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CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND FICTIONAL FORM

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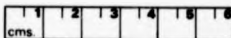
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**WILKIE COLLINS AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY PSYCHOLOGY:
CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND FICTIONAL FORM**

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the University of Warwick

by

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SUMMARY

This thesis considers the relationship between the novels of Wilkie Collins and nineteenth-century psychological methods and ideas. It explores the ways in which Collins extrapolates from these theories by appropriating them as means both of generating suspense and resolving tension, and shows how an investigation of these psychological ideas elucidates his fiction.

The Introduction briefly reviews Collins's development as a sensation novelist in relationship to contemporary sensation fiction. Chapter One outlines the wide range of psychological ideas that have a direct bearing on Collins's work. It considers, firstly, how the meaning both of insanity and of social identity was shaped by the development of the asylum system and the precepts of moral management - precepts that encapsulated many of the aspirations of early Victorian liberalism. Secondly it considers mid-nineteenth-century debates on the workings of the mind: debates about how to understand identity, about how to analyse the workings of the consciousness, and about how to interpret the significance of aberrant states and unconscious mental processes. Thirdly it summarises how conceptions of evolution and heredity developed in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The analysis of the novels emphasises Collins's development of narrative strategies. It explores how he both assimilates and resists contemporary psychological perceptions in his manipulation of narrative perspective and time, and how the development of this narrative method links the conjuring with perception and cognition with the exploration of the subjective shaping of social identity. Moral management provides the overarching framework for Collins's stories and is usually the source of narrative resolution, but it is qualified and undermined. In *Basil* and *The Woman in White* it is a primary source of tension and suspense; in *No Name* it is both undermined and underpinned by juggling with contrasting notions of evolution. *Armadale* draws on contemporary theories of dreams to explore social and psychic inheritance and transmission; *The Moonstone* appropriates contrasting theories of the unconscious in a complex cognitive investigation. The final chapter briefly discusses a selection of the later novels, considering their distinctive features, and arguing that the growing dominance of theories of degeneration had an important bearing on Collins's method in his later work.

INTRODUCTION

COLLINS AS A SENSATION NOVELIST

[Miss Braddon] has been preceded in the same path by Mr Wilkie Collins, whose *Woman in White*, with its diaries and letters and general ponderosity, was a kind of nineteenth-century version of *Clarissa Harlowe*. Mind, we say a nineteenth-century version. To Mr Collins belongs the credit of having introduced into fiction those most mysterious of mysteries, the mysteries that are at our own doors. This innovation gave a new impetus to the literature of horrors. It was fatal to Mrs Radcliffe and her everlasting castle in the Appenines. What are the Appenines to us, or we to the Appenines? Instead of the terrors of *Udolpho*, we were treated to the terrors of the cheerful country house or the busy London lodgings. And there is no doubt that these were infinitely the more terrible.

Henry James, *Review of Aurora Floyd*¹

In January 1889 J.A. Noble, reviewing Collins's final completed novel, *The Legacy of Cain* in *The Spectator*, noted that it 'is by no means one of Mr Wilkie Collins's best novels; but it reminds us of one of his best novels, for in one aspect its intellectual scheme is very similar to the intellectual scheme of *Armadale*'. 'Apart from their interest as mere stories', he continued, 'both books read like implicit protests against the fatalism which is more or less bound up with any full acceptance of the modern doctrine of heredity'. But suddenly his certainty about how to read the novel seems to waver: 'There is, however, a possibility that our interpretation may be mistaken, and that the doctrine in question is not really discredited by the story ... Perhaps, however', he goes on, sinking back into the assurance of established cultural categories, 'we are considering too curiously, and breaking an intellectual butterfly on a critical wheel. Mr Wilkie Collins may occasionally have a theory to illustrate, but he always has a story to tell, and the story is more important both to him and his readers than the theory'.²

This study considers the connections between stories and theories in Collins's fiction. It investigates the ways in which his narratives negotiate and manipulate a complex set of contemporary psychological and social assumptions, perceptions and models, in forms that involve both assimilation of and resistance to them. Collins was a popular and highly professional writer who aimed to produce exciting, compulsively readable stories for a mass, though predominantly middle-class, 'middle-brow', readership. His first full-length novel, *Antonina, or The Fall of Rome* was published in 1830; his final one, *Blind Love*, completed by Walter Besant, in 1890. He was thus writing throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, at a time in which the boundaries between 'popular' and 'serious' fiction were hardening; and he was, in a real sense, a product of those boundaries. But his fiction and his own shifting cultural position as a popular writer also illustrate how unhelpful those cultural divisions and the interpretative frameworks that they support can be.

Collins is no longer seen as a shady minor figure whose main claim to fame is proximity to Dickens.³ As both an early 'originator' of the English detective novel and as a mid-nineteenth-century sensation novelist his work has attracted increasing critical attention in the context of a growing interest in the development and significance of popular narrative forms. Kathleen Tillotson's essay 'The Lighter Reading of the 1860s' and Winifred Hughes's *The Maniac in the Cellar* each discuss Collins's fiction as part of a consideration of the sensation novel, while Sue Lonoff's study of reader relations, *Wilkie Collins and His Victorian Readers*, provides an analysis of his position in the context of the development of the nineteenth-century novel and its readership.⁴ Lonoff investigates the elements at work in Collins's cultural and biographical circumstances, analyses the ways in which he developed fictional strategies that could both please and shock his readers,

and discusses Collins's relationship to the critical establishment. Collins's reputation has benefitted, too, from developments in literary theory and narrative analysis, but while his plots have been interpreted in interesting and important ways, there has been no full-length study of their relationship to their intellectual culture.⁵

Here I shall bring together historical and narrative analysis to argue that Collins's novels offer explorations of identity and perception that are most complex at their most pleasurable, and to investigate how his stories generate mystery, ambiguity and suspense out of tensions that can be transposed into sources of narrative resolution. I shall analyse how they do this by interweaving and unpicking a wide range of nineteenth-century psychological theories and methods, ^{and how they draw on these theories as narratives themselves and transform them into fictional strategies within an} intellectual culture in which literature, psychology and social theory were not perceived as completely discrete disciplines. But Collins's novels were written first and foremost as sensation novels and the meaning of this term, its cultural position and Collins's early development as a novelist, need first to be briefly considered.

Collins was a radical professional writer who moved between cultural worlds, often operating at their boundaries. This began with his immediate family and friendships. Both his family and his Christian names were derived from established but patronage-dependent domestic landscape painters - Sir David Wilkie and William Collins - and Collins's own first published book was his father's biography.⁶ But his contemporaries were the marginal and oppositional artistic group, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and it was partly through this association that he became connected with the bohemian

metropolitan culture of the 1850s.⁷ He met Dickens when Augustus Egg arranged for him to take part in an amateur dramatic production, and his brother Charles (who married Dickens's daughter Kate), was a close associate, though never actually a member of the Brotherhood. The Group sometimes met at the Collins's household, and Collins himself was friendly with Millais, Holman Hunt, Egg and Rossetti, as well as being sympathetic to the aims of the movement.⁸ He was also connected with *The Leader* in the early 1850s, the radical weekly founded by Thornton Hunt and George Henry Lewes, and contributed to its running when his friend Edward Pigott bought a controlling interest in the journal.⁹ Thus, from the early 1850s, he moved between overlapping intellectual circles.

Collins abandoned an early legal training, and by the mid-1850s had begun to establish himself as a promising young novelist who was able to appropriate and adapt a range of methods and genres. The biography of his father, together with *Antonina, Or The Fall of Rome*, a historical novel in the manner of Bulwer-Lytton that followed it, had been respectfully received, and it was from this position that he wrote the audacious study of transgression and breakdown, *Basil, A Story of Modern Life*. Both with this novel and the short stories published in various journals during the 1850s, Collins was again drawing on fictional techniques that had already been established, notably the quasi-supernatural tale of terror, which he adapted in the context of mid-nineteenth-century social anxieties, while retaining many of its salient elements. This was a mode of fantastic writing which followed and borrowed from late-eighteenth-century Gothic romance, but which was distinguished from this tradition in certain key respects. Like Gothic writing, it involved intense situations and extreme emotions, subverting the sense of a stable objective world, but it did so not through establishing a clear break with the real through exotic or extraordinary physical settings, but by

focussing more specifically on the immediate physical sensations and distorted sense perceptions of the central narrative consciousness.¹⁰ This mode of writing was written and read in a culture which had assimilated many of the materialist presuppositions of late eighteenth century sensationist psychology.

