as "vertigo." But in spite of her poor health this season she had succeeded in two roles she had not enacted for many years, one of which, Peggy Thrift, was an ingenue. Perhaps her most significant achievement was meeting the challenge of Julia Marlowe's Rosalind in New York. With Marlowe's Rosalind to use as a measuring
stick Ada's development of emotional depth emerged more clearly than it had in the past. But Ada had the additional advantage of having triumphed in Shakespeare's own land in the role whereas Marlowe confined herself to America. Ada's position as leading Shakespearean actress in America remained secure.

Ada began her spring tour in Brooklyn on April 14, the day after closing the season in New York. Then while performing in Harlem the following week, she received the pleasant news that the Shakespeare Memorial Society had elected her a Permanent Governor on April 17 "in recognition of her services to the stage and to the Memorial Theatre at Stratford-Upon-Avon." She continued her tour to Boston, Philadelphia, and, Chicago, appearing for two weeks in each city before ending her performances on June 4. Her repertoire included Peggy Thrift, Lady Teazle, Rosalind, Annis Austin, Katherine, Countess Vera, Nell Yearance, and Agatha Posket. June 7 she sailed to England with the Dalys to rest at her bungalow in Cumberland, returning to New York in early autumn to begin the fall season. Several possibilities could explain why Ada did not perform in England this year: George Edwardes had leased Daly's Theatre and was producing a musical, The Slave Girl, at that time, she may not have been well enough for a provincial tour; or, more likely, her health required that she rest all summer.

Although Daly wrote to his brother, Joseph, during the summer of 1898 expressing disappointment at his inability to secure good plays because of the syndicate's monopoly of "options," he did acquire at least one new play for Ada. She inaugurated her preseason tour on October 4, 1898, in Philadelphia with her portrayal of Roxane in an
adaptation of Rostand's *Cyrano De Bergerac*. At the same time, Richard Mansfield opened another version of the play in New York, explaining why Daly chose to present Ada in the new role out of town. The most frequent criticism of Daly's adaptation concerned his attempt to center all the attention on Roxane by transferring speeches from Cyrano to her, especially a speech describing a kiss. Most critics praised Ada's Roxane, describing her characterization as charming as well as womanly. The *Boston Herald* claimed that she "gave the part of Roxane that deliciously youthful charm, speaking her lines sweetly and coquettishly in that wonderfully sweet voice. Miss Rehan's work [was] always flawless, and her Roxane [did] not differ." Although *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* did not consider Roxane equal to Lady Teazle, it called it a "highly finished portrait" endowed with "graceful gayety of girlishness" and developed womanhood. When she played in Boston on October 31, one critic added that she depicted the many moods of Roxane "with art that defied detection," while another emphasized her believability in depicting light comedy as well as strong emotions. The reviewer in Providence praised her for fully developing all the possibilities of the character.

At the same time, a handful of critics thoroughly disliked Ada's interpretation, and a good number expressed mixed feelings about it. *The Press* (Philadelphia) condemned her interpretation of Roxane as a "feather-brained girl;" and, in the same way, the *Providence News* found the character absurd, too sentimental to sympathize with, and impossible to take seriously. According to the Providence reviewer, Roxane was too "girlee-girlee" and seemed "a little fool" as well as a "goose of a girl." Only *The Evening Telegraph* (Philadelphia) judged
Ada "too mature in person and style" for the role; but the *Boston Post* reported that she was girlish to an extreme in the opening scenes; and the *Boston Globe* dismissed her impersonation as a mere repetition of many of her other piquant, graceful, winsome, and agreeable portrayals of young women in the past. Several critics admitted her portrayal was charming and fascinating, but they also declared Ada's depiction insincere and representative of a nineteenth century young woman rather than the seventeenth century Roxane.

Two Boston reviewers specifically described her weaknesses. H. A. Phelps of *The Boston Daily Advertiser* identified Ada's "mincing air and an affected enunciation" as the reason the heroine seemed insincere and alienated the audience. Yet the same reviewer included some positive comments about her Roxane:

> Miss Rehan was often agreeable and effective in the fourth act through her gayety and piquant charm of manner; and in the opening passages of the final act she was sweet and winning in her gentle dignity. Her murmured comments—mere interjections—as Cyrano repeated his budget of news, were delicious. In the moments of high stress and anguish Miss Rehan was not equal to the demands made upon her, and though never absurd, was very seldom powerful.

Like Phelps, Hope Bruce of *The Boston Times* saw flaws in Ada's performance because the character differed markedly from what Bruce expected. But Ada's "lines were exquisitely read and in that particular her work shone forth clear and sparkingly unapproachable by any other member of the cast." Bruce explained Ada's appeal:

> The beautiful poetry fell from her lips with no seeming thought of its difficulties, and with a keen appreciation and expression of the value which never failed to hit the mark.... She was more self-asserting, more playful, in fact more the girl of today than Roxane was supposed to have been, but she was very charming for all that. Her Roxane was
ano^l^r evidence of what a fine actress she really is.  

Ada succeeded in winning more approval in the role of Roxane than condemnation. It is unclear whether or not it succeeded at the boxoffice; but Joseph Daly mentions its addition to the company's repertoire, indicating it probably succeeded with the audience.  

In addition to Roxane, Ada portrayed Peggy Thrift, Lady Teazle, Nell Yearance, and Katherine while performing for one week each in Philadelphia and Baltimore, a day or two in Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, and Albany, New York; and, finally, again presenting her repertoire in Brooklyn, Boston, and Providence for one week each before returning to New York.  

As usual newspapers lavished praise on her for her portrayal of Shakespeare's Shrew; but the Rochester Union Advertiser pinpointed her great achievement as Katherine when it likened her to the great American tragic actor, Edwin Booth. The newspaper claimed that "as Booth was as Hamlet, so Ada Rehan [was] as Katherine in The Taming of the Shrew."

And the Rochester Herald contended that her "portrayal of Katherine [had] long been recognized as the best the American stage [had] to offer."

1898-99

When Ada returned to New York, she inaugurated the 1898-99 season, her twentieth with Daly and for his theatre, by appearing for the first time as Portia in Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice on November 19. Ada's characterization "left little to be desired," according to the critic for Harper's Weekly, John Corbin. He thought Ada portrayed Portia's gracious dignity of spirit. She passed from lighter
to graver shadings of emotion throughout the play, reading her lines with correct flexibility, rhythm, nobility, and charm; and she triumphed in her "Quality of Mercy" speech, expressing "reverential majesty" at its climax. Another critic missed the sweet dignity of Ellen Terry's Portia, but he praised Ada's emotional expression by saying that "she [followed] every change of thought with an unspeaking sympathy that [ran] the range of dramatic expression. Fear, suspense, hope, amusement, mirth and finally the joy and triumph of love [were] all shown with unmistakable power and with a transparency of impulse that [was] essentially Shakespearean." 

A Chinese actor, Fon-Chong-Mai, who impersonated females, attended a performance of The Merchant of Venice and then wrote a review of it with the help of an interpreter and a representative from The New York Herald. Ada held him spellbound in spite of the obvious language barrier. Her voice was rich and mellow with the sweetness of a celestial instrument and flowed from her lips so naturally and spontaneously that the oriental artist realized for the first time "what roll and rhythm and fire there [was] in the cadences of [the] language." 

A few reviewers contradicted the general positive critical opinion of Ada's Portia. The Chicago Dramatic Magazine dismissed it as a repetition of such roles as Val and Nancy and said that it lacked spontaneity and seemed more self conscious to the critic. Alfred Ayres in The New York Dramatic Mirror gave a ringing condemnation of her performance after seeing it four times. He disagreed with her conception of the character because she lacked dignity and maidenly reserve in almost throwing herself at Bassanio, her future husband, and
in seeing Shylock as a malevolent monster rather than a poor, misguided soul. She used ou in the place of an o in such words as body and substituted an u for an e in such words as sentence, making it sentunce, and changing levels, to levuls. Ayres called her drawl a "drag or dwell" since she lingered on words in an attempt to achieve an effect, which resulted in the loss of any effect. In Ayres opinion she neither read her lines with the correct emphasis nor exhibited an understanding of the sense of what she read. Her constant movement back and forth across the stage, sitting for only a few seconds in some scenes, also annoyed the critic; her attempt to simulate pensiveness by continual movement of her hands and arms added to his chagrin; and she even failed in her comedy bits in the fourth and fifth acts but this time due to her tameness and cutting of some amusing lines.

Another critic found Ada's drawl and enunciation unique to the actress herself and pleasing to those on and off the stage who copied them. What Ayres condemned, others praised as distinctive characteristics of the comedienne's acting style. The play ran until January 3, 1899, and one newspaper reported a small audience on December 23. Joseph Daly reported that his brother changed the bill in response to the public's taste, indicating a lack of interest in Shakespearean productions rather than poor acting on Ada's part. He also recalled his brother's disappointment in The Merchant of Venice but provided no further explanation, leading to the conclusion that the play continued to draw inadequate houses after December 23, forcing Daly to try to attract larger audiences by presenting Ada in another new role rather quickly.

Whether inadequate preparation was responsible or not, Ada failed
to win approval for her third new role of the season, Catherine in Victorien Sardou's *Madame Sans Gaine*, which she presented on January 3, 1899. As the laundress and woman of the people who becomes a duchess, she confused her audience by presenting an inconsistent performance. As her usually favorable critic, Alan Dale, put it, "She was a grande dame when she was starching petticoats—an amiable vulgarian as soon as she had a gilded salon of her own. That was the defect." Harper's Weekly concurred with Dale's opinion, adding that she was so "ill at ease" that "she was at a loss even as to her lines." But the critic excused her apparent errors as opening night flaws that would disappear thereafter. Her performance had indeed improved two nights later because she knew her lines.

Ada’s public had seen the famous French actress, Gabrielle Rejane, in the role of Catherine in 1895 and the lesser known actress Kathryn Kidder had just presented it in New York the month before Daly’s production. According to one reviewer Rejane had surpassed Kidder as the washerwoman and in some coarser behavior as the duchess, but Kidder had outdone Rejane in the lighter scenes. Consequently, Ada’s public undoubtedly expected her to combine the strong points of each actress and present a better performance than either, but she disappointed her fans.

Ellen Terry’s success as Catherine in England in 1897, a performance of which Ada could have attended, raised Dale’s expectations. He considered Terry superior to either Kidder, Rejane, or Ada because her "picture as a whole . . . was more artistically conceived and executed." Yet Ada "had moments that Ellen Terry could not touch." But because Ada had not laid the groundwork in
the first act for references to her past in later acts of the play, her fine work came to naught. For instance, Ellen Terry conveyed "the impression that she was a rollicking good fellow, all heart and no manners, a whole-souled sovereign"\textsuperscript{372} in the first act. She had even spat on the irons to test them and engaged in all manner of unrefined behavior instinctive to a laundress.\textsuperscript{373} Conversely, Ada presented a refined washerwoman until she became part of the nobility and then behaved in a vulgar manner. In Dale's opinion Terry possessed a husky, gritty voice, however, as opposed to Ada's liquid music.\textsuperscript{374}

After observing Ada's "seemingly intentional bad acting" during the second week of the run, another critic concluded that she refused to prepare for the role because she disapproved of Daly's plans for her. Daly had decided to devote his theatre to exciting melodrama, beginning with \textit{The Great Pearl} which had been successful in England. The role slated for Ada to play was an eccentric matron, whom the elderly Mrs. John Wood had acted in London. Ada reportedly "refused absolutely to appear in that character." \textit{Madame Sans G\^ane} concluded its short run after only two weeks.\textsuperscript{375}

Ada repeated her Lady Teazle and Katherine before portraying Lady Garnett for the first time in the American premiere of Cecil Raleigh and Henry Hamilton's \textit{The Great Ruby}, on February 9.\textsuperscript{376} Joseph Daly called this production "the venture that saved his [Augustin Daly's] fortunes in this most unfortunate season."\textsuperscript{377} The sensational mechanical effects held the greatest appeal for the audience in this exciting British melodrama, which climaxed with a struggle, the jewel thief's death, and a hot-air balloon pulled by a car slowly rising to the fall of the curtain.\textsuperscript{378} As Lady Garnett, Ada portrayed the wife of
a cockney silversmith from whom the ruby has been stolen. The *Telegraph* described her as "a middleaged woman, petulant, self willed and ambitious to shine in society," and *Harper’s Weekly* referred to her as "amusingly vulgar and pretentious." Apparently Ada performed "several excellent comedy scenes" and saved one scene with Sir John Garnett, her husband, which was meant to be pathetic, by employing her "splendid art." But she caused the most amusement in the play for the *Harper’s Weekly* critic when she accidentally transposed some letters and had to bury her head in the arm of the sofa on which she was sitting until she and the audience finished laughing. Her behavior reminded the reporter of her expression of amusement as Peggy Thrift and Rosalind. Believing Lady Garnett unworthy of Ada’s talent, the same journalist reported that she consented to perform the role only after "long persuasion" by Daly; therefore, Daly should allow her to portray Lady Macbeth a role better suited to her abilities. "Miss Rehan [was] better fitted to play different parts than any other American actress;" she was at "the prime of her powers;" and she possessed "rare nobility of presence and [was] the most masterly reader of blank verse" on the American stage. While her Portia convinced the critic she could succeed in the role of Lady Macbeth and perhaps attain distinction, Ada played Lady Garnett instead.

The journalist, Amy Leslie, went beyond the *Harper’s Weekly* critic in praising Ada. She assessed her contribution to and influence on the American Theatre:

Whatever good has come to the comedy-builders in America, whatever beautified and cultivated the gracious art of provoking sweetly, touching the heart lightly, or roguishly charming through brilliant humor, has come through the influence of Ada Rehan.
Either directly or indirectly, she has at once been the teacher, promulgator, and inspiration of high, elegant comedy. Modern or classic, of the serious, gracious, sentimental woof or that color of mischief romping with laughter, has been equally delightful in Miss Rehan's care, and her beauty, superb mental equipment, and devotion have filled her out with graces unrivaled and jealously imitated. None approaches her, but the shadow of her achievement broods handsomely in the attempts of hopefuls, and glows in bright women whose attainments are worth the polishing note imbibed from Ada Rehan.

Leslie enumerated some of Ada's outstanding qualities that endeared her to her audiences. She used her warm, lovely, sapphire eyes to express different emotions. When she was sad, they were half closed; but sometimes she would open them wide in surprise; and she had "planted them in the multitude's heart to live there always." She had a unique way of winning her audience with a "sweeping audience glance . . . that [flattered] everybody and [saw] nobody." With her proudly curved mouth, velvet-voice, queenly and commanding face, splended presence, and tender womanliness no comedienne in America could rival her. Ada's years of devotion to the stage, Leslie reported, she gave to Daly. He in turn "nurtured and built up her talents, and [had] taken every inkling of annoyance out of her easy life. She [worked] incessantly in Daly's company, but [had] none of the cares incumbent upon a star with her own money risked in the venture."

Although The Great Ruby continued until the end of the season, Ada left the cast to sail to Europe with the Dalys on May 13. Unlike the 1897-98 season when Ada had relied on revivals of her past successes, during the 1898-99 season and preseason tour she created four new major roles. The reception and variety of the roles
symbolized the changing tastes in drama. Although she achieved a moderate success as Roxane on tour, the role added very little if anything to her reputation and artistic growth. While her Portia was more of an artistic success, it did not draw the audiences that some of her other Shakespearean roles had in the past. As Catherine in *Madame Sans Gâne* she drew criticism even from those who usually praised her profusely, marking one of the worst and rare failures of her career. Her last role of the season, and most successful one, was melodramatic, artistically mediocre, and added little to her reputation. At the same time, she had enjoyed better health than the year before allowing her to perform approximately one hundred and ninety times without suffering from any apparent illness. But this year more than ever testified to the need for new and better plays with stronger female leads for Ada, if she was ever to repeat triumphs such as Katherine and Rosalind. The season also proved the great difficulty of competing financially with the syndicate for such new plays.