In Basil Collins elaborated many of these methods and extended their use of physiological referents to explore how social relations were mediated through forms of consciousness and methods of perception by developing the confessional form and the framing conventions of William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794) and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), both radical stories of pursuit and retribution, social definitions and forms of power. The magazine short stories of the 1830s took up many of the narrative techniques that had been developed in the 'Tales' promoted by *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine* from the 1820s, stories whose tensions were also based primarily in the physiological sensation, and whose methods were most clearly elaborated in the context of contemporary psychological theory by Edgar Allan Poe.¹¹ The close correspondence between Collins's and Poe's techniques was noted, for example by George Eliot, who emphasised in a review of *After Dark*, a collection of stories framed and published in book form in 1856: 'The main interest lies in the excitement either of curiosity or of terror; their great merit consists either in the effective presentation of a mystery, or the effective working up of startling situations ... In these excessively knowing days a mystery has become simply a problem ... Instead of turning pale at a ghost we knit our brows and construct hypotheses to account for it. Edgar Poe's tales were an effort of genius to reconcile the two tendencies - to appal the imagination yet satisfy the intellect, and Mr Wilkie Collins in this respect often follows in Poe's tracks.'¹²

But Collins wrote *The Woman in White*, a novel whose tension hinged on the distortion of the consciousness of interwoven narrators, on the doubling and substitution of identity, and crucially, on the problematic confinement of two women in a lunatic asylum, in the immediate journalistic context of *Household Words* and *All The Year Round*.¹³ *Household Words* was Dickens's journal. It was the vehicle through which he aimed to address his public as a family audience - 'We aspire to live in the Household affections and be numbered among the Household thoughts of our readers' - and which brought together distinct kinds of family readers.¹⁴ These included the established middle-class readers of the growing number of publishing-house journals (*Bentley's Miscellany*, *Fraser's Magazine*, *The Cornhill*, *Macmillan's Magazine*) on the one hand and the lower-middle-class audience of weekly publications such as *The Family Friend*, *Chambers' Journal*, *Reynold's News* on the other.¹⁵ It was thus a weekly journal aiming to mediate and expand a diverse and fluid readership - 'to bring the greater and the lesser in degree together ... and to mutually dispose them to a better acquaintance and a kinder understanding - is one main object of our *Household Words*'.¹⁶ And as such it was caught up in the revolution in middle-range publishing in the late 1850s which came to a head when Dickens broke with the journal's publishers Bradbury and Evans, and launched his own *All the Year Round* in direct competition with their *Once a Week*.

Collins played a crucial role in this venture, and *The Woman in White* was both its product and a chief cause of its success. Dickens's crucial gambit was to make the long serial a front-page feature of the new journal, and he took a certain gamble in asking the relative newcomer Collins to immediately follow *A Tale of Two Cities*, with which *All the Year Round* was promoted, with *The Woman in White*. The risk was met with astounding success - the serial sales of the journal came to over 100,000; no better than

Reynolds' regular achievement, but a breakthrough in middle-range publishing. The success was compounded by the publication of the first edition of the novel, which thus became an immediate best seller: all 1,000 copies of the first edition were sold on the day of publication, and seven subsequent editions were produced within six months.¹⁷

Almost as soon as it was published *The Woman in White* was taken up as a typical yet superior specimen of the sensation novel; a 'phenomenon' debated, satirised, parodied, and felt to have widespread cultural significance and effect in the 1860s. As a literary tendency it was a fluid category, in and out of which writers as different as Dickens and Rhoda Broughton might slide; but Collins, Charles Reade, Mary Braddon and Mrs Henry Wood were often taken to be its chief representatives. Margaret Oliphant opened her discussion of three 'sensation novels' - *The Woman in White*, *Great Expectations* and *East Lynne* - in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1862 by arguing that the form was both product and expression of a culture encountering not only the shocks of modern urban life and the limits of expansionist optimism ten years after the Great Exhibition, but also the 'ennui' that was its concomitant: 'We who once did, and made, and declared ourselves masters of all things, have relapsed into the natural size of humanity before the events that have given a new character to the age', she wrote. 'It is a changed world in which we are standing ... It is only natural that art and literature should, in an age which has turned out to be one of events, attempt a kindred depth of effect and shock of incident.'¹⁸ English sensation fiction was similar to Hawthorne's writing - 'that strange hybrid between French excitement and New England homeliness', she went on, in which 'we recognise the influence of a social system that has paralysed all the wholesome wonders and nobler mysteries of human existence'.¹⁹ 'Not a New Sensation' in *All the Year Round* pointed out that there was nothing new

about intensely exciting stories in themselves, and fears of cultural crisis as a response to new methods of production had been voiced before the 1860s. But it was precisely the ways in which 'sensation' fiction collapsed different meanings of the term into each other, and the process by which this conflation compounded the links between the form's conventions, its readership and its method of production, that contributed to the physiological metaphors through which it was understood as a cultural form. For it was described, overwhelmingly, as 'a diseased and morbid appetite, something novel, and significant of degeneration'.²⁰

The sensation novel was not so much a coherent genre in itself as a disturbing combination of genres held together by cultural anxieties as well as shared devices and motifs.²¹ Their most frequently emphasised feature was the way that they 'domesticated' Gothic conventions by transposing them to a familiar, every-day setting; and although, as I have suggested, this device did not originate with Collins, it was now being developed in new contexts and newly-disturbing ways, often by women novelists, most notably Mary Braddon, who were seen as occupying a comparable cultural space to earlier female Gothic writers, and appealing to a female readership that was seen as newly vulnerable. The sensation novel thus combined quasi-supernatural terror with high melodrama, domestic realism and 'Newgate' novels - stories of urban crime and low life based on popular journalism and police reports. More importantly, they were set not simply in the modern and familiar world, but specifically in the middle- or upper-middle-class family, exploiting its tensions by bringing into play the possibilities offered by its central narrative features - secrecy and disguise.

The Spectator described sensation novels as 'a host of clearly complicated stories, the whole interest of which consists in the gradual unravelling of some carefully prepared enigma', and what was particularly

exciting was that the pleasure of that unravelling often involved revealing a secret identity which in turn disclosed another set of questions concerning the transgressor's position within the family.²² Lady Audley's ostensible secret - that she is a bigamist - both conceals and reveals a further one - that she is mad. As in melodrama, the tension hinges on things not being what they seem; but in sensation fiction identity is not only dissembled through a masquerade - people assume false selves in order to steal a place and a property, or to retrieve a place that they had lost: the fallen, outcast heroine of *East Lynne*, her face rendered unrecognisable by a railway accident, steals back to her lost home, disguising herself as the governess of her own children. In sensation fiction masks, too, are rarely stripped off to reveal a true self, for the mask both is the transformed expression of the hidden self and discloses its contradictions, and in the process identity itself emerges as something actively constructed within a dominant framework of social interests, perceptions and values. They thus focussed on the ambiguity of both social and psychological codes to insinuate that seeming, too, is not always what it seems to be.

The intensity of sensation fiction was both directly physiological and emotional, since the sensation author, unlike the painter, remarked Margaret Oliphant, 'must take the passions and emotions of life to make its effects withal'.²³ *The Woman in White* was the exception which proved the rule, she suggested, since Collins 'ignored all these arbitrary sensations ...', but in general the form was felt to represent a very different 'nervous' response from the sensibility associated with late eighteenth century Gothic fantasy, in which the nerves mediated physical, moral and emotional response; now feelings were rooted in physical response in a way that short-circuited morality.²⁴ 'The Progress of Fiction as an Art', which discussed the long-term evolution of narrative forms in *The Westminster Review* in 1833, and

which included Collins's *Basil* in an analysis which ranged from Greek epic to Charles Kingsley, had argued that fictional forms became more complex in as much as they corresponded with the increasingly complex conceptual models of their culture, but went on to maintain that this also involved increasing differentiation between forms. Sensation fiction was thus a degenerate, naturalistic form of Gothic romance, through the ways in which, as a mode of romance, it both broke and corresponded with its contemporary 'scientific' secular culture: 'It was the fashion then to construct a story out of strange and unnatural circumstances, it is the fashion now to elaborate it out of morbid feelings and overwrought sensibilities', and this compounded the way it was perceived as a lower type of modern fiction.²⁵ Focussing on feelings, the 'nerves', became seen as increasingly morbid in itself: 'The faults of the French school are creeping into our literature, and threaten to flourish there', maintained *Fraser's Magazine*. 'The morbid analysis of feelings, which we have already reprobated, bids fair to be succeeded by an equally morbid analysis of mere sensation.'²⁶ This assessment was most polemically laid down in Henry Mansel's polemical article, 'Sensation Novels', in *The Quarterly Review*:

A class of literature has grown up around us, usurping in many respects, intentionally or unintentionally, a portion of the preacher's office, playing no inconsiderable part in moulding the minds and forming the tastes and habits of its generation; and doing so principally, we had almost said exclusively, by 'preaching to the nerves' ... Excitement, and excitement alone, seems to be the great end to which they aim ... And as excitement, even when harmless in kind, cannot be continually reproduced without becoming morbid in degree, works of this class manifest themselves as belonging, some more, some less, but all to some extent, to the morbid phenomena of literature - indications of a widespread corruption, of which they are in part both the effect and the cause; called into existence to supply the cravings of a diseased appetite, and contributing themselves to foster the disease, and to stimulate the want that they supply.²⁷

The sensation novel thus played an important role in consolidating cultural boundaries in the mid nineteenth century.²⁸ With exceptions, responses to it, from both conservative and progressive critical quarters, often formed a chain of associations linking its specific conventions, its effect on the reader, its method of production, and back again to narrative technique, all of which implied that it represented a nervous disorder generated by the tensions of modern life, while also being a sign of modern moral atrophy, and an infection from 'outside'. Both the pace and the complexity of the narratives themselves were a key link in this chain of associations. 'The violent stimulant of serial publication - of weekly publication, with its necessity for frequent and rapid recurrence of piquant situation and startling situation - is the thing above all others most likely to develop the germ and bring it to fuller and darker being', commented Margaret Oliphant, on the development of a tendency which she feared would spring from imitators of *The Woman in White*.²⁹

Armada, on the other hand, was repeatedly attacked on account of the labyrinthine weavings of its obsessional plot, which caused it to be seen as a particularly virulent strain of the sensation virus. 'Now we have a sensational mania ... From an epidemic, therefore, it has lately changed into an endemic. Its virus is spreading in all directions, from the penny journal to the shilling magazine, and from the shilling magazine to the thirty shillings volume', commented *The Westminster Review*, discussing *Armada*, and went on to suggest that there was something unhealthy about Collins's very skill in constructing such plots which, displaying their own devices, both became a kind of morbid anatomy and turned characters into puppets of the plot itself: 'To admire the plot and forget the character is like admiring the frame instead of enjoying the picture ... The sight of having our dinners cooked takes away our appetite.'³⁰ This was a view that was challenged by E.S.

Dallas in his wide-ranging treatise on aesthetic theory, *The Gay Science* (1866), which maintained that aesthetic pleasure recognised no division between high and popular forms, and which forcefully argued against hiving off either a mainstream or avant-garde high cultural tradition.³¹ Dallas insisted in the context of this contention that 'plot-dominated' novels were as conceptually complex as those creating the illusion of autonomous character, and it was the cultural position of popular narrative forms that determined the way that they were read: 'the difference between the two lies solely in the relation of the character portrayed to the actions described'.³²

Dallas pointed out, moreover, that while 'plotting novels' 'represent circumstance and incident as all important, and characters amid the current of events as corks upon the waves, they generally introduce one character who, in violent contrast to all the others, is superior to the plot, plans the events, guides the storm ... He predominates over the plot, and the plot predominates over all else'.³³ And it was this plotting of magnetic criminals within the novels that linked aesthetic and moral responses to sensation fiction. Sensation novels were often concerned with exploring the psychology of transgression and the social perception and definition of deviance, as well as invoking villainy; the portrayal of Lydia Gwilt in *Armada*, for example, pushes the portrayal of the subjective perspective of a wicked woman to its limits. But the form's fascination with deviance, and particularly bigamy, overruled the transgressor's penitence, as well as villainy's final retribution. 'Nothing can be more wrong and fatal than to represent the flames of vice as a purifying fiery ordeal, through which the penitent is to come elevated and sublimed', maintained Oliphant.³⁴ Its other common narrative feature though, madness, raised a more complex set of moral and aesthetic questions, since while also 'morbid' it was recognised as both a naturalistic and a fantastic device. 'Madness in Novels', which discussed Mary Braddon's *Lady*

Audley's Secret, Mrs Henry Wood's *St Martins Eve* and the anonymous *The Clyffords of Clyffe* in *The Spectator* in 1866, illustrated the ways that madness could be used as a fictional strategy that collapsed different conventions and cognitive processes into each other - that it simultaneously operated as a fantastic suspension of the real, and as a naturalised legitimisation of the 'supernatural', giving an external form to intense emotions: 'The nineteenth century believes in love and jealousy, and in a feeble way even in hate, but it is aware, nevertheless, that the mental concentrativeness out of which these passions spring is in this age rare', it opens and goes on:

One does not tumble down wells, but in the murder one might, if only it is artistically told, recognise the undeveloped wild beast in one's own heart. Miss Braddon perceived this, and it is to her credit that she discerned a mode of restoring the lost sensational effect to character. Madness may intensify any quality, courage, or hate, or jealousy, or wickedness, and she made Lady Audley mad. Thenceforward she was released from the irksome regime of the probable ... Probability becomes unnecessary, vraisemblance a burden, naturalness a mistake in art, everything was possible, and the less possible the emotion, the greater the surprise and pleasure.

It was a great discovery, and novelists have not been slow to seize it. Here is Mrs H Wood in want of a strongly sensational machinery. She wants to paint jealousy in its extreme form, and she has not of course the power to create Othello, or art to paint, as Thackeray and Trollope might have done, the morbid passion in its naturalistic nineteenth century dress ... But Mrs Wood, being familiar with medical lore, can make a mad woman do anything.³⁵

Madness had not one function in sensation fiction, but several, the piece went on to argue. With Braddon it was a way of expressing suppressed tendencies, for Mrs Henry Wood, a means of blurring the boundaries of the natural: 'We say it is natural, but in all events the unnaturalness disappears, for no-one except Mr Forbes Winslow knows what is natural in a patient with intermittent lunacy.' In *The Clyffords of Clyffe* madness transposes the

novel into the realm of the marvellous since here, 'Every one is either mad, or fears he may be mad ... and of course everything is possible'. The piece concludes by arguing for the validity of sensation novels as modern forms of supernatural romance: 'We do not deny that there is art in depicting the unnatural, an art shown in conceptions like Fusell, an art which rivets the spectator, not in what it sees, but in the thought of what it would see were all the conditions of art reversed.'³⁶

Collins's use of psychological conventions and notions of madness emerged in this complicated cultural setting. *The Woman in White* appeared alongside *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862), *Martin's Eve* (1866) and *Reade's Hard Cash* (1863), novels which illustrate the diverse uses of madness as a sensation convention, as I shall briefly outline. *Lady Audley's Secret* in particular took up and inverted some of the patterns of *The Woman in White* in the figure of its heroine, Lucy Graham, the bewitching young governess with golden curls and a secret past, who gains wealth and power by substituting a dead woman for herself; takes on a new identity by marrying the ageing Lord Audley; attempts to dispose of her former husband by pushing him down a well and of other adversaries by burning a village inn. In *The Woman in White* Laura's colourlessness allows her identity to be obliterated once its social signs have been removed; Helen Talboys, the penniless deserted wife, turns herself into Lucy Graham, a governess with an empty past, and gambles on the expectations created by her appearance to become Lady Audley. Both writers are questioning the blonde child-wife stereotype, and exploring the relationship between the construction of femininity and insanity, but in very different ways. In *The Woman in White* derangement is the product of the way that Laura is manipulated as a result of her situation; in *Lady Audley's Secret* Lucy's 'latent insanity' is the only possible explanation of her behaviour - she is bad because she is mad - and is also the

means by which her pathologisation grows out of her position as object of contemplation.