Added to her disappointment over the season, Ada faced one of the greatest losses in her life. After staying in London for about three weeks with her good friend, Lady (Mrs. Eric) Barrington, Ada traveled to Paris with the Dalys on June 5 to see a new opera, *Cinderella*. She later told her brother, Joseph, that Daly had taken ill just before they left New York and seemed to have improved considerably under the constant care of doctors in London. But his condition worsened on June 6 and he could not attend the opera with her, to which an artist, Eugene Grivaz, escorted her. Daly had visited a Dr. Herbert in Paris, who engaged a nurse to care for him at the Continental Hotel where he, Mrs. Daly, and Ada were staying. According to Ada, after consulting
with another doctor, Herbert reported to her the morning of June 7 that
the pneumonia the doctor suspected aboard ship, which had seemed to
improve in London, had now been complicated by heart and lung problems,
placing Daly in a serious condition. That afternoon with her at his
side, reassuring him that she had sent for the doctor and that
everything would be all right, Augustin Daly died. Ada recalled taking
Mrs. Daly, who was crying, from the room and returning to bid farewell
to the man who had meant so much to her. She told Joseph that as she
looked at him, "his face in death was inexpressibly youthful and
noble" to her.\footnote{391}

Because Mrs. Daly could not bring herself to make arrangements for
her husband's funeral, Ada saw to them with the help of Oscar Wilde.
She and the Dalys had met Wilde at dinner the previous evening and when
he heard of Daly's death, he called upon Ada.\footnote{392} Mrs. Daly left Paris
the following day while Ada and her good friend, Mrs. Eric (Lady)
Barrington, accompanied Daly's remains to England on the morning of
June 9.\footnote{393} From Southampton his body was shipped to New York for
funeral services there\footnote{394} on June 18,\footnote{395} which Ada did not attend,
remaining in London instead.\footnote{396} The lack of flowers at the funeral
from her prompted some to question their conspicuous absence\footnote{397} and
others to speculate as to the cause of the omission. Since Ada
remembered to cable flowers to those she knew far less intimately,
people surmised that she did send a remembrance but that "her wreath
was not acceptable to some one having voice in the funeral arrangements
and was therefore declined."\footnote{398}

Daly's death marked the end of Ada's twenty year association with
him. And her last year was perhaps the most disappointing. She had
worked so hard to achieve stardom between 1894-99 and at the height of her powers, she had met the challenge of a rival star, but faced a public and press increasingly intolerant of her appearances in ingenue roles, which Daly (and perhaps Ada herself) preferred. Consequently, the range of roles best suited to her was narrowing. At the same time, the power of the Syndicate made the acquisition of new plays increasingly difficult. But her greatest immediate concern was her professional future without the guidance and support of Daly.
Notes—Chapter 6

New York Herald 12 Aug. 1894, 43 vols. in Daly's Theatre Scrapbooks 36. Most volumes of the Augustin Daly Scrapbooks have no page numbers and the pagination that does exist is often erratic and unreliable. The scrapbooks are in the New York Public Library Theatre Collection and also available on microfilm in the University of Illinois Library. Hereafter cited as DTS. Although Marvin Felheim, The Theater of Augustin Daly, An Account of the Late Nineteenth Century American Stage (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956) 31-2, claims that Ada "had a disagreement with Daly in the summer of 1894 and remained with her old manager only after he agreed to star and to pay her a salary commensurate with her improved status," I could find no evidence to support his contention. In addition Diana Forbes-Robertson, My Aunt Maxine (New York: The Viking Press, 1964) 81, says that "Ada Rehan finally forced out of him [Daly] star status and a star's salary." However, Robertson neglects to state her source of information; and her aunt, Maxine Elliot, did not join Daly's company until 1895, making her an unreliable source.


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Immediately following Daly's death rumors and stories concerning Ada permeated theatrical circles in England and the United States and promptly appeared in newspapers. She was reported to have asked an artist friend, Eugene Grivaz, repeatedly "'What are we going to do?'" And her good friend W. Graham Robertson described her as a "changed woman; vague, purposeless, drifting she knew not whither." When he inquired about her future plans she replied in a helpless manner, "'I don't know what I shall do.'" She said she "supposed" she would continue to act but she did not know because she felt "'somehow as if—as if [she] couldn't.'" Having lost "almost the only friend she had permitted herself to cherish," the central person in her private and professional life, Ada expressed confusion in her grief. At the same time some newspapers repeated predictions of her retirement and cancellation of a Drury Lane engagement because she was ill and averse to the as yet unnamed melodrama that Daly had committed her to before his death. Others affirmed her intention to honor the agreement. But, as the journalist Montgomery Phister pointed out, nobody knew what she would do until she said something herself.

By July several newspapers announced that Ada had secured her release from the Drury Lane engagement in order to manage Daly's Theatre in New York. Ada explained to William Winter that she cancelled the engagement because after seeing one act of the play before Daly's death, she and her manager had decided the play "would never do." Although she believed "the best part of [her] life [was]
past," she "resigned to do all in [her] power to carry out his wishes," saying that she expected to face a "great trial" when she returned to New York. But she would work with all her might to pass through it "for his sake." In addition, the contention by a reporter that Daly had made her a partner four years earlier gained credence because Daly bequeathed to her twenty percent of the proceeds from the annual receipts, or sale of both his theatres in London and New York.

In his will Daly appointed his brother, Joseph, his wife, Mary C. Daly, and his business manager, Richard Dorney, his coexecutors. He empowered them to carry on the business of both the theatres as long as they judged it advisable, or to close the business of either or both and sell "the leases and other property connected therewith." According to Joseph Daly the estate had no capital with which to run the New York Theatre; therefore, Ada and four others offered to contribute ten thousand dollars each to keep the theatre in operation, increasing rumors that Ada wanted to manage it.

Richard Dorney ended all speculation when he announced that Ada would not manage Daly's Theatre and offered it for sale. Joseph Daly explained the executors' decision:

"... the chances of success were against the said undertaking on their part and ... it would be more just to the company, who were willing to trust their future into our hands, and to the creditors of the estate, to dispose of the theatre with the reputation Mr. Daly had given it undiminished, than to be compelled subsequently to place it upon the market after a possible season of failure."

The executors' final decision may also have been influenced by a reported disagreement between Ada and Mrs. Daly's brother, James C. Duff. Originally they had planned to keep the theatre running for at
least another year but they needed money to do so. When they called Ada asking for ten thousand dollars "she replied that she was willing to invest twice that sum, but only upon the condition that J. C. Duff, Mrs. Daly's brother, should not be allowed to have anything to do with the affair." Finding himself in the middle of the controversy, Dorney advised the sale of the theatre and "J. C. Duff . . . went up to Klaw and Erlanger with a suggestion that they buy the theatre." After consulting with Charles Frohman both parties concluded the sale. "Mr. Frohman received the theatre and everything in it excepting the Shakespearean productions, upon which Miss Rehan [held] a bill of sale as security for moneys advanced to Mr. Daly, and the contents of Miss Rehan's dressing room and Mr. Daly's private offices." The purchasers appointed Daniel Frohman manager and Duff business manager, a position some considered a brokerage fee for his part in the sale.

Ill and grieving but unable to face the memories of time she shared with Daly at her Cumberland cottage, Ada had planned to spend the remainder of the summer at "Ramsgate, a fashionable watering place [England], nursing her health under a doctor's care." But by August 7 she wrote to Winter again from Cumberland. Thanking him for his advice to remain silent and not write about some unexplained "affair," she assured him that she had only "written to Judge Daly & [sic] Mr. Dorney mostly about [Daly's] buisiness that [she] knew something of" in England. Then she recalled her great respect and affection for Daly:

I was fully alive to all he ever did for me & [sic] he knew my devotion to him & [sic] his ambitions. It was all so well understood between us that we had really grown into being One. we [sic] both worked with heart & [sic] soul--for one end. My loss. No one can ever
understand.26

Her heart broke at the thought of returning to New York where she lived "all those years—with such a feeling of Confidence & [sic] protection,"27 and where she shared with Daly "beautiful memories" of success, friendships, and triumph. She intended to return to Daly's Theatre only once more to remove her property and see his office where they had "so often been together. And that is all. When that trial is over [she wrote] I know it will mean the real end to all the memories of Daly's Theatre."28 She mourned the sale of the theatre to the syndicate, calling it "a great blow" and an unwise choice. Her "desire was to do all he wished" and believed it to be the desire of those to whom he left power as well but found out differently.29 She obviously agreed with The New York Dramatic Mirror which criticized Joseph Daly for selling the theatre to those his brother had found distasteful. The newspaper believed that it showed little respect for Daly's memory since other buyers made offers. The other executors had paid little attention to Dorney who was acting as Ada's manager and was planning a tour for her during the latter part of the next season.30

Ada had shown her devotion to Daly throughout their association. Now Daly expressed his gratitude to her in his will:

'I desire my wife also to give in my name and her own to Miss Ada Rehan my Empire furniture in the private office of my theatre in New York and any pictures in that office which she may select, to keep in remembrance of the many years in which I have benefitted by her unselfish interest in my concerns and as a faint token of my heartfelt recollection and appreciation of her unflagging faithfulness on every occasion.131

In another section of the will Daly made further reference "'to Miss Ada Rehan, to whose unswerving devotion to the interests of my theatre
I owe a great share of its honor and prosperity." 32

Many agreed with Daly's declaration that he owed much of his success to Ada and they accorded her credit in print. 33 In one reporter's view it was under her "leadership" that Daly's Company "achieved an international reputation," 34 while another pointed to her undisputed "position as the first actress of the American stage" 35 at the time of Daly's death. F. J. Donaghey of the Press paid homage with this tribute: "the company was Ada Rehan and Ada Rehan was the company." 36 Donaghey believed that Daly failed when he attempted to present the company without Ada and "until a decade ago, Ada Rehan could have named her own salary to any other manager in the English speaking theatre and could have demanded a place at the head of such an organization as she might pick." 37

In addition to her ability to invest ten thousand dollars or more in Daly's Theatre and the notes she held on the Shakespearean productions, Ada may have had an interest in other productions, which also included all the costumes, properties, and scenery. As a result, she does not seem to have needed the Daly inheritance unless she actually had been a partner and invested most of her earnings in the Daly Company. She had lived "modestly," and saved her money, investing in a home in New York and the one in Cumberland. However, her inheritance from Daly could provide further security and allow her to retire if she so chose. 38 Rumors of her dissatisfaction with Daly's will and her possession of documents proving her right to a larger share of his estate circulated. 39 And Mrs. Daly returned to England, where Ada had remained after Daly's death, to settle matters with her, lending some validity to the gossip. 40 When Ada returned to New York
on September 9, 1899, Dorney dismissed any dissatisfaction as untrue.  

Just as Daly had spoken for her in the past, Richard Dorney now addressed the assembled newsmen concerning Ada's plans. Although she was returning with two new plays they were not in any shape to be performed, nor did she intend to join forces with the actor Richard Mansfield, who suggested such an alliance this season. According to Dorney, Ada would "star independently." A few weeks later she removed items from Daly's Theatre and stored them in large warehouses: all scenery, properties, and costumes for The Taming of the Shrew, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice, Henry IV (Daly had it ready for production but had not done it), The School for Scandal, The Country Girl, and Love on Crutches; the furniture in Daly's private office; and the contents of "what was known as 'the Peggy Woffington room,'" which she purchased from the estate.

During the remainder of 1899 Ada stayed in her New York home with her brother, Arthur, while Dorney attempted to arrange a tour for her. She was also negotiating, through the British theatrical agent John Farrington, with Oscar Wilde for a play, Mr. and Mrs. Daventry, for which she had advanced the author one hundred pounds. In addition, unbeknownst to her the British actress Ellen Terry, recommended her to George Bernard Shaw for the role of Lady Cicely in Captain Brassbound's Conversion. Shaw had written the role for Terry but she could not do it for him because of her obligation to Henry Irving who disliked it. However Shaw managed to prevail upon her to perform in it once on October 10, 1899, in order to secure his copyright on it. Because of the ambiguity of the existing copyright
laws, it was believed that if a play were published before it was performed the author would lose the performing rights. Therefore, playwrights hired actors to perform their plays to insure their legal ownership of them. Shaw did not approach Ada about it at this time.

By the beginning of 1900, The Dramatic Magazine printed a poem by George Birdseye, imploring Ada to continue to perform. And the following week The New York Times reported that Ada would begin a ten-week tour on March 12 at Ford's Opera House in Baltimore. Acting as her representative, Dorney arranged the tour under Klaw and Erlanger.

George Clark, Daly's stage manager for many years, "directed the rehearsals" of the productions, the tour of which went "directly south to New Orleans and from there to the principal cities of the West and Northwest," visiting a total of thirty-one cities. Although the tour was supposed to last only ten weeks, it continued into May and included Ada's Katherine, Rosalind, Lady Teazle, and Peggy Thrift. Ada gathered together such Daly Company members as George Clarke, Eugene Ormonde, Whit Whittlesey, and Louise Draper for the tour, and introduced an innovation in The School for Scandal by casting the young actress in the traditionally older role of Mrs. Candour.

Ada's decision to tour after a ten month's absence is a puzzling one because signing with Klaw and Erlanger, the booking agents for The Theatrical Syndicate, meant capitulation to Daly's enemies. In addition, touring thirty-one cities mainly in one-night-stands, constant railroad travel, and no time for rest challenged her health. But she may have feared a loss of popularity if she stayed away from the stage any longer. As Hillary Bell pointed out she had more rivals now than before Daly's death and he could no longer help her maintain
her place of preeminence on the American stage. Although she frequently toured during the last few seasons with Daly, she performed most often at his theatre in New York. With the sale of Daly's Theatre to the Syndicate, Ada had no "home theatre" to which to return in New York. In ten month's time, according to Bell, "Zaza" Carter, Maude Adams, Julia Marlowe, and Viola Allen, raced to the forefront of the profession and caught the public's eye. Charles Frohman managed Adams, Marlowe, and Allen; and the Syndicate now controlled newspapers, hence, publicity. "When Miss Rehan took up her profession once more everything was new. Instead of being the star of the chief theatre in America she [was] now roaming over the country."

On May 24, while she was touring, she suffered another great loss, the death of her brother Arthur. Besides being a close sibling, Arthur had played a significant role in Ada's career. He had adopted the name Rehan and worked for Daly as a manager. After Daly's death he "obtained The Great Ruby and revived it at the Fourteenth Street Theatre and on the road." Only thirty-eight years old, he died of lung hemorrhages due to consumption. Not only did Ada lose his emotional support but his business guidance.

To add to her problems, during the summer Ada received news from Oscar Wilde that he could not honor their agreement and supply her with the play he promised; moreover, he asked for more time to repay the money he owed her, and she granted it. John Farrington communicated her disappointment to Wilde, which must have been compounded when she learned that he sold options on the play to at least four other people. But the play was not his to sell. Although the idea for the play was Wilde's, Frank Harris finally wrote it, and he arranged for Mrs.
Patrick Campbell to open in Mr. and Mrs. Daventry on October 25, 1900, at the Royalty Theatre in London. And while vacationing in England on August 24, 1900, Ada wrote to Winter to say she could find no new plays:

So I hope to go on with my fine old ones. This I much prefer but it does not quite satisfy my managers—they believe in new plays and small casts. The result of which is I cannot play in New York. They cannot make time for the old plays.

Although she wanted to perform in New York, she wondered if she would ever have the opportunity to do so again. However, when she attended the London production of Paul Kester's Sweet Nell of Old Drury in which the actress Julia Neilson succeeded as Nell Gwyn, she liked the play so well that she purchased it to perform herself in America.