Both novels revolve round the problems of perception and interpretation. Each uses insanity as a key narrative device, as a way of setting up modes of perception and undercutting them. In each, this uncertainty affects not only how the victim or villainess might be seen, but also how the detective consciousness interprets evidence - both the central subjects fear at some stage that their own minds might be unbalanced. In each, too, the amateur detective's ability to interpret reality and to act on that interpretation is bound up with their increasing sexual and social control and their ability to overcome the stagnant quasi-feudal order which they replace. One difference, however, is that in *The Woman in White* the process of writing and reconstructing evidence is made a central part of the process of investigation, while in *Lady Audley's Secret* the story is told through an omniscient narrative, whose focus progressively shifts from Lucy to Robert Audley, her nephew by marriage and self-appointed private investigator. As she becomes the central object of disclosure he becomes the central subject, and the novel is so structured that discovering her secret becomes his passage out of aristocratic ennui and into a purposeful middle-class profession. Within this overall framework, however, a double process is at work that in some respects forms an impossible figure. In becoming a detective, Robert Audley not only reconstructs Lucy Graham's identity, but engages with her in a battle over who defines sanity. Lucy's claim to her place, an act of defiance and aggression, is to attempt to label Robert Audley mad, and to have him incarcerated. Thus the final resolution of the novel - the establishment of hereditary insanity in Lucy and her committal to an asylum - by which Robert Audley establishes his identity, is a re-enactment, in another key, of the plot by which Lucy Graham attempted to secure her own.

The lack of any stable reference points for defining insanity can work in opposing ways in *Lady Audley's Secret*. Lucy's insanity is both an extension of and a departure from her ability to confound any distinction between appearance and reality. Robert Audley's role as detective is to create an alternative story of her past and her identity out of a tissue of unsubstantial clues of circumstantial evidence. Of course Lady Audley's guilt is hinted from the start, not least by the title of the novel; the suspense hinges on how the alternative story of the past might be anchored in the present through the detective-work. And just as Lucy's cunning is displayed by her skill in manipulating her own appearance, so the shifting signs of her identity first appear in her representation - her portrait. The first clue to Lady Audley's secret emerges through a particular artistic style, the obsessional, even fetishistic perspective of the Pre-Raphaelite painting of her: 'No one but a Pre-Raphaelite would have so exaggerated every attribute of that delicate face as to give a lurid lightness to the blonde complexion, and a strange, sinister light to the deep-blue eyes.'³⁷ Appearances are deceitful not only because what seems to be true is false, but because what seems to be false, a distortion, is true. The means of seeing the painting suggests a complicated truth - transformation, distortion and revelation - where no line between object and perceiver can be drawn:

It was so like and yet so unlike; it was as if you had burned strange-coloured fires before my lady's face, and by their influence brought out new lines and new expressions never seen in it before. The perfection of feature, the brilliancy of colouring were there; but I suppose the painter had copied quaint medieval monstrosities until his brain had grown bewildered, for my lady, in his portrait of her, had something of the aspect of a beautiful fiend.³⁸

And Robert Audley himself can only build up a chain of circumstantial evidence by actively projecting meaning into facts and events, in ways that

throw his own sanity open to question. 'Why was it I saw some strange mystery in my friend's disappearance?' he asks himself:

Was it a monition or a monomania? What if I am wrong after all? What if this chain of evidence that I have constructed link by link is woven out of my own folly? What if this edifice of horror and suspicion is a mere collection of crotchets - the nervous fancies of a hypochondriacal bachelor? Mr Harcourt Talboys sees no meaning in the events out of which I have created a horrible mystery. I lay the separate links of the chain before him, and he cannot recognise their fitness. He is unable to fit them together. Oh my God, if it should be in myself all this time that the misery lies!³⁹

And although this vacillation is finally overcome by his reaffirmation of the objective reality of contingent facts, this can only happen through exploring different modes of perception. The truth, when it is discovered, affirms the deceptiveness of the 'orderly outward world'. The novel finally, in incarcerating Lucy, represses its own secret, but in working towards this resolution, and in restoring the social order, the narrative covertly acknowledges that process of repression by centring it on Robert.

Who has not felt, in the first madness of sorrow, an unreasoning rage against the mute propriety of chairs and tables, the stiff squareness of Turkey carpets, the unbending obstinacy of the outward apparatus of existence? We want to root up gigantic trees in a primeval forest, and to tear their huge branches asunder in our convulsive grasp; and the utmost we can do for the relief of our passion is to knock over an easy chair, or smash a few shillings worth of Mr Copeland's manufacture.

Madhouses are large, and only too numerous; yet surely it is strange they are not larger, when we think of how many hopeless wretches must beat their brains against this hopeless persistency of the orderly outward world, as compared to the storm and tempest, the riot and confusion within: - when we think of how many minds must tremble on the narrow boundary between reason and unreason, mad today and sane tomorrow, mad yesterday and sane today.⁴⁰

In Mrs Henry Wood's *St Martin's Eve* on the other hand, madness is used as a device to explain and make possible violent female behaviour, but this

grows out of already existing tensions and jealousies within the family. Charlotte Norris, the ignorant inheritor of her father's 'taint', becomes the second wife to the wealthy George St John and step-mother to his heir; both she and their own second son lead a marginalised existence within the family home and a displaced relation to the patrilineal line which is compounded by the husband's premature death. Thus ironically, Charlotte's own 'inheritance' from her father becomes a threat to the pattern of inheritance from which she and her son are both excluded. Her madness, like Lady Audley's, takes the form of temporary seizure and is hidden beneath a bland exterior; as with Lady Audley's secret it is simultaneously a force transmitted from outside and an expression of her 'own' nature. Yet the emphasis has shifted in *St Martin's Eve* - Charlotte's jealousy and acquisitiveness is on behalf of her son, and is portrayed as excess of maternal solicitude, whereas Lucy abandoned her son to seek her own advancement in a fit of puerperal insanity. Charlotte's incipient insanity is constantly half suggested, half kept concealed from the reader, and is presented contradictorily; one moment as an underlying evil nature, the next as a propensity which she gradually comes to recognise and struggle against: 'She deliberately intended to do right; but passion and prejudices are strong; unusually strong they were in her, and her mind was ill-regulated.'⁶¹ She is described as 'striving against her evil spirit', and at the same time as being driven mad by remorse for the murder of her step-son,

When a writer of sensation romances makes a heroine push a superfluous husband down a well ... we smile over the highly seasoned dish, but we do not think of applying the warning to ourselves and for the future avoid sitting on the edge of a draw-well. But when we read as in the novel *Very Hard Cash* ... that any man may, at a moment, be consigned to a fate which to a sane man is worse than death, and that not by a single act of any of our Lady Audley's ... but as part of a regular organised system, with all the compliance of the laws of the land - when we read this, a thrill of terror goes through the public mind. If what Mr Charles Reade says is possible, who is safe?⁶²

Thus J.S. Bushman, a physician at Laverstock House Asylum responded in a letter to *The Daily News* to the serialisation of Reade's novel -its title later amended to *Hard Cash* - in *All the Year Round*. As it suggests, the 'thrill of terror' of the novel was derived not from the image of madness but from the image of the madhouse, and the stresses it places on the sanity of the sensitive but sane individual; the 'dark place' where everything was possible, receptacles not simply of madness, but conspiracy and crime. But the letter emphasises that the novel was also taken seriously as an exposure of real conditions in asylums, and was used by Reade to advance the campaign for their reform: 'I ... desire it to be known that this great question did not begin with me in the pages of this novel, neither shall it end there.'⁴³

Like *The Woman in White*, *Hard Cash* uses wrongful confinement in a private asylum for financial gain, and its sensation in part depends on connecting the fears that were associated with the image of the eighteenth-century madhouse with the particular debates on madness and confinement of the late 1850s and early 1860s. The hero, Alfred Hardie, a brilliant Oxford scholar, is duped and imprisoned in an asylum by his scheming father for his knowledge of his father's fraudulence; and here the definition of madness is explicitly seen as a form of social control. *Hard Cash* enacts a family drama of rivalry and retribution between father and son, by consigning the hero not simply to an unspeakable 'other' place, but to a place where social identity itself is obliterated with the collusion of the most progressive branches of the medical profession. Yet finally the hero reasserts his sanity by his resolute bearing as a gentleman. The tension of the novel depends on contrasting his fundamental sanity and coherent, male, upper-middle-class identity, with modern psychological medicine. This interprets all symptoms as potentially morbid, and is embodied in the figure of the asylum proprietor - the

sinister and slippery Dr Wycherley. Thus all three novels imply different conceptions of madness and put the device to distinct kinds of use. But they each depend on asserting, ambivalently, that madness represents absolute difference - the 'wild beast in one's own heart' - and that the boundaries of insanity are always problematic.

Collins's fiction was written within this literary context, but his writing raises a more complex set of questions. Like *Lady Audley's Secret*, his novels are clearly examples of what Tzvetan Todorov identified as the fantastic mode. They occupy that borderland state between the mimetic and the marvelous, the literal and the metaphorical, in which the boundaries of the real are forever breaking down and, as was noted in the mid nineteenth century, they articulate their contemporary culture's ambivalence towards the nature of knowledge and identity itself.⁴⁴ Collins's novels continually produce a sense of the uncanny; perspectives suddenly become provisional and the familiar world strange through the development of recognisable and repeated motifs. There is the recurrent emergence of the 'other' figure, and of split and double selves, ambiguous figures who both threaten and transgress the boundaries of the 'orderly outward world' bringing with them echoes of the supernatural; figures who are perceived as anomalous, deviant or insane, and who continually come back in a way that threatens the boundaries that were founded on their exclusion. And as such they feed that sense of the uncanny - the weird, the hidden, the inexplicable - that Freud described in his essay on the phenomenon as expressing all that which is most familiar, coming back transformed into the sinister, by the process of repression.⁴⁵ They do this moreover by extending the uncertainty to the consciousness of the perceiver whose sense of a stable reality is thus also undermined and who might be pushed into a state of uncertainty, breakdown

or an alternative 'visionary' consciousness by the experience. And this process is often recounted, too, through a shifting narrative perspective; there is usually a tacit struggle over narrative authority, and over who defines truth and reality going on in Collins's novels.

In these respects Collins's novels are certainly fantastic texts and it is tempting to apply that analysis of fantasy that sees it as an inherently subversive mode to his work. But the methods by which these breaks with the 'real' are achieved means that his novels also raise questions, not simply of how to analyse the development of those conventions historically, but also of how to think about the historical formation of those psychic processes that they explore. Rosemary Jackson, for example, lucidly puts forward a 'subversive' reading of fantasy in *Fantasy: A Literature of Subversion*; and following Foucault's analysis of the changing cultural meaning of madness in *Madness and Civilization*, argues that fantastic writing as it developed in the nineteenth century operates as the expression of those unassimilable elements of the individual and collective psyche repressed by a secular culture and a dominant realist tradition.⁴⁶ In this reading, fantastic motifs, particularly images of madness as representing 'otherness', always exist in some relation to the real, yet remain the 'wild card' which it cannot contain, in a way that implicitly resorts to privileging madness, making it the bearer of an alternative truth, while also depending on a notion of a stable mimetic realism and a closed scientific system that has to be asserted in order to be subverted. But in Collins's novels fantastic devices work by drawing on the models of their culture in an explicitly mimetic way, and this breaks down the boundaries of the real still further, while remaining in a 'real' relation to their external referents. And this contradictory relation transforms the significance of these figures of 'otherness', for it is their homeliness that is

most weird, and their weirdness is invoked by appropriating contemporary images of madness.

Collins's novels, moreover, are concerned with creating and resolving mysteries, with tracking down both criminals and hidden traces of the past, reaching an interpretation of a range of shifting and contradictory evidence by following clues in both senses of the word: sign, and thread weaving through a labyrinth. They appropriate a wide range of fictional conventions to which no single generic category can be applied, but T.S. Eliot's dictum - that *The Moonstone* is 'the first and greatest of English detective novels' - is usually taken as a starting point, installing Collins as the 'father' of the English branch in genealogical histories of the form.⁴⁷ Detective novels are, in a sense, paradigms of the mechanisms of all narratives - initial mystery, retardation, reconstruction and recognition, engaging the willing participation of the reader. They provide the means of confronting social and psychic tensions; exploring the disruption of order in enclosed communities where anything is potentially significant and everyone is potentially guilty, and of restoring both social equilibrium and a coherent framework of perception, through an analysis which reconstructs the past through interpreting the everyday clues of the present, re-establishing the order that was initially questioned.⁴⁸ Detective fictions, too, lend themselves to psychoanalytic readings, and as explorations of latent meaning through manifest empirical signs they have been interpreted as analogues both of the psychoanalytic process and of the construction of scientific knowledge.⁴⁹ Psychoanalytic readings have been applied to *The Moonstone* to analyse it as a novel which symbolically manifests the transformations at work in the process of repression, beginning

with Charles Rycroft's reading of the novel as symbolic re-enactment of the primal scene; and the sophistication with which the novel questions many of the presuppositions of the genre while elaborating most of its 'Whodunnit' conventions has been noted.³⁰ But again, *The Moonstone* is neither purely an unconscious fantasy that can be interpreted as if it was a dream, nor a prescient anticipation of later psychoanalytic techniques - it also derives both its mystery and the resolution of it from incorporating and conjuring with contemporary theories of the unconscious, taking them beyond their immediate frameworks by turning them into sources not so much of final truth as of cognitive ambiguity and elaborating a recurrent set of concerns and conventions that Collins had been developing throughout his writing.

In the preface to his extraordinary exploration of the scientific and occult possibilities of mesmerism, *A Strange Story* (1862), Edward Bulwer-Lytton argued that there was nothing so fantastic as scientific speculation though this might involve overturning many of the premises of the scientific establishment: 'If the Author of this work has presumed to borrow from science some elements of interest for Romance, he ventures to hope that no thoughtful reader - and certainly no son of science - will be disposed to reproach him.'³¹ He quotes an extract from William Hamilton's *Lectures on Metaphysics* as an epigraph to the novel: 'To doubt and to be astonished is to recognise our ignorance. Hence it is that the lover of wisdom is in a certain sort a lover of mythi, for the subject of mythi is the astonishing and marvellous.'³² Collins's novels often share this sense of speculative enquiry, this fascination with forms of knowledge that hover on the margins of science. But although they are intellectually complex, they do not have the same kind of ambitions as those of Bulwer-Lytton, and this makes their relation to contemporary psychological theory the more convoluted. Collins does not draw on one psychological theory or model but on a range of

methods as narratives, which, in becoming sources of tension, can either affirm or overturn contemporary concepts. They thus become crucial to the way that the narratives proceed by setting up and undermining their own authority, the means by which particular framing and embedding devices set up relationships between narrators, and the way that the texts as a whole work as fabrics of overt and hidden associations.

The first chapter of this study will provide an overview of these theories, which form both a specific set of methods and perceptions that Collins draws on, and an overarching ideological framework within which it is shaped and makes sense. Psychology was emerging as a discipline and profession during the first half of the nineteenth century, drawing on and pulling together physiology, philosophy and social theory, in the context of the development of the asylum system, and of the asylum itself as the stage for the building up of social identity. It thus linked theories of the workings of the mind with definitions of what it meant to be a social being, drawing and contributing to wider perceptions of gender and class identity. I shall explore this, and look at how different theories of the workings of the consciousness and the unconscious emerged during the mid nineteenth century, linking these with changing conceptions of organic forces that shaped individual destinies - inheritance, evolution and adaptation. In analysing Collins's novels I shall analyse how his fictional extrapolation of these perceptions and his narrative transformation of particular techniques is part of a developing exploration of social identity. This begins first of all in the family, which in Collins's fiction is a social, an organic and a psychic structure, based on the power of the father and its own continued line, often a waning line that needs to be revitalised from outside. 'The emotions are the nurses of the faculties', Collins wrote in the biography of his father, 'And the first home is the sanctuary in which they are created and reared'.⁵³ In

Collins's novels homes are sanctuaries, asylums, places of both safety and danger, where the self is built up and broken down. Families form the links with the past that give identity coherence, but they also take the form of a morbid inheritance, and this tension can only be overcome by the individual self undergoing a social and psychological transformation in order to return to a family that has a renewed cultural meaning.