On November 28, 1900, Ada created the new role, Nell Gwyn, in Paul Kester's Sweet Nell of Old Drury in Buffalo, New York. After touring successfully for a few weeks she opened in New York at the Knickerbocker Theatre on December 31, her first performance in that city for almost two years. Alan Dale described her reception: "Everybody was genuinely and spontaneously glad to cry a fervid welcome to an actress who did so much for the now defunct century. And it seemed auspicious that she should return before that century had quite gasped its last." The minute Ada appeared on the stage the audience greeted her with a roar of applause that lasted two minutes; and as the play proceeded they applauded everything she did. Applause caused the curtain to be raised eight or ten times after act one. "The second act ended amid less enthusiasm but the third brought cheers and calls of 'Bravo' to add to the turmoil. Women tore bouquets of violets from their bodies and threw them on the stage and men waved their
hankerchiefs. . . . it was the long popular actress that the audience wanted to honor and it surely did.  

As Nell Gwyn, Ada portrayed the famous seventeenth century orange girl turned actress, who historically was one of the first prominent comediennes on the English stage. Nell excelled in roles impersonating men, which made the part just right for Ada. In the play, as she did in real life, Nell becomes the mistress of Charles II; the rest, however, was fiction. Nell protects the young Sir Roger Fairfax from the malignant Lord Jeffreys whose ward, Lady Olivia Vernon, is betrothed to the young man. Although Nell loves Fairfax herself, she intercedes for the young lovers, and at one point, she masquerades as Jeffreys who was chief justice. The prevailing mood of the play was festive and jolly, according to one reviewer who gave a precise description of Ada's appeal in the role:

... this part elicits her impetuosity, her gleeful mischief, her raillery and her force of intellectual character. She manifested in it the invariable fluency of an accomplished actress, and played it in that large, fine style--involving freedom of movement, breadth of gesture, distinction of aspect and spontaneous ease of execution for which her acting has long been distinguished.

Similarly, the critic James L. Ford described the warm reception Ada received while criticizing public taste. Fine artists now had to make way "for Birdy Gumdrop, who [was] eighteen years of age, [chewed] gum and [did] a refined and intellectual skipping rope specialty." Ada's art was "as fine and convincing and delightful as in the very best days of Daly's Theatre." In Ford's opinion no woman on the American stage had the skill in comedy that Ada brought "into play in the lighter scenes of Sweet Nell of Old Drury." While entertaining,
however, the play was unworthy of her abilities. He attributed her charm to her Celtic ancestry because only someone from that "most poetic, wistful, mirth-loving, emotional and essentially feminine race on the face of the earth... could play with anything like authority the part of the English girl Nell Gwyn."77

Ada's "peculiar charm" impressed Alan Dale as well. In the role of Nell, Ada displayed all the moods it encompassed: love, pathos, melodrama, bandinage and coquetry—"a little of everything." When she impersonated the judge by donning his "wig and gown she was capital;"78 and she performed an irresistible dance. Rather than Sweet Nell of Old Drury, it was "Sweet Ada of Old Daly's" the audience saw because Kester's character was far removed from the real Nell.79 Likewise, the critic, Lewis C. Strang, believed the success Ada achieved in the play "was due entirely to the splendid technical equipment that was hers after years of acting."80 Through sheer personal force she made the play a success by moving the action along and arousing "interest in Nell and her doings. During all these scenes—her reception of the players, her byplay with the king, her effrontery of the ladies of the court, her teasing of Jeffreys, and finally her assumption of that worthy scoundrel's roles and office—Miss Rehan's vivacity, her raillery, her flow of animal spirits were constant, amusing, and abundant."81

When Ada appeared in Chicago on December 3, 1900, before her New York opening, another critic also praised her charm, her dance, her roguery, and imitation of the jurist but added her girlish looks and manners. In Chicago she filled the theatre with well-wishers82 as well as in Boston:
Miss Rehan was admirable. Her light, bantering tone, her raillery, half spiteful and half roguish, the changeful play of her mobile face, the eloquent toss of her stately head, and the ease and grace of her every movement—here was acting that one could enjoy indefinitely, here was acting worthy of herself. What more need be said?

In spite of the play's weaknesses, Ada succeeded in it, confirming that she could still act without Daly.

At the same time, some critics were disappointed in her "saucy, untamed orange girl." She neither looked the part, "for obvious reasons," nor gave it the necessary lightness and spontaneity. A New York critic agreed saying that she lacked a "happy-go-lucky" quality that a younger, "even though a poorer actress," could have achieved. Yet he admitted that throughout the rest of the play Ada infused a spirit into the character no other actress "would have been able to get into" her. Ada "did more for Mr. Kester's play than Mr. Kester's play did for her." And Alan Dale found her support wanting, among whom she employed her brother-in-law, Fulton Russell, and his son, Richard Russell.

In spite of her success, illness plagued Ada once again, forcing her to cancel her performance in the middle of the New York run on January 14. The following day Ada's mother, Mrs. Harriet Crehan, died of bronchitis in her Brooklyn home. Prostrate with grief, Ada could not resume her performances until January 18. Within two years Ada had lost three of the most important people in her life, yet she continued to perform, traveling to Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Boston, and other cities. But once more her health posed a problem and upon reaching Cleveland, her doctor ordered her to end the tour. She reportedly suffered from a weak heart. By March 14, 1901, she
wrote to her dear friend Mrs. Whitin saying she was "still far from well" but hoped she would be "much improved" by the time she saw her friend in Washington at some unspecified time. That spring Ada sailed once again to England to recuperate at her bungalow on the Irish coast. She was to return in September and reappear in a new play under Klaw and Erlanger.

Ada did not return to the stage at all during the 1901-02 season. However the New York Evening World reported that she made a much needed profit of twenty-one thousand dollars in January 1902 on some real estate for which she paid nine thousand dollars. She looked young and lovely when she attended the Metropolitan Opera in March and said she would act again when she found a suitable play. Sailing for England the following week she also explained that she would look for material abroad, see Bernhardt's new play, attend the coronation of Edward VII, and rest at her home in Cumberland. But when asked to consider appearing in Diana of the Crossways in July, she could not decide. Still under contract to Klaw and Erlanger, she returned to the United States in October with the playwright Haddon Chambers, who was to write a piece for her. It must have failed to satisfy her needs because nothing more was heard of it.

In March 1903 the high cost of storage and the depreciation in value of the furniture, properties, and costumes Ada acquired at Daly's death, much of which she and Daly purchased together, forced her to put them up for sale. Estimated to be worth one-hundred thousand dollars, the items brought only thirty-eight thousand four-hundred and twenty-one dollars after one week of daily auctions. In addition an appraisement of Daly's estate revealed that Ada's salary
"was many thousands of dollars in arrears." Then in May 1903 George C. Tyler, a theatrical manager, "asked Ada . . . to come back to the stage for a repertory tour with Otis Skinner." Tyler lived next-door to Ada on West Ninety-third Street in New York and he "used to go in and visit with her by the hour. She was so animated and brilliant, such a consummate person as she chatted away that [he] never thought of her as old at all." Ada's desire to act again, her trust in Tyler, the prospect of performing some of her favorite old roles, and her financial status may have convinced her to accept Tyler's proposition. Daly owed her six thousand dollars in back salary when he died; and now, four years later, all claims on the estate had been settled but hers. She had not received the bulk of her inheritance yet either because the estate had just been settled, and she was dissatisfied with her share of it. As a result, her lawyers had a referee appointed to settle the dispute.

Two years after having left the stage in 1901, Ada presented her Katherine in The Taming of the Shrew with Otis Skinner as Petruchio in Atlantic City on October 19, 1903. The twenty-five week tour that included more than thirty cities in the East, West, and South featured Ada and Skinner in The Merchant of Venice and The School for Scandal as well. The Atlantic City performance sold out long before opening night and proved an "unqualified success" for both the stars. As the tour proceeded Ada received the same warm reception and glowing reviews she had always experienced, while more and more articles praising her past and present triumphs appeared in print.

It was generally agreed that her Katherine still could not be equalled by any other actress of the day. A New Orleans critic
declared that among her many artistic successes, she would "be remembered to fame," by her role of Katherine:

From the minute in which she swept into the room, in tempestuous fury, with her eyes flashing fire, and her nostrils quivering with excitement, she was the very incarnation of the vixen that Shakespeare meant to draw. With a thousand deft and subtle touches—in the proud toss of her head, the vicious stamp of her foot, the catlike way she shut and opened her hands, as if they longed to scratch and tear—she painted the picture, and as one watched her methods, so true, so fine, and listened to her voice, deep and sonorous, as she read her lines, one felt that most of the so-called stars might well go to school to her to learn the rudiments of their art.

Similarly, in Chicago the critic Amy Leslie believed that "a more suavely poetic, genuine, seductive and brilliant Katherine had never spoken the fiery lines of the part." Perhaps she had lost a little of her majestic beauty, but Ada's voice retained its amazing carrying power. She spoke in a low-pitched, "silvery tone" that was "veiled as in an early frost," urgent, and sweet. She commanded "a silence of breathless hanging on her lips for every pretty word." A "musical" Katherine with a "subtle wit" and "ingenuousness" that infused "youth and furtive womanliness" into the character, Ada created a "bountifully lovely work of art" that captivated Leslie in 1903 as much as it had almost seventeen years before.

When Ada opened in New York as Katherine on January 18, 1904, she was visibly embarrassed as she waited for the applause to die down only to begin again as she dropped back into the character of the shrew. The New York Evening Sun critic expressed the general consensus when he said that "Any other Katherine is inconceivable for us." With her beautiful voice, unmatched by anyone on the stage at the time, and her personal charm, she made the transformation from a devil to an angel
almost seem believable. Yet one of the great and artistic qualities of her interpretation, to the same critic, consisted in the doubt she created as to the sincerity of her submission. The Evening Post (New York) critic could not see any perceptible change resulting from the passing years in her acting. Nor had time "dealt harshly with her, and her mannerisms [were] less marked than they [had] been in other parts," according to the Life reviewer. Not only did she look better to the critic Alan Dale than she had in a long time, but she acted better as well. "She was more like her old self than she was during even the last seasons at Daly's Theatre." She showed no trace of fatigue or ill health, performing in a buoyant, spry, lively, and amiable manner. In Dale's words, "she reigned supreme over the entire cast."

Unlike the rest of the critical community, one reviewer perceived changes in Ada wrought by time. Her eyes were "a little weary" and her mouth was "slightly drawn." But otherwise it was still the "same splendid impersonation" and "probably the best impersonation of the Shrew that [the American stage had] known." The New York audience honored her with twelve curtain calls.

Skinner's Petruchio won praise from most reviewers, but a few found his performance flawed. The New York Dramatic News and The New York Evening Sun judged Skinner's performance excellent, and one critic declared his Petruchio the best since Drew played the part at Daly's Theatre. Another stated that Skinner succeeded by portraying the role "with a rollicking gayety that [robbed] it of much of its brutality." Munsey's Magazine conceded that the character "was a clear, clean, scholarly, robust impersonation, good to look at and a
pleasure to hear, in many immortal deliveries: but he never seemed to really love Katherine half so devotedly as he loved himself. He seemed to be trying to win a wager. Life, too, found "Mr. Skinner's Petruchio not so pre-eminently great." "Handsome" and "commanding" in personality with "a resonant voice and a very intelligent reading," he had "too much force," and lacked "light and shadow." A lighter touch "would have been better fitted to his Katherine." Alan Dale praised Skinner's "deft piece of work," but he faulted the actor for not allowing Ada to take a curtain call by herself. Clinging tenaciously to her hand, Skinner was there "whenever [the audience] craved to applaud Ada Rehan all by herself."

Ada's Lady Teazle won the admiration of critics and audience alike during the tour. "Set down another triumph for Ada Rehan" asserted one enthusiastic reviewer who credited Skinner with a spirited and graceful Charles Surface but proclaimed the evening "'Lady Teazle's' night." Preserving the "impression of womanly dignity throughout," Ada presented "the charm of naturalness" in her "nearly perfect Lady Teazle." Ada made the human nature of the character felt in spite of Lady Teazle's artificiality. Missing from her Lady Teazle was "a harshness of tone" and "abandon in her method of acting" which she had recently developed. The New York Sun critic noted her execution of "passages of old comedy in the right key, with bravura in the grand manner." Few survived "on the stage who [were] to the grand manner born as [was] Miss Rehan. Ellen Terry [was] more human, more contemporary. But the Rehan [was] still the goddess in the cloud." Recently comedy had become more colloquial with "players directly addressing the audience across the footlights with their eyes and
Times had changed since Ada earned praise for her human appeal: now too often performers made "a personal play for the gallery. In diction, in vocal variety, in bearing, in gesture, this comedienne [was] the fine fleur of her species. Her like you [could] not see outside of Paris." Ada exuded "high spirits, buoyancy, and grace," presenting a brilliant Lady Teazle. Although Skinner's approach was "robust rather than elegant," his Charles Surface, in the critic's view, "was a tour de force." Yet Skinner disappointed another reviewer because of his lack of variety and his monotonous expression of vivacity in the same key.

Ada and Skinner divided the honors as Portia and Shylock in The Merchant of Venice, according to The Morning Telegraph. As Portia, Ada pleased her admirers by breaking from "the dignity of the straight reading to light shades of quaint comedy," in a delightful manner. Skinner too gave a finished portrait of Shylock and after the contest between the two in the trial scene, they got three curtain-calls.

"Sometimes brilliant, and at all times faithful to the ideal," Ada had lost nothing in the passing years and Skinner had gained much, reported another newsman. But The New York World thought Skinner lacked "deep feeling" in his acting, while Ada's Portia was "ever a delight," revealing "the depth of womanliness and affection of Portia's nature." Ada's Portia, her Lady Teazle and, especially her Katherine would all be recorded as classics in the history of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, declared the same commentator.

Indeed, Katherine, the Shrew, stood out as Ada's best impersonation. In Ada's opinion,

'Katherine's own words [pointed] out her fine
intelligence, which [placed] her far beyond the common acceptation of the word "shrew." I look upon her as a grand creature, a very noble nature, of high breeding—a spoiled, wilful child, who had always her own way with everyone. Highstrung and nervous, though, at the same time, strong and thoroughly healthy, she could not bear a shadow of contradiction.\footnote{155}

An exhausting role, Katherine demanded a sustained force of passion from Ada throughout the entire play,\footnote{156} even more so because Ada never lost the character when off the stage. It remained with her in her thoughts. "I have lived, so to speak, whole days and weeks with Katherine of Padua,"\footnote{157} remarked the star. She reveled in the "character as a boldly drawn, hot-blooded, genuinely feminine type,"\footnote{158} which seemed a very part of herself.\footnote{159} If Katherine was her favorite role, Ada chose Lady Teazle as her second best.\footnote{160}

In spite of predictions that the tour would fail because Shakespeare was unpopular and musical novelties in vogue, it proved a great artistic and financial success. They filled the Lyric Theatre in New York every night at a time when theatres in New York were doing poor business.\footnote{161} In one week they made between eleven and twelve thousand dollars.\footnote{162} However, the death of Ada's brother William on opening night once again brought grief in the midst of success. In order not to jeopardize the tour no one told her of her brother's death until four days after it occurred.\footnote{163}

In his biography, Otis Skinner paints a picture of Ada as a sad, ill woman whose "nearest and dearest" companion in the world was a little black cocker spaniel dog named 'Bobs,' for whom she sacrificed her own comfort by staying in second-rate hotels rather than relegate the dog's care to stagehands. According to Skinner, Ada was no longer
the "exquisite comedienne" he remembered from his Daly days; she took no pleasure in acting, seeing it as an obligation; and she was helpless without Daly. It is unclear in what way Ada was helpless since Skinner does not explain. However, the audience and critics alike still saw the fine artistry in her acting and George C. Tyler testifies to the fact that even at a rehearsal "When Miss Rehan got her cue and came bouncing in, her shoulders were back, her eyes were sparkling, her voice rang out like a girl's--she was as vivacious and youthful a Katherine as she'd ever been in the grand days of Daly's company." In addition, Ada explained to a Boston Daily Globe reporter that after being alone with her dogs and books, surrounded by beautiful scenery in her bungalow in Cumberland for several years, the fascination of the theatre was "'too strong to resist.'" She described the pleasure she took in her present acting tour:

At any rate, when George C. Tyler held out to me the alluring prospect of appearing once more in those roles in which I feel the happiest, and in which the public has been so gracious as to find me worthy of special praise, I could not resist the temptation. For many years I have lived with Katherine, the Shrew, until she seems sometimes to be, in verity, a very part and parcel of myself, and the pleasure of portraying her imperious temper and gradual transformation into the affectionate humility of wifehood is as strong within me as of yore.