So in each of the chapters on the novels I shall explore the ways that Collins reworks certain repeated motifs, replays plots with different combinations, building up and breaking down different oppositions, focussing in detail on the interwoven threads of the narratives themselves, and their correspondence with the clues of psychological association. But each of the novels I shall analyse also elaborates particular areas of psychological theory. *Basil* and *The Woman in White* conjure with different aspects of moral management, and although this is a strand that runs throughout Collins's fiction, it is modified in other novels of the 1860s - in *No Name* in relation to competing models of evolution; in *Armadale* in the context of theories of dreams, and in his most complex cognitive investigation, *The Moonstone*, in relation to contrasting notions of the unconscious. In the final chapter I shall briefly analyse a range of the later novels in the context of the increasing predominance of degenerative assumptions in social and psychological theory.

CHAPTER ONE

IN THE COMPLICATED LABYRINTHS OF OUR FRAME:
 PSYCHOLOGY AS SOCIAL PERCEPTION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Nothing can be more slightly defined than the line of demarcation between sanity and insanity ... Make the definition too narrow, it becomes meaningless; make it too wide, and the whole human race becomes involved in the dragnet. In strictness we are all mad when we give way to passion, to prejudice, to vice, to vanity; but if all the passionate, prejudiced and vain people were to be locked up as lunatics, who is to keep the key to the asylum?

The Times, 22 July 1853¹

Moral Management and Household Words

During October 1857, Dickens and Collins's collaborative short serial in *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices* appeared in *Household Words*. The piece humorously traces the picaresque wanderings of the serious-minded and curious Francis Goodchild and the hedonistic Thomas Idle, and in the fourth instalment Goodchild gives an account of his visit to a county lunatic asylum: 'An immense place ... admirable offices, very good attendants; altogether a remarkable place.' He begins his description of the institution, though, by using metaphors which immediately recall Dickens's own earlier 'A Walk in a Workhouse': 'Long groves of blighted men-and-women-trees; interminable avenues of hopeless faces; numbers, without the slightest power of really combining for any earthly purpose; a society of human creatures who have nothing in common but that they have all lost the power of being humanly social with one another.'² He goes on to focus on the scene, particularly on one 'poor little dark-chinned meagre man with a perplexed brow and a pensive face, stooping low over the matting on the floor, and picking out with his thumb and forefinger the course of its fibres'. The man is discouraged from

this activity by the attendant and goes back to his room, but a minute later shuffles out again and returns to poring over the matting. Goodchild continues:

I stopped to look at him, and it came into my mind, that probably the course of those fibres as they plaited in and out, over and under, was the only course of things in the whole wide world that it was left for him to understand - that his darkening Intellect had narrowed down to the small cleft of light that showed him, 'This piece was twisted this way, went in here, passed under, came out there, was carried away here to the right where now I put my finger on it, and in this progress of events, the thing was made and came to be here.' Then, I wondered whether he looked into the matting, next, to see if it could show him anything of the process through which he came to be there, so strangely poring over it. Then I thought how all of us, God help us! in our different ways are poring over our bits of matting, blindly enough, and what confusions and mysteries we make in the pattern. I had a sadder fellow-feeling with the dark-chinned, meagre man by that time, and I came away.³

The passage suggests a complex pattern of responses to the image of insanity. The visitor is at once impressed and depressed by what he sees. The asylum reminds him both of an inverted stately home and a workhouse wherein the pastoral imagery is ironically transferred to the occupants of the place. Mania, like 'the dragon Pauperism' in 'A Walk in a Workhouse', 'in a very weak and impotent condition; toothless, fangless, drawing his breath heavily enough, and hardly worth chaining up', has been rendered tame in this model institution, but in the process has become the ultimate vision of social powerlessness.⁴ But looking at the 'meagre man' more closely, the perspective shifts: projecting meaning into his projections of the madman's projections, and seeing this as the development of a mystery story, the philanthropic observer is shocked out of his paternalistic complacency. Suddenly the madman's tracing of clues and weaving of meanings become an echo of his own uncertainty; it is this identification which lies behind his sympathy.

The passage would have presented a familiar picture to readers of *Household Words* - five years earlier Dickens had reported his own visit to St Luke's Hospital for the insane poor. But it might have had disturbing echoes too, since it emphasised a different side to asylum life from the one normally stressed in the journal. The question of the care and treatment of the insane and the development of the lunacy reform movement was a particularly congenial subject for *Household Words*, but this was unlikely to involve the attempt to disentangle insanity's internal meanings. Dispelling old myths and superstitions about madness and replacing them with enlightened humanitarianism was an especially suitable focus for the journal's mission as entertaining educator of a newly defined lower-middle-class family audience.⁵ And the plight of the human but helpless mad was a particularly worthy subject for such concern, since wherever madness might be found, it struck, above all, in the family. 'There are few household calamities so utterly deplorable as loss of reason in a husband, wife, or child; and there is, perhaps, no household calamity for the lightening of which so much can be done or left undone by friends of the afflicted, according to their knowledge or their ignorance of certain leading truths', noted 'The Cure of Sick Minds' in 1839, summarising a mass of material that had appeared within the previous few years. 'The development of this kind of knowledge has been the work of science in our own day, and its diffusion is the duty of journals such as ours. For that reason we have, from time to time, dwelt upon points relating to insanity in England, and we now found, upon the latest reports of our county Lunatic Asylums, a few more notes of profitable information.'⁶

The development of this kind of knowledge was not confined to *Household Words*. Articles discussing a wide range of theories about the workings of the mind as well as contributing to debates about definitions and forms of insanity and the treatment of the insane were a significant feature

of Victorian journals and periodicals. They formed part of an intellectual culture that included friendship networks and debates and discussions in journals and periodicals and where psychological, social, medical and cultural ideas interfused even as they became more specialised as scientific disciplines.⁷ Outside the texts themselves, evidence of Collins's direct involvement in these debates is vague and circumstantial, and depends on inference drawn from his friendships and wider acquaintance - with Dickens (the close friend of Conolly and Elliotson, involved with mesmerism, and criminal and lunacy reform), with Reade (involved, in a different way, with lunacy reform), with Bulwer-Lytton, with Edward Pigott, George Elliot, G.H. Lewes and Herbert Spencer. The external evidence comes from Collins's explicit appropriation of precise sources which then become transformed in the texts rather than his engagement with public debate outside the novels, and even here what is important is the combination of sources, and the significance of the ways in which they overlap.

The source for the wrongful confinement of Laura Fairlie in *The Woman in White* that is most often cited is the 'sensational' late eighteenth century French case of the Marquise de Douhault, described in Mejan's *Recueil des Causes Celebres*, a copy of which Collins bought during a trip to Paris in 1836. But he also much later described that he had received a letter asking him to intervene in a contemporary confinement case as he was planning the novel.⁸ The novel was serialised in *All the Year Round* during 1859 and 1860; it coincided with the publication and widespread discussion of the Parliamentary Select Committee Enquiry into the Care and Treatment of Lunatics and Their Property of 1858-9, members of which included Collins's two acquaintances, John Forster and Richard Monckton Milnes. And the Enquiry itself marked the culmination of a particular set of debates about how to establish the boundaries of madness. This concern formed part of a

longer term shift in the cultural meaning of the asylum and ideas about the social formation of identity: the kind of knowledge developed by *Household Words*, encapsulated in the concept and method of moral management. Moral management was a particular method of treating and perceiving insanity; and it gained its authority from the way in which it at once encapsulated and contributed to the aspirations of progressive liberalism during the first half of the nineteenth century. Moral management provides the overarching ideological framework for Collins's fiction. As I shall show in my discussion of the novels, it both supplies the paradigm within which narrative authority and meaningful identity is formed, and offers a means of overturning that authority, revealing its mechanisms of manipulation, its sources of power. This chapter begins by outlining some of the ways that moral management was built up within the culture around two poles, two extremes that were forever meeting - the asylum and the middle-class home. The paradigm was shaped unevenly, extending across a range of writings and practices, permeating contemporary culture as an overlapping set of hypotheses, narratives, impressions and anecdotes, in which utopian visions of ideal asylums merged with accounts of visits to real ones and memories of good and bad ones, and where particular perceptions qualified, while being set within, an epic story of progress and heroic deeds, which was nonetheless tempered with ambivalence and anxiety.