After Daly's death Ada employed lawyers to insure she was treated fairly in the distribution of his estate; she earned money in real estate; she auctioned off inherited pieces too expensive to store; and she still earned good money acting although exact figures are unknown. Skinner benefitted from the tour as well. In the previous ten years he had acted in New York occasionally in minor roles, but performing with Ada in the classical repertoire earned him "the prestige and
distinction which a metropolitan success alone [could] bestow. Without her drawing power Skinner could not have enhanced his career as he did with her as his costar. Newspapers indicated that Ada kept herself informed about the business negotiations of her career. She directed her lawyers to request an accounting of the box office receipts for the Skinner tour to assure that she received her full percentage of them in addition to her salary. The hardships of constant travel due to many one-night stands, combined with her illness and grief over her brother's death, apparently wore on Ada's nerves. In one instance she refused to perform because her dog was ill and she would not leave him; but the stage manager, Joseph Buckley, prevailed upon her and she relented. The precarious state of her health necessitated a trained nurse, Miss Nelson, as her companion. An incident Skinner uses to illustrate his point concerning Ada's bad humor also reveals the problems she faced in dealing with people who appear not to have had her best interests at heart. After a performance in Norfolk, Virginia, Buckley arranged to have the boat that transported them to the railroad terminal pick them up at twelve thirty rather than an earlier hour in order to accommodate Skinner who wished to eat after the performance. But neither Skinner nor Buckley consulted Ada about her preference in the matter. Annoyed that she could not go directly to the private railroad car in which they traveled, she insisted upon going to the boat earlier. Instead of admitting that he arranged the later time for Skinner's convenience, which Ada may have suspected, Buckley delayed their departure by tipping hotel personnel to slow their leave-taking. When Ada expressed her annoyance at the obvious delays, Buckley
pretended to scold the people he had just paid to make blunders, creating an elaborate scenario for Ada's benefit. Since Buckley had managed Skinner before, he obviously arranged affairs to suit the actor. Both men's deceptive behavior towards her may have contributed to her reported moodiness as well as the discontinuance of their partnership the following season. Ada reportedly was considering an offer to join Sir Henry Irving in London in a series of comedies, while Skinner planned to tour in a repertory of plays performed by Edwin Booth before his death.

But the year 1904 also marked the beginning of a personal correspondence between Ada and George Bernard Shaw. Long an admirer of Ada, Shaw wanted her to portray Lady Cicely in his Captain Brassbound's Conversion; he had tried unsuccessfully to induce Ellen Terry to do it since 1899, and he considered Ada the only other actress fit for it.

Although Ada apparently considered the play pointless after reading it, he still wrote to her on June 29 requesting the opportunity to read the play to her himself. Claiming that he had her in his mind "when he wrote the play," he did not approach her sooner because he had no successful drama with a woman's part until his present play, Candida. He also feared he had alienated her with his criticism of Daly, who, he said, taught her a technique but limited her depth, and wasted her genius on "man-made foolishness like the Countess Gucki when [she] had become one of the greatest actresses in the world." Demands from actresses and producers for the play forced him to ask her to portray Lady Cicely rather than let it go to anyone else. Now in London for her yearly vacation, Ada's reply to Shaw on June 30 reveals her wish not to disappoint him by her possible inability to perform the
role. Nevertheless, the prospect of hearing Shaw read the play delighted her, but she warned him that she had little control over her management. With that understanding she arranged their meeting for three o'clock on Saturday, July 2. Confident after Ada responded favorably to the reading of his play, Shaw wrote to her again proposing that she tour the play under the management of a theatrical trust, specifically suggesting Charles Frohman and an opening in London in the spring of 1905. Under this agreement Shaw would allow only Ada to portray Lady Cicely in the larger American or British towns for three years on condition that the production take place within the following two years. Shaw considered the Trust "a perfectly inevitable commercial development" and advised Ada "to leave theatrical speculation to the speculators." The management could relieve her of all "pecuniary responsibility" and pay his royalties.

But Ada had understood from their conversation that she could "acquire the rights entirely for" herself, affording her the freedom of producing it whenever "the opportunity should arise." She had thought that she might be able to produce it during her winter tour that year but she found Shaw's business conditions impossible to accept. Thanking him for the honor of considering her for the role, she assured him that the personality of the interpreter of Lady Cicely was a secondary matter because the play would stand on its own merits; her long experience had taught her that success in the theatre depended upon the substance of the play. Shaw shot a reply back almost immediately to Ada asking her to allow them to begin again. He ordered: "You must spend a day in thinking now—or get somebody you can trust to do it for you—and then name your conditions." He then
proceeded to describe what Ada would and probably already had faced in dealing directly with the new businessmen of the theatre. If she kept the rights of the play entirely to herself, every concession, every farthing that the theatres [could] now get out of [Shaw], they [would] then be able to get out of [her]. Indeed, they [would] get more. They [would] bargain with her without [scruple], without delicacy, without caring one rap for [her] interests, and quite possibly without even confining their own aims to business matters--for instance, they [might] be trying to build up a reputation for somebody else. It would be far better to leave them to fight it out with [Shaw]. . .

After thus building up to his climax, he declared it impossible for her to "fight Frohman & Klaw & Erlanger & Shubert & all the rest single handed." He finally closed with: "I must have you for Lady Cicely; & I WILL, WILL, WILL. So there!"

A few days later he again urged Ada to consider Frohman rather than the Shubert brothers, Sam, Lee, and Jacob, especially for London. But if she did choose the Shuberts "on no account" should she pay royalties out of her percentage. The Shuberts, declared Shaw, should provide him with royalties and Ada should "leave all the trouble" of business to Shaw who had thought of many things and knew what was going to happen. Ada must have agreed once more to do the role because on July 14 Shaw wrote to thank her for her letter which inspired him with joy. He then informed her he would approach Frohman about managing his play with her as Lady Cicely in London. Ada's quick and resolute response via telegram elicited a letter on July 16 from Shaw reassuring her that he had not involved her with the syndicate and would not commit her in any way with them. But in the rest of the letter he launched into a lengthy attack on Minnie Maddern Fiske's husband who
opposed the syndicate, refusing to allow his wife to work with it. Again Shaw defended the trust and Charles Frohman, telling Ada not to worry about his tentative negotiations because she could repudiate them at any time. He implored her pity for their fellow creature Frohman and promised every stone would be turned for her sake. ¹⁸⁹

Shaw told Ellen Terry later that month that after reading the play to Ada, she wanted it "for all the world." His estimation of the situation clearly illustrates Ada's opposition to the syndicate and loyalty to Daly:

But alas! this stately Rehan is a most fiery, simple, sentimental, loyal, faithful soul; and now she dismisses Brassbound from her life as her bitterest disappointment because 'we can never see things from the same point of view,' which means that she has found me out in two brutal & cynical crimes: first, that I actually want her to make terms with the syndicate which squeezed her dear dead teacher & manager [Augustin] Daly almost into bankruptcy, and second and worst, that my opinion of the said Daly as a manager for a woman of genius when Ibsen revolutions are taking place is hardly more flattering than my opinion of Henry Irving in the same capacity. She is simpler than you and has not your literary genius; so that I am much more disagreeable and bewildering for her.¹⁹⁰

In response, Ellen Terry urged Shaw to give Ada his play because "She would do great things with it... [and] Lady C. [Cicely was] not strong enough to play itself."¹⁹¹

Accordingly, in another lengthy epistle to Ada on August 2, Shaw modified his criticism of Daly by praising him for teaching her the traditions of the time. But he pointed out that the public point of view changed during Daly's lifetime and Ada outgrew his guidance. Shaw's explanation of the effect of the change in social attitudes towards women, which in turn altered audience response to Ada's
Katherine, illuminates her triumph with that role as well as with Lady Teazle. According to Shaw, Ibsen changed the image of women in drama with *A Doll's House* by presenting them as "serious and sometimes heroic figures, exercising moral influences and religious influences; responding to these influences from others; and struggling with all the currents of the thought of their day" rather than as "mere doll-sweethearts, with no influence except the influence of their pretty faces." As a result, the public changed its point of view, and saw Katherine as strong and resolute, which allowed Ada "to make the married part of *The Taming of the Shrew* tragic, and to win a success of the first order in a part that had never before carried a success of more than the second order." Shaw believed that without Ada's influence Daly would have created a stronger Petruchio in comparison to her Katherine in his adaptation of the play. But her Katherine outshone Drew's Petruchio. With the changing times, villains became heroes and the public no longer exalted in the taming of Katherine; therefore Ada's portrayal succeeded. In the same way Shaw believed she won sympathy for Lady Teazle.

Similarly, Shaw told Ada, people in London demanded to see fully matured women such as Mrs. Madge Kendal in women's roles rather than in trivial girl's parts. But for thirty years Mrs. Kendal, and by implication Ada, had chosen to perform the drama of 1860 in which Mrs. Kendal believed and which contained exclusively heroines under twenty-five. Mrs. Kendal toured the provinces where she earned so much money that she stayed there not troubling herself about the demands of London. Shaw thought Daly held the same view as Mrs. Kendal and both were partially right. "The Scrap of Paper actually [did] make more
money for her [Mrs. Kendal] than Hedda Gabler would. This would be ten times more true of anyone who could play Shakespeare in the grand manner, as you [Ada] can," explained Shaw, because "everywhere the old school is triumphant when its exponents can act." He admitted to Ada that Daly was right and she could still gain great glory "on the old lines." Even if like Sarah Bernhardt, Ada kept in touch with London by trying "an occasional experiment in a new direction," she would still find herself relying mostly on Daly's lines because up to a point they were the best lines, Shaw assured her. In taming Captain Brassbound in Shaw's play, Lady Cicely used force of character, whereas Daly's Countess Gucki used coquetry to achieve the same ends and Daly would see this now, Shaw continued. While Ada was quite right to be loyal to Daly, she should not sacrifice herself to his traditions that were right in his time but wrong now. According to Shaw, Daly was unable "to see the artist [Ada] he taught as I [Shaw] see the artist [Ada] who taught me."

Shaw wrote to Ada that in addition to outgrowing Daly's guidance because the public view changed, Ada outgrew his guidance because the economic "system of One Manager, One Theatre" gave way to that of "One Syndicate, Fifty Theatres." Ada would have to take his word that the new system improved on the old. "I am only feebly trying to take care of you," said Shaw. Probably discouraged by her distressing dealings with businessmen as well as her need to fight Daly's estate, and Shaw's overwhelming arguments in favor of the syndicate, Ada told Shaw that "a woman ought to be taken care of." To which he replied: "She ought; but she never is." In begging her forgiveness for wounding her and offering her consolation and support, Shaw wrote to
her:

If only I were strong enough, I had much rather deliver you from all stifling, ageing, sentimental ties and loyalties; tap your heart all over with an adamant hammer to convince it it is not in the least broken; and inspire you to the conquest of a new world, with new ideas, new people, new plays, new struggles, new failures that will turn out to be triumphs, new hopes and fears, new everything. That is not the way to be nice to you; but it is the only way to be of real use to you. Hermione [in The Winter's Tale] has been long enough on her pedestal.

Touched by Shaw's concern for her and his apology for his criticism of Daly, Ada once more agreed to play Lady Cicely to the best of her ability under the Shuberts' management. Shaw wanted her to play it in London first and then appear in it in the United States. But Ada informed him that the only way she could see of her doing it was in America first, then, if it succeeded, in London. In any case Shaw would have to convince the Shuberts to accept it. She wished to produce it during her winter tour in America with Charles Richman. Now her self-appointed advisor, Shaw argued for a London opening, explaining how she could eliminate the risk of a London failure which she feared. Because her genius did not include lesser roles such as the Sweet Nells, she would have to do her best roles, explained Shaw. She could not fail "in a first rate play by a first rate author at a first rate theatre under first rate management." The only two authors possible were Barrie and himself, according to Shaw. Naturally, his play offered better assurance of success for her than a Barrie piece. Whatever Ada decided, Shaw believed the Shuberts could be convinced to commit themselves to "a great Rehan season if they were properly handled."

Shaw explained his motives in corresponding with Ada differently
to Ada's good friend, Lady Barrington, than he had to Ellen Terry. He confirmed Lady Barrington's prediction that Ada would angrily reject any proposal of a business alliance with the Theatrical Syndicate. But he risked it because he found it necessary to "lay violent hands on the goddess; demolish the old temple; and leave her exposed to all the storms of a tempestuous modern world, under a new order, and amid a new generation."\(^{207}\) He assured Lady Barrington that he and Ada were "now very good friends." He claimed to be uninterested in a performance of his play. "The thing that really interested [him] was the getting of her free, the release of her genius from superstitions of 1860, disguised as personal loyalties & attachments, the convincing her that the modern theatrical syndicate was a huge improvement on the old theatrical manager as an instrument for her practical commercial business."\(^{208}\) True to his word, Shaw does seem to have wanted to help Ada and asked Granville Barker to adapt George Meredith's *Diana of the Crossways* for her because she requested he get someone to do it.\(^{209}\) Moreover, before her American tour, Shaw wrote to Ada to give her Barker's address, to remind her of Lady Cicely, and just to enjoy the pleasure of writing to her. In his letter to her, he also spoke of making the theatrical managers, Liebler & Co., pay "a just retribution" for their treatment of her the previous winter, further indicating that they treated her unfairly in connection with the Skinner tour.\(^{210}\)

Leaving the question of a production of *Brassbound* unresolved, on October 31, 1904, Ada began her sixteen-week tour of the large American cities under the management of the Shuberts with her Katherine in New Haven, Connecticut.\(^{211}\) In addition to *The Taming of the Shrew*, she included *Twelfth Night*, *The Country Girl*, and *The School for Scandal* in
her repertory. Although she could still draw a full house to the opening of a new theatre, as she did in Saint Louis on December 26 when she opened the Garrick Theatre for the Shubert brothers with her Lady Teazle, her tour brought a mixed response from reviewers. The Washington Post critic acknowledged that her art remained unchanged. She could "evoke laughter, or tears, or tensity;" and she knew how to use her voice and gestures to express "anger or hesitation or whatnot," coupling intelligence with her fine technique. Yet she had lost her charm, which did not relate to her age since both Ellen Terry and Henry Irving retained their personal appeal in spite of being older than Ada. A New York reviewer thought she appeared older than "the shrew that Shakespeare drew" and she betrayed a momentary weariness in her performance. Nevertheless, the same writer declared her still unrivalled in the role of Katherine and probably never equalled. The Dispatch of Pittsburgh detected rare instances of beauty in which she sparkled and shone forth as Katherine but believed all the spontaneity, vigor, and "vivid spirit of her art had passed." Not unexpectedly, her old champion, William Winter judged her Katherine brilliant. And The Boston Evening Transcript agreed with Winter praising her brilliant triumph of art. Likewise, the Toledo Blade described the "surety and precision only possible in genius, [with which] she touched every side of the complex part" as well as the truth embodied in every phase of her performance. Imbued with all the graces of her art, she made the role a "living verity." In spite of meagre audiences in New York, Ada extended her tour for three more weeks.