This story opened with two mythologised gestures: the epic image of Pinel opening the gates and striking the chains from the bound and chained lunatics of the Bicetre ('Citizen, I am convinced that these madmen are intractable only because they have been deprived of air and liberty'), in 1793, and its more prosaic English equivalent, William Tuke founding the Retreat, an asylum for insane Quakers, near York in 1796.⁹ It was undoubtedly a significant movement, marking a point where Jacobin radicalism and English

rational religious traditions merged and contributed to the formation of early-nineteenth century liberal ideology.¹⁰ But the gestures took on increasingly mythical connotations as the reform movement developed through the first half of the nineteenth century, a development that depended in part on a continual process of self definition, which was based in turn on a repeated rewriting of its own history. So although there was in reality no absolute break in the perception and treatment of madness around 1800, the horrific image of the eighteenth century madhouse needed to be continually invoked to highlight and make sense of nineteenth-century progressive reform. 'From a blind and hard-hearted policy, which embraced only the affliction of one evil by the affliction of another ... a sudden transition was made to a system, professing to be based on knowledge of the human mind, and on the common sympathies of our nature, and to have as its object the eradication, or if that appeared Utopian, the amelioration of the evil', wrote W.A.F. Browne in *What Asylums Were, Are, and Ought to Be* in 1837.¹¹

Indeed many of the outraged descriptions of 'old corrupt' eighteenth century asylums, with their ubiquitous imagery, above all, of whips and chains, both reinforced the self-congratulatory portrayal of contemporary reform and justified a prurient horrified fascination with the images of brutality that was not so very different from the despaired voyeurism with which earlier observers had viewed the antics of the mad themselves. Dickens's description of Christmas at St Luke's in *Household Words* in 1852 contrasted the scene with how it might have been a hundred years before: 'Coercion for the outward man and rabid physicking for the inward man, were then the specifics for lunacy. Chains, straw, filthy solitude, darkness and starvation; ... spinning in whirligigs, corporal punishment, gagging, continual intoxication; nothing was too wildly extravagant, nothing too monstrously cruel to be prescribed by these mad doctors. It was their monomania ...'¹² A

metaphor of Christian redemption was developed in 'The Star of Bethlehem', a history of that most redolent symbol of the enforced bestiality of madness, Bethlehem Hospital, or Bedlam: 'The remedy for lunacy which we now find in cheerfulness and hope was sought in gloom and terror', and the article went on to describe the recurrent signs of eighteenth century brutality: Norris's cage, Cox's spinning chair, cold baths, and threats of drowning, and again, whips, chains and straw.¹³ 'Things Within Dr Conolly's Remembrance' also charts a progress of gradual enlightenment, marking its beginning with the work of Tuke and Pinel and its culmination with the figure of 'the wise and good Dr Conolly'.¹⁴ Weightier journals and reports told the same story. Andrew Wynter's lengthy summary of recent psychological findings and medical reports in *The Quarterly Review* in 1857, like many others, invoked Hogarth's allegorical painting of the consequences of unlicensed sexual excess, 'The Rake's Progress', to emphasise: 'It is not fifty years since the state of things which now only exist in the imagination was both general and approved. The interior of Bethlehem at that date could furnish pictures more terrible than Hogarth ever conceived ... Through the instrumentality of the Tukes, Gardiner Hill, Charlesworth, Winslow and Conolly, the old method of treatment, with its whips, chains and manacles, has passed away for ever.' And he continues with a more striking image: 'And as a true emblem of the revolution which has taken place, we may mention that some years since a governor, in passing through the laundry of Bethlehem, perceived a wrist manacle, which had been converted by one of the women into a stand for a flat iron.'¹⁵

The break was not nearly such a dramatic one of course, although the violent and often punitive practices of the eighteenth century madhouse were not a figment of the reformers' imaginations either. But while, pace Foucault, bestial images might have prevailed in the eighteenth century,

positioning the mad as the repositories of unreason, perverse reversions to an untamed state, other Whiggish models were also emerging, which saw madness more ambivalently, lurking at the heart of English culture itself. 'Nervous' disorders, in particular hypochondria, melancholy and spleen, were felt to be peculiarly English diseases of affluence; the symptoms of the over-indulgence, idleness and excess of civilized refinement of the upper class of both sexes; but also the cause for a sneaking national pride, the sign of sensibility on the one hand, of ambition, energy and progressiveness itself on the other.¹⁶ 'We have more nervous diseases', noted George Cheyne in *The English Malady* in 1733, 'since the present Age has made Efforts to go beyond former Times, in all the Arts of Ingenuity, Invention, Study, Learning, and all the Contemplative and Seditary Professions.'¹⁷ There was, too, increasing pressure for reform of the private madhouse system during the eighteenth century, leading to the setting up of pioneering curative asylums. The moral treatment practised at the Retreat which in turn became the model for the development of the techniques of moral management with the massive expansion of the state asylum system during the first half of the nineteenth century, grew out of this Whiggish liberal tradition, but the process of its development absorbed and expressed the contradictions of early Victorian liberalism. The domestication of the image of madness and the reforming of the insane into newly humanised subjects obviously drew on and contributed to the ideology of self-control, self-management and self-help which was one of its central features. But reform would be consolidated in a context where the newly-defined middle-class family was becoming the central model for the shaping of social identity.

This meant, too, that the Retreat could become a crucial reference-point for the development of both moral management as a method of treatment and the growth of the county asylum system precisely because it

preceded the transformation of the institutional landscape that it helped to shape. It was a private asylum, set up in part to provide an alternative to the notorious corrupt York madhouse; and like other private non-restraint asylums for the wealthy set up at the beginning of the nineteenth century, such as Brislington House and Ticehurst Asylum, it was small enough to look like a country house, in contrast to the vast, almost palatial edifices of the mid-nineteenth century model county asylums such as Hanwell or Colney Hatch.¹⁸ And although Samuel Tuke's *A Description of the Retreat* emphasised that the asylum was designed for Quakers 'of every class as regards to property', the operative word was Quaker; the inmates of the Retreat shared the framework of rational and Christian self-management that was a central part of their treatment. Moreover moral treatment had the space to develop, Tuke argued, precisely because there was no clearly delineated set of medical conventions or prescriptions: 'In the present imperfect state of our knowledge, of the very interesting branch of the healing art, which relates to the cure of insanity; and unable as we generally are to ascertain its true seat in the complicated labyrinths of our frame, the judicious physician is very frequently obliged to apply his means, chiefly to the alleviation and suppression of symptoms.'¹⁹

So the particular form of moral management developed at the Retreat was an eclectic one, gaining its coherence from the reciprocal bonds of authority and affection of the family. Patients were given good food, with wine and porter, taken on invigorating walks, occupied with pastimes and 'suitable' accomplishments; sympathetic treatment was a way of encouraging emotional as well as social reintegration. Propriety was thus more than the outward sign of self-possession and self-ascendancy, and this was achieved by the judicious blend of fear and the desire for self-esteem. 'The principle of fear, which is rarely decreased by insanity, is considered as of great

importance in the management of the patients. But it is not allowed to be excited beyond that degree which naturally arises from the regulation of the family.²⁰ Patients, like children, 'quickly perceive ... that their treatment depends, in great measure, on their conduct', and this 'leads to many struggles to overcome their morbid propensities'.²¹ This hidden theatre where patients enacted their sane selves culminated in the Retreat's famous tea parties where the inmates, becoming visiting guests, audience and actors of their own concealed drama, 'dress in their best clothes and vie with each other in politeness and propriety. The best fare is provided and the visitors are treated with all the attention of strangers. The evening generally passes in the greatest harmony and enjoyment ... the patients control, to a wonderful degree, their different propensities; and the scene is at once curious, and affectingly gratifying.'²²