A young actress, Fola La Follette, who refused more prominent acting work "to 'play bits'" in Ada's company, recalled the tour and
Ada with fondness. The young woman's parents passed on to her their admiration for Ada and she developed her own devotion to the older artist upon working with her and seeing her perform. La Follette's recollections offer the insight of a younger generation into Ada's private and professional life at this time. While Ada employed a stage manager she personally attended and directed almost all the rehearsals for eight weeks prior to the opening in New Haven. From the handing out of scripts to each company member at the first rehearsal to a personal demonstration of the minuet when a dancing instructor failed to teach the performers the delicate steps, Ada controlled every aspect of production. When her nephew attempted to hide his lines in his hat she quickly exposed him; when Miss La Follette's costume did not fit she replaced it; and when the young actress wore unbecoming makeup, Ada taught her how to apply it correctly. She maintained a discreet distance from the company members and a decorum that included an impersonal greeting and a hierarchy among the artists according to the importance of their positions earned through long experience and strenuous work. Yet she concerned herself with the well-being and comfort of the most insignificant company members. Rather than put people out of work by canceling eight weeks of one-night stands, she endured the rigors of "catching trains at from four to six A. M. and travelling until two or three in the afternoon."220 Because of the schedule and "zero weather" she invited the women of the company to share her special car as well as the services of her chef and waiter for only the cost of the food. On particularly difficult jumps she accommodated the men of the company as well. When hotels refused her black maid, "Lizzie, a room, she would have a cot placed in her own
room rather than have her devoted servant discriminated against."^221

Ada exhibited her thoughtfulness and generosity towards her young admirer in several other ways. When Fola stopped viewing scenes from the wings by order of the stage manager, Ada called her to her dressing room to inquire about her absence. Explaining that her banishment resulted from a disturbance one night by some extras, the young actress regained her cherished viewing place in the following manner:

The stage manager was summoned at once. To my inexpressible joy I heard Miss Rehan direct him to admit me to the first entrance and to see that a chair was provided for me whenever I wished to watch the play. Then she added to me: 'If there is anyone in my company who cares enough about acting to wish to watch and learn they are to have the opportunity. How else are the young people to grow?'^222

Obviously impressed with her protegée's desire to absorb all the knowledge of the theatre she could, Ada provided her with copies of the acting versions of a number of plays in her repertoire when she spied the young actress attempting to make her own cuttings of them. In addition Ada generously presented her with a transcript of the prompt book of The Taming of the Shrew so that she might copy "the stage directions line for line." But Ada's offer to allow Fola to play one of the more important women's roles when they played the apprentice's home town of Madison, Wisconsin "most deeply touched the young actress."^223

Knowing that in spite of her poor health Ada still persevered increased Fola's respect for her mentor. Ada even confided to her how her dog, "Bobsy," had attached himself to her after a frightening sea voyage and in spite of her resistance to having a "pet lap dog," she adopted the animal. But Fola discerned in Ada "a saddened and lonely
spirit" that involuntarily isolated her from others. And even an enthusiastic, filled-to-capacity audience in Madison, Wisconsin, did not change Ada's resolve to end her career. When they thanked her after the performance "for all the happiness she had given them" that night and in the years past," she tearfully informed Fola's parents "this was to be her last season." When they protested that she could not deprive people of her magic, she said she was an old woman. But she did not mean her white hairs. Putting her hand over her heart she told her friends she was old there, betraying a deep sense of loss and discouragement.

Similarly, Ada revealed the same sadness in an article she wrote for Madame in which she recalled some of her favorite roles and performers. She credited Mrs. Gilbert and Augustin Daly with being sponsors for her theatrical career. She learned to strive for truth in her acting through attention to detail from Daly. The current emphasis on huge expenditures to make a play more commercially appealing rather than on artistic merit shocked and discouraged her. Shakespeare should never cease to appeal in her opinion, especially her favorite comedy, The Taming of the Shrew. Likewise Sheridan's School for Scandal transcended time. Lady Teazle's "grace of manner, coquetry and prettiness of speech . . . appealed to [Ada] as the ideal of a comedienne's role." The simple charm of The Country Girl in a similar way awakened pleasant memories of past acquaintances and successes with Daly. But in the present she saw "new people coming into prominence and old ones passing away." At the end of all the striving and struggle "the actor [achieved] his greatest fame while living [and was] soon forgotten." Unlike a painter or a sculptor,
an actor left nothing tangible behind. According to Ada, "the actor [declaimed] his lines to audiences [who] momentarily remember[ed] the voice of the living speaker, [but forgot] the declaimer when the tongue [was] stilled by death."229 Yet the greater glory of having done her bit of good in the world by amusing her fellow creatures compensated for "the disappointment of not having achieved a lasting and eternal fame."230

If the tour disappointed Ada, her designation of her as one in a group of five great latter-day comediennes in a lecture given by Sir Squire Bancroft, the famous British actor/manager, at the Royal Institute in London must have been gratifying.231 But it could not have changed the fact that in New York, her home and place of her greatest success, she could no longer draw a full house.232 She ended her season by participating in a "Testimonial Performance for the benefit of Helena Modjeska" at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, on May 2, 1905,233 after which she sailed to England on May 20.234

A month later her theatrical managers, Sam and Lee Shubert, received a Cablegram from London saying she suffered from an attack of appendicitis. At the same time, the Shuberts, to whom she was still contracted, announced that they expected to present her in Shaw's Captain Brassbound's Conversion in the fall. Once again she was staying with her good friends, Lord and Lady Barrington.235 The following day The New York Times announced that her condition did not require surgery and she had improved.236

After seeing Sam Shubert in March 1905, Shaw resumed his campaign to commit Ada to portray Lady Cicely; he wrote to her urging her to
convince Shubert to present the play in London before America. Unfortunately, Sam Shubert died in a railroad accident not long after Shaw saw him. Shaw subsequently began pressuring Ada to stay in London for the winter and perform Lady Cicely at the Royal Court Theatre there, saying he wanted no one but her in the role. At the same time, the Royal Court Theatre was pressing Shaw for the play and David Belasco also approached him about joining Lee Shubert in producing it. Shaw wanted to begin rehearsing Ada in the role very soon. But Ada's illness precluded any agreement between the two at the time. However, Shaw still insisted she could play at the "Court" in the autumn, telling Lady Barrington that in his own callous way he loved Ada as much as she did. Then Ellen Terry's offer to the Royal Court Theatre to portray Lady Cicely the following March 1906 prompted Shaw to entreat Lady Barrington to ask Ada to consider taking Ellen Terry's dates. But because Ada's doctors absolutely forbade her to play for a year Shaw postponed the production. He told the theatre manager, John Vedrenne, that he did not wish to throw the play away on anyone "not up to the proper weight." According to Shaw, "Ellen Terry [was] the only one equal to it; and she [did] not believe in it: she would play it on the strength of [his] 'success'; and the result would be very doubtful." At the same time, Shaw explained to Granville Barker that Ada gave the play up when she became ill, thinking she was ending her stage career. He promised to hold the play for her as long as she liked because she needed such medicine to recover; and he could not go back on his word.

When Vedrenne engaged Ellen Terry anyway because he wanted an immediate agreement, Shaw urged Ada to undertake the play at once and
wrote to Ellen Terry pleading a moral obligation to Ada. From Terry he received no response; Lady Barrington replied for Ada that she was not physically strong enough to do it. Shaw angrily informed Lady Barrington that Terry could have the role although he believed Ada could do it in March. He would "have nothing to do with great geniuses" in the future, he declared. At least Ada could "sit still and look noble. Ellen [would] fidget and flounce all about the place unless [he froze] her with mere terror; and then she [would] forget every word of her part."²⁴⁶ He did not believe Ada was ill. "She [was] a consummate actress" and just wanted to escape Captain Brassbound's Conversion. He told Lady Barrington that he no longer cared about the play.²⁴⁷ Lady Barrington must have been reluctant to convey Shaw's message to Ada because he wrote to her again advising her to let Ada know the worst. Had Ada made a commitment for two years ahead, he could have held the play. But Barker's career was at stake and Terry did commit herself; so he had to let the London engagement go to Terry. Yet he still had hopes for Ada in America. For six years, he added, he attempted to interest Ada in the role and she had only considered it for six minutes out of kindness to him. His desire for Ada in the role had "been the ferocious selfishness of the artist who [wanted] a rare talent for a particular piece of work."²⁴⁸ Although he had to "give way to the inevitable. . . . No other Lady [would] do quite as well or nearly as well."²⁴⁹

Shaw had written the play for Ellen Terry, but by 1905 he actually would have preferred Ada to Ellen Terry as Lady Cicely because Ada was ten years younger. After seeing Terry during the Christmas holidays and noting the effects of time on her appearance,²⁵⁰ he wrote to Ada
concerning the American appearance. According to Shaw, dozens of actresses, including Henrietta Crosman wanted to portray Lady Cicely in America. Ada could see Ellen Terry in the role in the spring and see how it should be handled. Unhappy with Eleanor Robson's portrayal of his Major Barbara, Shaw added: "Can nobody deliver long rhetorical speeches grandly but Ada Rehan? Is there really nobody else? Did nature break the mould?"251

In January 1906 Ada's long dispute with Augustin Daly's estate ended with the referee deciding in her favor. Ada had contended she should get one-fifth of the profits from the operation of the London theatre, which the executors did not sell when they sold the New York theatre. Although the exact sum of money was undisclosed, Ada would receive her percentage of the profits since Daly's death as well as in the future.252 If she had any financial worries about retirement before, fortunately for her, they no longer existed. In a letter to Lady Barrington, Shaw indicated that Ada's doctors in New York warned her that if she did not retire from the stage she would die. Nevertheless, he wrote Lady Barrington to request that she tell Ada not to listen to the doctors because Ada did not know what was wrong with her. Shaw believed she only guessed it was her heart. And he wondered if it could have been an appendicitis complicated by the heart, making an operation under anesthetics too dangerous. He told Lady Barrington that he had written to Ada advising her not to take the doctors' opinion unless she thought they were right. Then "she must retire," said Shaw. But otherwise he would risk killing her if she would risk dying. 253

Illness plagued Ellen Terry, too, during the rehearsals of Captain
Brassbound's Conversion to the point that she obviously lacked sureness in her opening performance. The play had a long run for the Royal Court Theatre but Shaw complained of unsatisfactory returns. Yet he did not blame Terry; he blamed the play. When Ada replied to Shaw early in May from New York, she had consulted with another doctor whose findings were not encouraging. She planned to sail to England on May 26 and arrive in London on June 2. While there, she would see Captain Brassbound's Conversion and visit her London doctors. She confided in Shaw: "I feel as if I must play again. I am willing, rather than face the picture you draw of retirement."[255]

Unfortunately, Ada could not sail for England until June 10 because she experienced another attack of appendicitis on June 2, forcing her to cancel her original plans. Lady Barrington journeyed from England to New York for the express purpose of caring for Ada on her voyage to England. When they arrived at the dock to depart for England Ada required assistance to walk up the gangplank. After her arrival in London, she was compelled to rest one week and then ordered to Cumberland at once, but she stole out one afternoon to see Ellen Terry as Lady Cicely. "Ellen Terry was delightful—as good as ever," Ada wrote to Shaw. She wondered how he could ever care to see her as Lady Cicely. She confessed that she previously thought something of a demon, but he was so forgiving that now she knew there was much of the angel in him. She would try to get up to London in a few weeks if she improved. But "climbing uphill [that] morning seemed so slow;" she might not be able to come. She promised her doctors she would not act for at least six months, and so she feared Shaw must give her up. If Ellen Terry wanted to do the play in America, she ought to
have it. Terry would make a success of it. After a final plea from Shaw, Ada wrote to him for the last time saying:

I have paused before answering your last letter as you requested. It grieves me to tell you I cannot play Brassbound next October. You can never understand how hard it has been for me to write to you. Thank you for your last kind letter.

Ada remained at her bungalow in Cumberland for the winter of 1906-07 with Lady Barrington. They spent most of their time outdoors with Ada's horses and dogs. She returned to New York in October 1907 amid rumors of a venture into vaudeville that came to naught. And when she returned to New York from her annual European trip the following year (October 1908) she told reporters she would never act again. She had given up the idea two years before when she had to forgo Shaw's play because of illness. The theatre and requirements upon the actress had changed since her day. "'The long training, the matter of stage deportment, the declamatory ability, these things were not thought of as they once were. It was so serious, so hard then," said Ada. The great demand for amusement encouraged plays that could not survive now. She longed for "'the day when Shakespeare was the ruling ideal.'" Six months later she had what she described as "'an attack of the heart from which [she] was unconscious for some time.'" Probably suffering from a stroke, she had to be assisted up the gangplank once again as she left for her home in the north of England. She never attempted a return to the stage again.

Daly's death in 1899 was the beginning of the end of Ada's career. She had been immediately confronted with professional decisions she was not prepared to encounter. Already in poor health, the added opposition of Mrs. Daly and her brother to Ada as well as the final
The disposition of Daly's Theatre in New York only added to her distress. The lack of a home theatre forced her to endure the rigors of touring again, further damaging her already deteriorating health. The deaths of her mother and brother Arthur following so soon after Daly's demise left her grief stricken. She did not perform for two years. William's death after her return to professional life added to her growing depression.

George Bernard Shaw sensed a deep disillusionment in Ada when he approached her to portray Lady Cicely in his Captain Brassbound's Conversion. But her strong loyalty and commitment to Augustin Daly made it impossible for her to capitulate to the Theatrical Syndicate and to Charles Frohman. Ada's attempt to advance her career with a new role, Nell Gwyn, succeeded only moderately. In her subsequent touring her two favorite roles, Katherine the Shrew and Lady Teazle, reconfirmed her popularity with her audiences and critics alike.

Ada's last tour revealed her directorial and managerial ability. Unfortunately, it also demonstrated New York's lack of interest in Shakespeare, and the necessity of touring, as well as creating new roles if she were to continue her career. Shaw had persuaded her that retirement held no happiness for her. His encouragement, a young actress's admiration, successful tours, and her own determination might have restored her interest in her career, but nothing could restore her health. Her doctors clearly gave her a choice of retirement or an early death. Although she experienced difficulties in adjusting to the changing theatrical conditions, it was physical illness that finally forced her to retire from the stage.

During the remaining years of Ada's life she was a semi-invalid;
forced her to retire from the stage.

During the remaining years of Ada's life she was a semi-invalid; but she sometimes attended the theatre and she continued to divide her time between New York and England. With her two sisters, Hattie and Kate, at her bedside as well as her nephew, Arthur Byron, Ada died on January 8, 1916, of arteriosclerosis and cancer at Roosevelt Hospital in New York. She was fifty-eight years of age. Like her personal life, Ada's funeral was private. "Only members of her family and a few close friends" attended the Episcopal service at her residence on West Ninety-third Street in New York. She chose to be cremated and have the urn containing her ashes placed in the family vault in Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn. Augustin Daly's brother, Joseph, attended the funeral as well as Ada's good friend, Mrs. Whitin. Many others sent remembrances, respecting her desire for a small, simple funeral.
Notes—Chapter 7

1 Chicago Democrat 8 June 1899, 43 vols. in Daly's Theatre Scrapbooks 43. Most volumes of the Augustin Daly Scrapbooks have no page numbers and the pagination that does exist is often erratic and unreliable. The scrapbooks are in the New York Public Library Theatre Collection and also available on microfilm in the University of Illinois Library. Hereafter cited as DTS.

2 W. Graham Robertson, Times Was, (London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd., 1931) 231.

3 Robertson.

4 Robertson.

5 The Daily Telegraph (London) 9 June 1899, DTS 43.


7 The Daily Telegraph (New York) 2 July 1899 and Elmira Telegram 25 June 1899, DTS 43.


9 Cincinnati Commercial Tribune 18 June 1899, DTS 43.


11 Ada Rehan, Letter to William Winter, 1 July 1899, Folger
Shakespeare Library, Washington, D. C.

12 Ada Rehan, Letter to William Winter, 1 July 1899.

13 Ada Rehan, Letter to William Winter, 1 July 1899.

14 New Haven Leader 27 June 1899 and Hartford Post 23 June 1899, DTS 43.


16 Joseph Francis Daly 645-7.


18 Joseph Francis Daly 650.


20 Unidentified newspaper clipping 21 Aug. 1899.

21 Unidentified newspaper clipping 21 Aug. 1899.

22 Joseph Francis Daly 650.


24 St. Paul Press 16 July 1899, DTS 43.


31 Brooklyn Standard Union 20 June 1899, DTS 43.
32 Joseph Francis Daly 645.

33 New Orleans Times Democrat 8 June 1899, DTS 43.

34 Louisville Commercial 8 June 1899, DTS 43.

35 Cincinnati Commercial Tribune 18 June 1899, DTS 43.

36 Press (Philadelphia) 21 June 1899, DTS 43.

37 Press (Philadelphia) 21 June 1899.


48 W. E. Barker, "Copyright in a Dramatic Work," The Oxford


54 In 1904 Shaw wrote to Ellen Terry explaining that Ada had refused to play Lady Cicely in his play, Captain Brassbound's Conversion, because he wanted her "to make terms with the syndicate which squeezed her dear dead teacher and manager Daly almost into bankruptcy." Christopher St. John, ed., Ellen Terry and Bernard Shaw 374-75.


56 Hillary Bell, Press (New York) 31 May 1900.


59 Hapgood 29-32.
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113 Unidentified newspaper clipping 29 Nov. 1903, in "Ada Rehan" Portfolios.
118 Amy Leslie, 9 Dec. 1903.
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256 "Ada Rehan Sails; May Not Return," The Telegraph (New York) 10
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257 Ada Rehan, Letter to George Bernard Shaw, 1 July 1906, "Ada
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263 Unidentified newspaper clipping, from Milwaukee, Wisconsin 22
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266 Unidentified newspaper clipping 4 Dec. 1909, in "Ada Rehan"
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Death, Ada Rehan, Registered Number 983 8 Jan. 1916.
Ada Rehan's acting career spanned thirty-three years of growth and change in the American theatre during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The story of her rise to fame forms a composite stage history representative of her time. As American theatre claimed a place in world theatre, Ada Rehan gradually grew to international prominence as "America's representative actress." Not confining herself to the United States alone, she competed with the best performers in Europe by appearing in England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, and France. The demanding range of her repertoire included sensational, historical, and romantic melodrama, poetic drama, Shakespearean comedy and tragedy, musical comedy, operetta, contemporary domestic comedies, and seventeenth and eighteenth-century English comedies. It was in the sensational melodramas typical of her time that she entered the profession in 1872, performing with her sister, Kate, and her brother-in-law, Oliver Doud Byron. Her experience with Byron, a stock actor and leading man, taught Ada skills in analyzing scripts and character, vocal projection, and the importance of discipline in the school of practical experience.

After only one season of playing walk-on roles, Ada entered one of the most crucial periods of her development, an apprenticeship under the demanding supervision of Mrs. Louisa Lane Drew, manageress of Philadelphia's Arch Street Theatre. Enlarging her knowledge of the basic repertoire of the day, she observed leading performers such as Dion Boucicault, John Brougham, W. J. Florence, Ada Gray, and Adelaide Neilson, as well as Mrs. Drew. While she was a member of the Arch
Street Theatre Company, she formed one of her most important professional relationships with Mrs. Drew's son, John, who later became her leading man. Two seasons of performing minor speaking roles in Mrs. Drew's troupe equipped Ada to play better supporting parts in Barney Macauley's stock company during the 1875-76 season.

Residence in Macauley's company broadened Ada's experience in additional plays and with other popular artists. She benefitted most by her promotion to larger juvenile roles while supporting such stars as Lawrence Barrett, Charlotte Crabtree, and Agnes Booth.

One year with Macauley's company enabled Ada to make another change in her career, performing leading roles with John W. Albaugh's stock company, which appeared regularly in Albany and Troy, New York, Providence, and Baltimore. The next three years provided her with exposure to every kind of popular drama and with every type of performer on the stage in yet another geographical area of the United States. She learned more about acting from such prominent role models as Mrs. J. H. Hackett, Rose Eytinge, John Brougham, Edwin Booth, John McCullough, and Maggie Mitchell. From Mitchell Ada could recognize the value of personal charm and vivacity. As the demands of Shakespearean tragedy broadened her range of emotional expression, her strong stage presence and personal magnetism became more prominent. But the growth of combination companies during these years caused a sharp decline of resident stock companies outside New York, including Albaugh's, forcing her to join Fanny Davenport's combination for several months.

It was while playing supporting roles with Fanny Davenport in New York during the spring of 1879, that Ada sought the major change in her career when she applied for work with Augustin Daly, the most powerful
and successful manager as well as star maker of the day. After performing in a small role in his adaptation of Zola's *L'Assomoir* at the Olympic Theatre, Ada sought a more permanent association with Daly by applying for a position in the stock company for the theatre he planned to open in the fall of 1879. Daly's engagement of her began a twenty-year association which took Ada to the crest of her career, broken only at his death.

Daly quickly recognized her talent, allowing Ada to play main roles that gained the attention of New York critics. Her rise to prominence was aided by her acting with three other veteran performers, John Drew, Mrs. Anne Hartley Gilbert, and James Lewis. The "Big Four" developed into a quartet of performers famous for their ensemble acting. At the same time, Daly featured Ada in leading roles in seventeenth and eighteenth-century English comedies, Pinero's contemporary British drama, and melodramatic plays of Victorien Sardou and the elder and younger Dumas.

The recognition of the "Big Four" as a smoothly functioning ensemble came with their first trip to England where they performed in 1884. At the same time, Ada also gained prominence in her other featured roles. As she grew in popularity, Daly enlarged her roles in all of his adaptations, and along with the other members of the quartet, Ada achieved a subtle style of acting, a kind of modified realism in contemporary plays, for which Daly's company had become known. When Ada and the company again performed in England in 1886, critics singled her out, according her greater acclaim. She earned praise and admiration from the English actress, Ellen Terry, the French actor, Constant Coquelin, and reviewers in France and Germany.
Continuing to increase her accomplishments and dominance, she achieved the most popular success of her career in the role of Katherine in 1887. The following year, she triumphed brilliantly in London in the role and made her first appearance as Katherine at Stratford-Upon-Avon. Ada's pattern of performance became regular in 1884 when the company began bi-annual summer visits abroad to perform, and also toured extensively throughout the United States before and after the season in New York every year. During the years they did not go abroad, they extended their tours as far west as San Francisco.

Ada's preeminence as an actress soon established her as a celebrity. Men adored her and women emulated her. And Daly increased the size and number of her roles to include more Shakespearean comedy and seventeenth and eighteenth-century comedy as well as a variety of contemporary and poetic drama by authors like Pinero and Tennyson. As her popularity and critical acclaim continued in a consistent pattern of growth, the "Big Four" deteriorated. John Drew's departure from the company in 1892 ended the quartet and facilitated the official acknowledgement of Ada as a star by Daly. While Daly had vehemently denied the fact of her unofficial stardom and openly fought the star system, maintaining one of the last resident stock companies in America, the public and press declared her a star as early as 1885. With no open advertisement as such, she had won star status by acclamation.

Ada's international eminence as a Shakespearean actress made it possible for her to spend the 1893-94 season performing at Daly's London theatre. American and foreign managers sought to employ her, but by this time, her emotional and professional/artistic attachment to
Daly would not permit her to leave him as others had done. Nor could she be assured that the other managers would promote her as Daly did. Upon her return to the United States in 1894, she became the only performer ever to tour under Daly's management as a star. At the height of her powers, she performed to phenomenal standing-room-only audiences.

The record of her career thus far had been one of continuous artistic growth and achievement. Almost every new season signified a crossroad in her professional/artistic growth. Acknowledged as one of the greatest actresses of her generation, she had to surpass herself to maintain her standing. At the same time, weaknesses overlooked before in her acting received more attention from the critics. Some said that she lapsed into a sing-song pattern of delivery and gasped spasmodically at times. But once criticized, she corrected these faults. George Bernard Shaw advised her to adapt to the changing times by portraying some of the "new woman" roles of the Ibsen school of realism. Since Daly, and perhaps Ada herself, disapproved of the new realism of Ibsen, they chose to concentrate their efforts on domestic comedies, seventeenth and eighteenth-century comedy, Shakespearean comedy, and a few melodramatic plays. While Daly found it difficult to find new plays for Ada, she succeeded in the ones he did produce and even attempted unusual roles such as Pierrot in the pantomime The Prodigal Son.

Having established herself as an international star, Ada performed again in London during the summers of 1895 and 1896. In 1897 she made her second successful appearance at Stratford-Upon-Avon in the role of Rosalind. In addition she was elected a Permanent Governor of the
Shakespeare Memorial Association. But the powerful Theatrical Syndicate had gained control of the best theatres, playwrights, and performers in the United States by 1896, making it difficult for Daly to find suitable plays for Ada and theatres to appear in on tours.

The greatest crisis of her career came with the death of Augustin Daly in 1899. Her career temporarily collapsed. The shocking loss of her personal friend and professional protector, manager, and director, combined with her health problems, were setbacks from which she could never fully recover. Ada further handicapped her career by her unwillingness to join with the syndicate and submit to Charles Frohman's management, forcing herself to tour when she resumed her career in the spring of 1900. The death of her mother and brothers so soon after Daly's demise, coupled with legal problems over her inheritance from Daly, added to her grief and health problems.

Between the spring of 1901 and the fall of 1903 Ada did not perform. After a grueling tour with Otis Skinner to many cities in America during the 1903-04 season, she toured one last time the next year in a repertoire, which included Katherine, Peggy Thrift, Lady Teazle, and Viola. Still loyal to Daly, Ada steadfastly refused to align herself with Charles Frohman in spite of George Bernard Shaw's compelling rhetoric. It took nearly two years for Shaw to get her to agree to portray Lady Cicely in Captain Brassbound's Conversion under the management of the Shubert Brothers. But Shaw's plans never came to fruition because by 1905 her doctors gave her the choice of retirement or an early death. Thereafter she lived as a semi-invalid until her death in 1916 at age fifty-eight.

Not the least of Ada Rehan's accomplishments was helping pave the
way for other American actresses in London such as Maude Adams and Julia Marlowe. Her phenomenal success with British audiences and critics created a new respect for American actresses and a more favorable atmosphere for those who followed; and it enabled Augustin Daly to build a theatre in London. Furthering the cause of realism and ensemble acting as a member of the "Big Four" and in contemporary plays, she also added new "life" to Shakespeare with her impersonations. In rivalling Ellen Terry not only did she prove herself America's foremost Shakespearean actress, but she showed conclusively the American capacity to compete with the British in the realm of Shakespeare. As a star and America's representative actress, she consistently encouraged a higher standard of acting throughout the United States with her touring. Although representative of nineteenth-century theatre, Ada looked forward to the twentieth-century theatre in her submission to Daly's direction. Even while touring as a star, she remained a member of his company in New York, subordinating herself to his position of authority as director/manager. She contributed to the development of the supremacy of the twentieth-century director through her unwavering support of Daly in that position.

More than eighty years after her retirement, Ada Rehan emerges as America's representative actress during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. "When in her prime Ada Rehan was superb, unapproachable." To achieve her comic effect, Ada combined strong body movement, gestures, facial expression, and superior vocal quality and delivery with a magnetic presence and extremes of passionate intensity. First successful as a charming ingenue, she widened her
range to include a variety of comic and romantic heroines in her repertoire. Ada's ability to portray girlish charm, naïveté, flirtatiousness, and exuberance enabled her to play the endearing ingenues of Daly's domestic comedies adapted from the German and French. These European plays generally featured a young woman capable of hypnotizing with her feminine wiles. A photograph of her as Psyche in Cinderella at School shows the appealing girlish innocence she projected (Plate 1). Her exuberance and charm stand out in a picture of her in the Jenny O'Jones scene from Red Letter Nights (Plate 2). She is pictured as the amiable, wild, and mischievous Tony pretending to be a "slatternly" hoyden. Her large, sincere smile and saucy pose, with hands on hips and literally "kicking up her heels," conveys a sense of fun and enjoyment. As Cousin Val in The Railroad of Love, she reveals her flirtatiousness in a photograph showing her leaning against one side of a door with John Drew on the other side (Plate 3). Amy Leslie described her as "delicious" in the risque poses, and swift changes from grave to gay this role demanded of her. During misunderstandings she lifted "her odd peaked eyebrows, [drew] down her lip and [swallowed] astonishment and humility with an appealing gulp."  

Ada also excelled in seventeenth and eighteenth-century English comic roles such as Peggy Thrift and Lady Teazle. She considered these characters two with whom she could most closely identify. "The charm of simplicity" that the play A Country Girl possessed appealed to her; and she thought Lady Teazle the ideal of a comedienne's role because of "her grace of manner, coquetry and prettiness of speech." A photograph of her Peggy Thrift illustrates the way she translated the mischievousness of the character with her body (Plate 4). The "simple
PLATE 1: Photograph of Rehan as Psyche.
PLATE 2: Photograph of Rehan as Jenny O'Jones.
PLATE 3: Photograph of Rehan and Drew in *The Railroad of Love*. 
PLATE 4: Photograph of Rehan in *The Country Girl*.
girl, who, in practice of the harmless wiles of love and courtship, comically develops a sudden and astonishing dexterity."8 Her ease and casualness in posture indicate a physical relaxation. The critic Clark Davis knew "of no other actress to whom acting [came] so spontaneously."9 The tilt of her head, the sly smile, and the half shut eyes looking in the direction of the audience illustrate the use of her mobile features. Like her Peggy Thrift, her Lady Teazle represented a type of character in a higher social class than most of the contemporary roles she played. Therefore she showed versatility by adjusting her actions to the customs of the times such as learning a minuet, curtsying, and the use of a fan as Lady Teazle. Yet in these seventeenth and eighteenth-century comedy roles the "romping" hoyden often appeared and always her "infectious good humor" made itself obvious. The photograph of her Lady Teazle reveals a hoydenish and a sensual quality about her (Plate 5). Her slight smirk and lowered eyelids seem to challenge anyone in sight. As one critic noted: "Ada Rehan, like Circe, plays the senses into the languor of insidious ease and then possesses them forever."10 William Winter explained Ada's gift of characterization: "like her great and renowned sister in dramatic art, Ellen Terry . . . [she possessed] the power to personify and [could] give the touch of reality."11

As Agatha Posket, Georgiana Tidman, Lady Nell, and Kate Verity she exhibited a refined, womanly charm necessary for Pinero's contemporary British comedies. And she succeeded in expressing more tender, pathetic, poetic, and dramatic emotions as the romantic Roxane, the tragic Rose Michel, the poetic Maid Marian, and the melodramatic Meg Merrilies. However, it is primarily in comedy that she earned her
PLATE 5: Photograph of Rehan as Lady Teazle.
fame. A quick glance at the number and variety of some of her most successful roles reveals a highly flexible, versatile professional few actresses could rival. She progressed from such comic ingenue roles as Libby (The Mighty Dollar), Selena (Needles and Pins), Phronie (Dollars and Sense), Thisbe (Quits), Telka (The Passing Regiment), Tony (Red Letter Nights), Nancy (Nancy and Company), Nisbe (A Night Off), and Floss (Seven-Twenty-eight) to more refined comic heroines such as Baroness Vera (The Last Word), Hermance (Countess Gucki), Annis Austin (Love on Crutches), Val (The Railroad of Love), and Lady Gay Spanker (London Assurance). Her seventeenth and eighteenth-century comedy roles include: Letitia Hardy (The Belle's Stratagem), Sylvia (The Recruiting Officer), Oriana (The Inconstant), Isabelle de Nesle (Wives), Donna Hypolita (She Would and She Would Not), Peggy Thrift (The Country Girl), and Lady Teazle (The School for Scandal). To these roles she brought a vitality and mischievousness, unmatched by other actresses. In 1894 Munsey's described the unique quality she brought to all her roles as "an earnestness, a dash, a subtleness, a spontaneity, in her acting that [magnetized] her audiences."12 Her Shakespearean repertoire was comprised of Mistress Ford (The Merry Wives of Windsor), Katherine (The Taming of the Shrew), Helena (A Midsummer Night's Dream), Rosalind (As You Like It), Princess of France (Loves's Labour's Lost), Viola (Twelfth Night), Beatrice (Much Ado About Nothing), Julia (The Two Gentlemen of Verona), and Portia (The Merchant of Venice).13

Within the Daly company itself, no actress ever surpassed Ada. Edith Kingdon, Henrietta Crossman, Maxine Elliot, and Blanche Bates left the company amid rumors of dissatisfaction with Ada's dominance. None of these actresses achieved Ada's stature, nor did any other
actress in the company. Only one actress rivaled Ada, Ellen Terry.

While Ada performed the same roles as many other American actresses, none exhibited her unique versatility:

In drawing comparisons between Miss Rehan and other American actresses of note, the critic is confronted with a maze of difficulties which make the estimate of her histrionic worth somewhat confusing; no other actress, even if of equal merit in certain roles, has been so productive in talent and genius when it came to an extended repertoire. Julia Marlowe acquitted herself well as both Rosalind and Viola and in other roles, but she never attained the fame in her lifetime that Ada achieved. As one contemporary pointed out in 1897: "Julia Marlowe and Mrs. Fiske, though each admirable in their special fields, can in no wise approach Miss Ada Rehan in breadth and sustained power." One of Marlowe's biographers noted "her lack of humor" in portrayals of Rosalind and Viola, something in which Ada never disappointed. Similarly, Marlowe's Juliet lacked passion and force, while Ada's Katherine overflowed with them. Mrs. Fiske devoted herself to Ibsen heroines and primarily plays of the modern realistic school after 1893. She never achieved Ada's international fame in Shakespeare or as a comedienne. Her contemporary, Brander Matthews, affirmed Ada's supremacy:

She grew in stature with the years and she ripened as the seasons rolled around, until at the end there was no rival who had essayed so many and so diverse parts and who had done them so well. The actor Francis Wilson likewise testified to Ada's superiority to the other American actresses Daly promoted. "Among the many lovely actresses whose talents were developed under Augustin Daly, from Agnes Ethel, Fanny Davenport, Clara Morris on down, none was more gifted,
more worthy than Ada Rehan." Similarly, Mary Anderson who achieved
great popularity as a tragic actress in England and the United States
lacked Ada's versatility.

In 1885 the Dramatic Times compared Ada to Ellen Terry saying:
"The place occupied by Ellen Terry on the English stage is possessed by
Ada Rehan on our own—a position so high that in valuing the power of
the two artists they can be compared only to each other." Ellen
Terry herself called Ada "'the cleverest woman in America.'" In
George Bernard Shaw's opinion Ellen Terry's "only rival as a
Shakespearean actress was the great Ada [Rehan]." But even before
Ada began performing in Shakespearean comedy at Daly's Theatre in New
York, Life's critic declared her "the Ellen Terry of America" in 1885 and,
after her death in 1916, the London Era did the same. According
to their contemporaries, both Ada and Terry could play the hoyden.
Clara Morris called Ada a born actress and the idol of New York City in
the early eighties, as well as "the most perfect of white-muslined,
blue-girdled, garden-hatted stage hoydens." In Morris's opinion, Ada
dealt "dreadful blows at rigid deportment and conventional propriety"
by indulging in "sudden, boneless floppings and slouchings all about
the stage furniture" that became known as the "'debutante slouch.'"
Just as Morris called Ada a hoyden, Henry Irving testified to Ellen
Terry's hoydenish manner in performance.

Terry and Ada's careers likewise paralleled each other. Nine
years older than Ada, Terry also claimed Irish ancestry but unlike Ada,
she came of an acting family. Both actresses apprenticed in stock
companies, were tall women, and performed out of economic
necessity. Terry enjoyed her greatest success in the eighteen
eighties and eighteen nineties as Henry Irving's leading lady in Shakespearean comedy at the Lyceum Theatre in London. Her career declined after 1897 because she outgrew her youthful roles. Terry's qualities are reminiscent of Ada:

Ellen Terry's buoyancy, her all-pervading gracefulness, the charm of her singular voice, in which laughter and tears seem to be in everlasting chase, the innate femininity of all she attempts, do in fact to some extent disarm cold and searching criticism. She possesses that magnetic personality which compels sympathy in spite of oneself.

A year before her death, Ada's admirer and biographer, William Winter, similarly assessed Ada's characteristics:

... Her rich, healthful, refined beauty, her imposing stature, her Celtic sparkle of mischievous piquancy, her deep feeling, her round, full, clear, caressing voice, her supple freedom of movement, the expressive play of her features, and the delightful variety and vivacity of her action—who that ever appreciated could ever forget them?

Having seen both Ada and Terry portray Portia in the late nineties, critic Norman Hapgood pinpointed a basic difference between the two actresses in the role. In Ada's acting in the trial scene in The Merchant of Venice he claimed "there was more that was threatening, less that was pleading. The 'quality of mercy' [speech] was in her handling an indignant protest and a warning, not like Terry's plea to melt a stone, but it was given with the authority of noble art." Terry expressed a "beautiful simplicity, matchless elocution, and quiet melting poetry." Ada dominated the scene on stage in a way Terry did not. Terry remarked that Ada's leading man, John Drew, "never played for his own hand but for the good of the piece." Thus with Drew, Ada was able to give full expression to her characters, resulting in the emergence of her strengths which eventually dwarfed Drew's performances
and led to his resignation, and ultimately, the dissolution of the "Big Four."

On the other hand, George Bernard Shaw criticized Terry's subordination to Irving on stage. Like A. C. Wheeler, he deplored the "masculine domination" of both actresses' managers and the consequent waste of their genius. However, Shaw recognized the different manifestation in and effect on their respective performances:

But as Daly did not himself act, his hackings and hewings were very largely addressed to the object of taking all the good lines out of other parts and adding them to Ada Rehan's; and she spoke them so harmoniously that when listening to her it was impossible to care much about anything but the mere music of her voice and Shakespeare's, whereas at the Lyceum Irving's peculiarities were the first consideration. To him professionally Ellen Terry was only the chief ornament of his theatre. Besides his method was so slow that it was impossible to act with him. She had to stop too often and wait too long to sustain her part continuously when he was on the stage.

Reminiscing in 1927 with some friends about "the greatest English-speaking actress of [their] time," H. M. Walbrook of the London Stage voted for Ada over Ellen Terry, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, and Mrs. Kendal. After some discussion between the gentlemen they all agreed "that the finest genius of the four was the young Irishwoman who so electrified London in the eighties, and who after electrified Paris and Berlin with her Katherine in The Taming of the Shrew." The more Walbrook thought about it, the more convinced he became "that Ada Rehan was the finest English-speaking actress [he had] ever seen. Her personality was the most bewitching . . . and also the most dominating" he had ever met upon the stage. Among any group of actors and actresses Walbrook believed she would "have been the supreme figure."
Even though she acted with a fine company of artists, "the moment she stepped upon the stage everybody else on it seemed suddenly to become rather second-rate. No smile was so roguish, no glance so full, no voice so golden, no rage so over-whelming, as hers."  

Ellen Terry herself regretted not having had the opportunity to act with Ada "just once." Writing in 1908 she said: "When Mr. Tree could not persuade Mrs. Kendal to come and play in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* a second time, I hoped that Ada Rehan would come and rollick with me as Mrs. Ford—but it was not to be." Although the British critic Clement Scott envisioned Terry as the best Rosalind he could imagine, she never acted the role. But Ada did portray Rosalind, and Scott pronounced her better than anyone he had ever seen in that part.

Ada distinguished herself in all her Shakespearean roles. Rosalind afforded her the opportunity to express "playfulness and tenderness; it was blithe and buoyant and above all womanly; it was without taint of self-consciousness and with unfailing enjoyment of the situation." Photographs of her as Rosalind illustrate the ease with which she wore the doublet and hose (Plates 6, 7 & 8). Her facial expression in the picture of Viola reveals a serious, thoughtful Viola (Plate 9 & 10). William Winter believed that "in that embodiment, more than in any assumption of character previously presented by her, she relied upon a [softness] and [gentleness] discarding strong emphasis."  

Unquestionably Ada's most famous and artistically successful role was Katherine the Shrew. "Kate the Curst" epitomizes Ada Rehan's extremes of passionate intensity and typifies her acting.
PLATE 6:

Poster of Ada Rehan

MISS ADA REHAN
PLATE 7: Photograph of Rehan as Rosalind.
PLATE 8: Photograph of Rehan in As You Like It.
PLATE 9: Photograph of Rehan as Viola.
POSITIVE AND COMPARATIVE.

Sir,—Permit me to offer you a "Mem. for a Daily Diary."—Twelfth Night. To assist one in producing a Shakespearean play, and for finding an actress capable of doing justice to its heroine, it would be difficult, than Ada Rehan, to find an Aider and a better. After this I may be indignantly asked "how dare I thus recklessly pan upon the name of so excellent an actress?" Wherunto I am bound to reply with just one more, and say, according to the French proverb, "Rehan n'est pas pour un supeur."

Le super? C'est mal. And sorry shall I be when the Dpliers leave us, and the word goes forth, "Rehan ne ca plus!"

Yours,
Le Saucer.
FROM LONDON PUNCH FEB. 24th 1894

Ada as "Viola."

PLATE 10: Newspaper Clipping of Rehan as Viola.
Acknowledging Kate to be her favorite role, she considered her "a person of awful temper, yet high spirited and in the end brought to . . . the saving grace of woman—a charm of manner that [won] for her [Kate] the kindliest feelings of the audience."\(^9\) Beside supreme outrage and contempt, Ada juxtaposed the tenderest love and loyalty. When Ada presented Katherine in Birmingham, England in 1897, she reportedly "electrified her audience" and took "them as well as the characters on stage by storm. . . . From first to last, and by irresistible force and finish of her performance, she carried all before her. . . . Bearing herself like an ideal queen, and delivering every line with precision and effect, she achieved a triumph seldom seen upon the stage."\(^{50}\) So compelling was her presence that "she held the audience with a grip that made inattention impossible;" she kept their "gaze riveted on the stage."\(^{51}\) Her acting so captivated the "mind and senses," one critic called her a genius. She brought Katherine to life: "the fierce, imperious damsel, haughty as Hector, proud as Lucifer, superb as Juno, who sleeps in Shakespeare's pages, awaiting the call of a nature capable of a passion as deep as her own to awaken her to new life."\(^{52}\)

At the age of thirty-one, when she first appeared as Katherine, Ada ideally suited the role in experience, maturity, and appearance. Photographs of her as Katherine indicate the physicalization required of her in the role (Plates 11 and 12). In one picture she stands erect, arms folded, and looms out defiantly, showing strength of character and emotional intensity lurking beneath the surface. With her agile body and musical voice, she "rushed on the stage in her wrath, . . . a superb spectacle of youthful energy, [and] a magnificent
PLATE 11: Photograph of Rehan in *The Taming of the Shrew*. 
PLATE 12: Photograph of Rehan as Katherine.
animal in a magnificent rage." She replaced the gleeful ingenue of contemporary plays with a woman of deep sensibilities. Undoubtedly, her personal and professional relationship with Daly greatly contributed to her understanding of the turmoil within the character. As Clement Scott explained, Ada mastered "the grand style. . . . It was as it should be, a double Katharine. It was the Katharine of a whirlwind and the Katharine of a calm." One of Ada's biographers, Forrest Izard, believed "She was the supreme embodiment for all time, one feels certain, of Katherine, Shakespeare's Shrew. That part she was born to play."

About five-feet-seven inches tall, Ada possessed the height and slender body that allowed her to appear majestic and strong as well as boyish and almost athletic when disguising herself as a male such as Ganymede. Her long limbs and body facilitated her comic "slouching and flopping on furniture." But they also gave her a graceful, swanlike appearance when she literally "swept" into a room as Katherine. James Huneker of The Sun referred to her as an actress "to the grand manner born. . . . in bearing and in gesture . . . the fine fleur of her species," whose "like you [would] not see outside of Paris." Ellen Terry, on the other hand, did not possess the same regal quality that Ada had. Yet with her physical strength, agility, and control Ada adapted her movement and gestures to the specific character she portrayed, effecting a natural physical spontaneity, which made her characters seem real. As Jean V. Cutler concludes in his dissertation, Realism in Augustin Daly's Productions of Contemporary Plays, Daly "achieved a modified kind of realism which is a transition from the earlier romantic style to the fully realistic style of a later
William Winter quoted the French newspaper *De la Pamarroye* as having complimented the Daly Company, but especially Ada, for their ability to create the illusion of reality. "If all American comedians play like those we have seen, they have a right to say the American theatre is a natural one: their propensity to realism is affirmed in a thousand details. The ease of entering, making exits, taking their chairs, seating themselves, etc., is the image of an everyday, life."^60

Although *The Sunday Advertiser* described Ada's face as "a marvelously beautiful one," that had "a youthful glow" early in her career, she was not beautiful in the sense of having classical features. Forrest Izard concluded: "Her face, like her careless joyousness and exuberant animal spirits, was Celtic. . . . As with Ellen Terry simple beauty paled beside her."^62 To add to her attractiveness she had abundant brown hair. But her "gray-blue-Irish eyes" were her most distinguishing feature. One admirer described her eyes, brow, and head as beautiful, but especially her eyes: "'with their soft, lamp-like, mellow glow, with their sharp, fiery glints, with their gorgon directness or again with their innumerable little twinkles of fun and sly melting shadows, with the flashing from the lids and the eyelashes of light, or the deep, still beaming that perhaps most eloquently of all speaks of the soul.'"^63 While this fan is extravagant in his praise, he is characteristic of many critics' in their comments. Amy Leslie remembered the changing color of Ada's eyes,^64 and the fascinating, "sweeping audience glance of hers that [flattered] everybody and [saw] nobody."^65 And Shaw called Ada's eyes "lodestars."^66 Other features, too, displayed the various and
conflicting emotions of the character she portrayed. The "tilt of her chin," the "toss of her head," and the instant alteration of expression from gaiety to a look of horror conveyed the inner life of the person she portrayed. Ada developed herself into an instrument of her art. Usually cautious, Moy Thomas, the critic of the London Daily News, explained Ada's means of achieving her effects by saying it was "not only in speech, but by a look, a gesture, or a pose she [conveyed] her meaning as clearly."67

Of all her physical attributes, Ada's voice prompted the most extravagant praise. Possessed of a clear, articulate, vibrant, and melodious voice, she could burst into peals of happy laughter, scream "under Petruchio's insults like a wounded animal caught in a trap,"68 or "croon" her verses beautifully.69 Its outstanding musical quality suited the feminine heroines she portrayed and lent itself well to the delivery of verse passages. In addition, she knew how to speak the poetry. "She had mastered the difficulties of blank verse, never chopping it into halting prose and never weakly falling into singsong."70 Adept at delivering long rhetorical speeches without ranting, she could vary her voice "to express many shades of subtle thought and emotion."71 But she also had a calm unconscious way of saying funny things that added to a sense of naturalness in style as well as a way of rattling off lines in a spontaneous but distinct manner that seemed natural, too. Although some critics disliked the drawl in her voice, most considered the way she would draw out her words very amusing. Clement Scott explained how she used her voice to play "upon her rare art of comedy. She [was] not slow or lethargic, as most English players [were]. She [had] a magnetic influence that
[traveled] over the footlights; she [had] the audience, or such parts of it as [possessed] intelligence and sympathy in the palm of her hand." Shaw thought her voice musical, and likened it to that of a lark. And Alan Dale preferred Ada's "liquid music" to Terry's "husky, gritty voice."

Ada Rehan inspired the most lavish praise of any actress of her generation. Not only did American critics like Brander Matthews, Edward A. Dithmar, Alan Dale, and William Winter pay high tribute to her in print, but such British critics as Clement Scott, William Archer, and George Bernard Shaw declared her a great artist. Completely physically relaxed on stage, she possessed a commanding personal magnetism. Forrest Izard quotes Arthur Lynch as saying in 1896, "'Ada Rehan is of a superior race of women. She can be enormously interesting simply standing looking out of a window, her back to the audience, immobile, but with a "calmness" that sends off vibrations that stir the pulses very curiously, and make her always the magnet, the center.'" Her melodious voice filled the theatre. As Clement Scott commented about her performance of Katherine: "'We had not to strain our ears to hear the language that was spoken.'" Arthur Lynch further explains how she awakened in her audience a sense of excitement that smacked of danger by combining audacity and vivacity:

She is all alive; she whirls round and comes into the action with a bold ringing stroke that has been adjudged to perfection. She can stride—not like a man, for she is always a fine woman. . . . She can bang a door like a chord of martial music. She can precipitate herself headlong into a room, and seizing her opponent or her lover, for she is equal to all occasions, at the critical wavering moment, sweep in with a wrestler's power and lift him metaphorically helpless off his feet. Yet in all these displays Rehan is never violent in a narrow way. . . . The
beauty of repose is delightful in her . . so also is the quick salient swerve of emotion wherein the soul is suddenly shaken to its depths by love, by fear, by admiration . . we find life and flesh and blood throughout, and everywhere the fire of the soul that animates it.

William Winter believed that Ada had the quality that makes an actress, the "power of being something and doing something which converts words into actions and constructs before the eyes of the spectator a moving picture of human life." 

Unique among contemporary American actresses of the period in her command of an international audience, Ada's position on the American stage equalled that of Sarah Bernhardt, Eleanora Duse, and Ellen Terry in their respective countries. No actress of her time approached her Katherine, including Ellen Terry. Ada is known to have given 735 performances of the role as compared to 314 of Viola and 216 of Rosalind.

Perhaps because her health forced her to retire eleven years before her death, and she did not live as long as Bernhardt, Duse, or Terry, theatre historians have overlooked Ada Rehan's accomplishments and underestimated her ability. Reviews of her work, however, and the number, kind, and variety of roles she portrayed, her international recognition, and the testimony of the most successful artists of her time establish her as one of the finest nineteenth century actresses America produced. No other American Shakespearean comedienne of her time achieved her eminence. Had America alone extolled her virtues, she would still have earned a significant place in the history of American acting. But because she succeeded in winning the highest praise from British and other European critics and artists alike, she
must be considered one of the finest actresses of her day, and perhaps, America's greatest.
Notes—Chapter 8


3 Albany Evening Journal, 6 Jan. 1885, 43 vols. in Daly's Theatre Scrapbooks, 15. Most volumes of the Augustin Daly Scrapbooks have no page numbers and the pagination that does exist is often erratic and unreliable. The scrapbooks are in the New York Public Library Theatre Collection and also available on microfilm in the University of Illinois Library. Hereafter cited as DTS.


8 William Winter, Ada Rehan, (New York: Privately Printed for Augustin Daly, 1898) 31.

9 Davis Clarke, Unidentified newspaper clipping, 1886, in DTS 16.

10 The Dramatic Times (New York), 19 Dec. 1885, DTS 16.

11 William Winter, Ada Rehan 47.

12 Munsey Sept. 1894, from one of two "Ada Rehan" Portfolios, in The Player's Collection which is part of the New York Public Library

13 For a more complete list of roles see William Winter Ada Rehan.


15 Samsom.


21 The Dramatic Times (New York), 19 Dec. 1885, DTS 16.

22 The Dramatic Times (New York), 19 Dec. 1885.


24 Life 28 Dec. 1885, DTS 16.


29 Terry 1.
30 Terry 41.
31 Terry 41.
32 Christopher St. John 56-66.
33 Charles Hiatt, Ellen Terry (London: George Bell and Sons, 1898) 266-67.
36 Hapgood 160.
37 Ellen Terry 320.
38 G. Bernard Shaw xxx.
40 G. Bernard Shaw xxx.
42 H. M. Walbrook.
43 H. M. Walbrook.
44 H. M. Walbrook.
45 Ellen Terry 320.
47 Brander Matthews 192-3.
48 Winter, Ada Rehan 82-3.
49 Ada Rehan.
50 Excerpt reprinted from The Daily Post (Birmingham), in


52 The Birmingham Daily Gazette.


54 Clement Scott 424.

55 Forrest Izard 203-04.

56 Unidentified newspaper clipping, titled "Ada Rehan's Form---Alas!," 1894, in Harvard Theatre Collection.


58 James Huneker.

59 Jean V. Cutler.

60 William Winter, Ada Rehan 192.


65 Leslie 253.


67 Review of Twelfth Night by Moy Thomas of the The Daily News
(London), in Edward A. Dithmar, Memories of Daly's Theatres (Privately Printed by Augustin Daly, 1897) 97, in Harvard Theatre Collection.

68 Clement Scott 424.


70 Brander Matthews 193.


72 Clement Scott 421-22.

73 The Home Journal (New York), Mar. 6, 1894, DTS 36.

74 The Home Journal, (New York), Mar. 6, 1894.


76 Clement Scott 422.


78 Arthur Lynch, in Human Documents quoted in Izard 218.

79 Clement Scott 424.


81 Winter, Wallet 172.
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---. Woffington, A Tribute to the Actress and the Woman. Troy, New York, 1888.


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The Daily Louisville Commercial
The Louisville Courier-Journal
The New York Dramatic Mirror
New York Herald
The New York Times
Newark Daily Advertiser
Philadelphia Evening Bulletin
The Philadelphia Inquirer
Public Ledger and Daily Transcript (Philadelphia)
The Sunday Mercury (Philadelphia)
The Troy Daily Times
Unpublished Materials


They are also available on microfilm in the University of Illinois Library.


Hanley Collection. George Bernard Shaw and Ada Rehan Correspondence. Harry Ransom Humanities and Research Center, The University of Texas.


Dissertations


APPENDIX:

Roles Played by Ada Rehan

The following is a chronological list of roles, when known, performed by Ada Rehan, with names of authors and plays, when known, and dates as well as the names of the city of the first performances. The list has been drawn from the works of Winter, Dithmar, Brown, Odell, and from Daly's Scrapbooks, and from American and British newspapers.

1. Clara in Oliver Doud Byron's adaptation of James McCloskey's *Across the Continent*, 1872, New Jersey.


9. Role unknown in James Pilgrim's *Katy O'Shie1*, February 9, 1874, Philadelphia.


17. Role unknown in Mrs. Inchbald's *Wives as They Were and Maids as They Are*, November 7, 1874, Philadelphia.


21. Role unknown in Frank Roger's *The Thoroughbred*, February 1, 1875, Philadelphia.


26. Role unknown in Martha Lafitte Johnson's *Bank Stocks*, September 13, 1875, Cincinnati.

27. Pearl Courtland in Augustin Daly's *Under the Gaslight*, September 27, 1875, Louisville.


29. Little Mother in George F. Rowe's *The Geneva Cross*, October 26, 1875, Louisville.

30. Francois in Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *Richelieu*, November 15, 1875, Louisville.

31. Maria in Charles Selby's *The Marble Heart*, November 14, 1875, Louisville.

32. Role unknown, in W. G. Willis' *The Man O'Airlie*, November 15, 1875, Louisville.

33. Maud in Fred Marsden's *Musette*, November 23, 1875, Cincinnati.

34. Artine in Oliver Doud Byron's *Donald McKay*, December 24, 1875, Louisville.

35. Libby Ray in B. E. Wolfe's *The Mighty Dollar*, January 17, 1876, Louisville.

36. Audrey in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, February 10, 1876, Louisville.

37. A Lady in Shakespeare's *King John*, February 12, 1876, Louisville.

38. Lady Florence May in Lester Wallack's *Rosedale*, August 28, 1876, Albany.
39. Marguerite in Lester Wallack's *The Romance of a Poor Young Man*, September 6, 1876, Albany.

40. Julia Latimer in Dion Boucicault's *Flying Scud*, September 11, 1876, Albany.

41. Madelon in August Waldauer's *Fanchon the Cricket* adapted from George Sand's story, *La Petite Fadette*, September 18, 1876, Albany.

42. Rose in *Little Barefoot*, September 22, 1876, Albany.

43. Ethel Grainger in H. J. Byron's *Married in Haste*, October 16, 1876, Albany.

44. Marie de Commine adapted from Delavigne's *Louis XI*, October 20, 1876, Albany.

45. Laura Hawkins in Mark Twain's *The Gilded Age*, October 23, 1876, Albany.

46. Mary Clark in Mr. Whittaker's *The Charter Oak*, November 6, 1876, Albany.

47. Witch in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, November 10, 1876, Albany.

48. Sybil Hawker in George F. Rowe's *Brass*, November 27, Albany.

49. Little Emily in George F. Rowe's *Little Emily*, December 1, 1876, Albany.

50. Donna Jovita, in Bret Harte's *Two Men of Sandy Bar*, December 11, 1876, Albany.

51. Cordelia in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, December 20, 1876, Albany.

52. Lurline in J. S. Dalrymple's *The Naiad Queen*, December 25, 1876, Albany.

54. Celia in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, January 12, 1877, Albany.
57. Lady Sarah in William Dunlap's adaptation from the German of August Von Kotzebue, *Elizabeth*, February 1, 1877, Albany.
59. Mathilde de La Tour in a translation from French, Miss Sarah Multon, February 5, 1877, Albany.
60. Queen Elizabeth in *Mary Stuart*, February 19, 1877, Albany.
62. Laura Livingston in *Escaped From Sing Sing*, March 5, 1877, Albany.
63. Eloise Woodruff in *Becky Mix*, March 12, 1877, Albany.
64. Ophelia in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, March 22, 1877, Albany.
66. Grace Rosebury in an adaptation of Wilkie Collins' *The New Magdalen*, April 1, 1877, Albany.
68. Annine in *The Victor of Rhe*, September 17, 1877, Albany.
70. Adelaide Clyton Barnes in Stanley McKenna's *Our Oddities*, September 26, 1877, Albany.
73. Olivia in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, November 2, 1877, Albany.
74. Louise in Augustin Daly's *Frou Frou*, November 2, 1877, Albany.
76. Virginia in John Sheridan Knowles' *Virginius*, November 26, 1877, Albany.
77. Senona in Robert Montgomery Bird's *The Gladiator*, November 27, 1877, Albany.
78. Fidele La Crosse in Bartley Campbell's *A Heroine in Rags*, December 3, 1877, Albany.
79. Louise in *Under The Snow*, December 8, 1877, Albany.
82. Mary Netley in T. W. Robertson's *Ours*, January 5, 1878, Albany.
83. Eve Hillington in *Lone Man of the Sea*, January 5, 1878, Albany.
86. Cora Darlington in *Middy Ashore*, January 19, 1878, Albany.
87. Stella in *Little Detective*, February 25, 1878, Albany.
88. Diana de Lascours in *The Sea of Ice*, March 11, 1878.
90. Role unknown in Bartley Campbell's *Risks*, April 1, 1878, Troy, New York.

93. Marie in *The Marble Heart*, September 17, 1878, Baltimore.


95. Mabel Wallace in Oliver Doud Byron's *Hero, or Mount Shasta*, October 28, 1878, Baltimore.

96. Georgina in Clifton W. Tayleure's adaptation of *Jayne Eyre*, November 7, 1878, Baltimore.

97. Stella in *The Enchantress*, December 30, 1878, Albany.

98. Virgina in an adaptation of D'Ennery's *Mirah, the Woman of the People*, January 13, 1879, Baltimore.


102. Lu Ten Eyck in Augustin Daly's *Divorce*, March 10, 1879, Baltimore.

103. Mary Standish in Augustin Daly's *Pique*, March 11, 1879, Baltimore.

104. Big Clemence in Augustin Daly's *L'Assomoir*, adapted from Zola's novel, April 30, 1879, New York.


107. Isabelle de Nesle in Bronson Howard's *Wives*, September 29, 1879,


116. Psyche Persimmon in Woolson Morses's *Cinderella at School*, March 5, 1881, New York.


118. Pauline de Beausejour in Edgar Fawcett's *Americans Abroad*, October 5, 1881, New York.

119. Marie de Mancini in the elder and the younger Dumas' *Royal Youth*, October 22, 1881, New York.

120. Telka Essoff in Augustin Daly's adaptation from the German of Gustav Von Moser and Franz Von Schonthan, *The Passing*


125. Floss Bargiss in Augustin Daly's adaptation from the German of Franz Von Schonthan, *Seven-Twenty-Eight*, February 24, 1883, New York.

126. Phronie Tremont in Augustin Daly's adaptation from the German of Adolphe L'Arronge, *Dollars and Sense*, October 2, 1883, New York.


130. Aphra Grumbleigh in Augustin Daly's adaptation from the German of Franz Von Schonthan, *The Wooden Spoon*, October 7, 1884, New York.


133. Sylvia in George Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer*, February 7, 1885, New York.

134. Nisbe in Augustin Daly's adaptation from the German of Franz Von Schonthan, *A Night Off*, March 4, 1885, New York.


142. Valentine Osprey in Augustin Daly's adaptation from the German of Franz Von Schonthan and Gustav Kadelburg, *The Railroad of Love*, November 2, 1887, New York.


151. Etna in Augustin Daly's adaptation from the German of Franz Von Schonthan and Gustav Kadelburg, *The Great Unknown*, October 22, 1889, New York.

152. Rosalind in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, December 17, 1889, New York.


155. Miss Hoyden in Miss Hoyden's Husband, condensed from Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *A Trip to Scarborough*, March 26, 1890, New York.


157. Baroness Vera in Augustin Daly's adaptation from the German of Franz Von Schonthan, October 28, 1890, New York.

158. Lady Teazle in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*,
January 20, 1891, New York.


163. Rena Primrose in Augustin Daly's adaptation from the German of Oskar Blumenthal, *Little Miss Million*, October 6, 1892, New York.


171. Julia in Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, February 25, 1895,


184. Catherine in Victorien Sardou's *Madame Sans Gene*, January 3, 1899,
New York.


Vita

Aileen Hendricks-Wenck was born January 20, 1940 in Bronx, New York. She attended Catholic schools in Brooklyn, New York and graduated from Our Lady of Wisdom Academy in Ozone Park, Long Island, New York in June 1958. After acting off-Broadway and touring with Val Balfour's Oberammergau Passion Play, she married Robert William Wenck on January 3, 1960. Her first son, August William, was born October 12, 1960 and her second son, Robert William Jr., was born on April 11, 1962. Between 1965 and 1971, she taught Creative Dramatics and directed children's plays in College Station, Texas. After earning her Bachelor of Arts degree from Texas A&M University in December 1971, she was awarded a graduate teaching assistantship by the Department of English at Texas A&M University and received her Master of Arts degree in August, 1974. From 1974 to 1977 she was an half-time Instructor of English and Theatre at Texas A&M University. In 1978 she was granted a graduate teaching assistantship in the Speech Department at Louisiana State University, where she began work on the Doctor of Philosophy degree as a Theatre Specialist. She separated from her husband in 1979 and has held graduate assistantships and half-time Instructorships in English, Theatre, the English Language Orientation Program, and Reading Laboratory at Louisiana State University since that time. Between 1981 and 1987 she has also performed in several television commercials and with Playmakers of Baton Rouge, Inc., a professional children's theatre.
Candidate: Aileen Hendricks-Wenck

Major Field: Speech


Approved:

Major Professor and Chairman
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination:

29 January, 1988