'A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree', Dickens's description of Christmas at St Luke's Hospital in 1852, also focuses on the ritual gathering as a means of achieving self-possession by assuming a proper persona. But the resemblance between ritual, patient and institution highlights their differences: 'At one end were a number of mad men, at the other, a number of mad women, seated on forms ... The ball was proceeding with great spirit but with great decorum.'²³ The narrator writes in the character of a well-informed observer and public personality, and like the other articles on insanity in *Household Words* (most of which were written by Morley), the piece stresses how the institution has improved and presents insanity as primarily a product of poverty, semi-starvation and 'grinding parochial parsimony', as well as working class demoralisation. But as a 'curiosity' rather than a catalogue of advances, the piece is more tentative and ambivalent and represents a shift in the perception of moral management, as well as of the insane themselves. The decorum and orderliness of the mad,

their learning of useful work and social skills, is a way of resisting insanity's powerlessness and isolation but also a means of compounding it. In contrast with the *Lazy Tour* image the mad are irreducibly 'other' here, but they are strange by virtue of the very decorum with which they enact the motions of social life. St Luke's was a reformed pauper hospital and did not have the same cachet as the large, purpose-built county asylums. Dickens's description here turns the symbolic imagery of the Retreat inside out, and the place thus, too, acts as the underside of the public face of the county asylums, mid-century stages of moral management, which in turn both echoed and transformed the earlier connotations of the Retreat.

The lunacy reform movement had been able to develop partly because of the absence of any coherent public or private structure, but this also shaped the pattern of the development of institutions during the first half of the nineteenth century. When the Retreat was founded there were various ways in which the insane could be confined: the wealthy at home or in private madhouses; paupers in prisons, in charitable institutions such as St Luke's or Bethlehem, or farmed out to private madhouses by the parish.²⁴ The reformers' aim following the 1809 County Asylums Act had been to encourage the development of the state sector, and also to lobby for greater state inspection of private madhouses and asylums; but the two sectors remained separate until 1845. This meant that although the development of county asylums encountered initial resistance from various landed interests, their development remained the focus of concern. Moral treatment had developed in the smaller, private environment of the Retreat yet although progressive private asylums were developing, in the mid-nineteenth century it was the massive county asylums that were set up as the primary models for the treatment of insanity.²⁵ The model county asylum was a Retreat writ

large, resembling a stately home rather than a county house, but now, too, a mass institution, a place of confinement as well as cure.

Thus Conolly, outlining the ideal asylum in *The Construction and Government of Lunatic Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane* (1847), stressed the importance of the social organisation of space: 'Separate wards and bedrooms for the tranquil, for the sick, for the helpless, for the noisy, the unruly or violent, and the dirty ...' while emphasising: 'There can be no doubt that the best site for an asylum is a gentle eminence, of which the soil is naturally dry and in a fertile and agreeable country ... Patients of all classes derive advantage from the circumstances of situation just mentioned; and if it is intended to receive patients of the educated classes into the house, it should unquestionably be situated amidst scenery calculated to give pleasure to such persons when of sane mind.'²⁶ So confinement, too, becomes linked with the image of an idealised landscape, a private place that is on display and which bears a range of overlapping class connotations. Conolly's *The Treatment of the Insane Without Mechanical Restraints* (1856) reinforces this, stressing the importance of seclusion and repose to lull the patient out of a violent or manic state, to suppress anything that might give rise to irritation or distressing associations. Here mania is soothed out of existence rather than being wrestled with and overcome by the sane part of the self and a new image of leisure becomes associated with the remoulding of identity through work:

When they are taken out to walk in a quiet garden, or a pleasant field, among trees, and shrubs, and flowers, they are impressed with the sensations of a kind of new world. When, sitting down to comfortable dinners, they find that some of the officers still come to see that all is conducted properly, a conviction that they are carefully looked after necessarily arises in their thoughts ... Day after day these influences operate, and day by day mental irritation subsides, and suspicions die, and gloomy thoughts gradually disperse, and confidence grows and strengthens, and natural affections re-awake and reason returns.²⁷

In becoming domesticated in this way, insanity becomes feminised, as the model of middle-class wifely propriety and domestic virtue becomes the role to which all women should aspire, and domesticity acquires new kinds of homely connotations.²⁸ Femininity and insanity did not become associated for the first time in the mid-nineteenth century, but they now are juxtaposed in specific ways as the boundaries harden between male and female, public and private spheres.²⁹ The nervous disorders of upper-class women of the eighteenth century were inextricably associated with their class, but with the growth of the psychiatric profession, the female body becomes doubly pathologised, either by succumbing to passivity or resisting it.³⁰ As femaleness becomes vulnerable so the mad woman of every class is cured through learning to be a middle-class gentlewoman, yet moral management, which on the one hand encapsulates this learning of dependence, also provides the only means by which the constraints of femininity might be transcended. Dickens, describing St Luke's, noted the rigid division into male and female wards, male and female lines of dancers. The bleakness of the wards is the sign of the total social isolation of the mad: 'Nothing in the rooms to remind the inmates of the world outside. No domestic articles to occupy, to interest, or to entice the mind away from its malady. Utter vacuity.' Yet while the patients become transformed back into human beings by enacting a domestic tableau, turning the institution into a home, they still remain silent - they just look more comprehensible: 'It was a relief to come into the workroom; with coloured prints over the mantle-shelf, and china shepherdesses upon it; furnished also with tables, a carpet, stuffed chairs, and an open fire. I observed a great difference between the demeanour of the occupants of this apartment and the inmates of the other room. They were neither so listless nor so sad. Although they did not, while I was present, speak much, they worked with earnestness and diligence.'³¹

Andrew Wynter, too, in his article on 'Lunatic Asylums' in *The Quarterly Review*, elaborated the point implied by his bizarre 'emblem' of progress - a wrist manacle transformed into an iron stand - in his description of the reformed Bedlam by describing the female side of the hospital: 'We find the apartments occupied by a score of busy workers, the majority of whom appear to be gentlewomen. Every conceivable kind of needlework is dividing their attention with the young lady who reads aloud David Copperfield ...; while beside the fire, perhaps, an old lady with silver locks gives a touch of domesticity to the scene ...'³² Conolly emphasised that attention to dress, in another context empty-headed vanity, was an important means of re-establishing self-possession: 'A neglect of this really proper feeling is a frequent cause of discontent in asylums and sometimes retards recovery ... many of the women should indeed be indulged in wearing neat articles of dress.'³³ So while *The English Woman's Journal*, in a series of articles on insanity between 1859 and 1861, stressed a point also made by many alienists, that women's lack of education and opportunity to work led to a lassitude that could slip into nervous debility: 'The nurture and education of women are as enervating as possible ... Now we ... make a demand for strong minded women. Yes, we own it, while repudiating much that this abused term has been made to include',³⁴ their very defensiveness sprang from the inescapability with which 'proper feeling' and self-possession now took the form of feminine propriety. Collins's manipulation of these contradictions forms one of the crucial sources of tension of *The Woman in White*. It also points to the wider dilemma in which mid-nineteenth century feminism was caught.

The figure of Dickens's friend John Conolly himself encapsulated many of the inherent tensions of moral management, the ambiguous effects of the growing status of psychological medicine, and the overlapping and contrasting

anxieties that surrounded public and private asylums by the 1850s. By the early 1840s, Conolly, architect of the non-restraint system at Hanwell, the Middlesex County Asylum, and whose work Shaftesbury (Chairman of the Lunacy Commission) effusively described as 'the greatest triumph of skill and humanity the world has ever known', was an ideal candidate for the situation of self-made hero of lunacy reform, and in a position to combine professional opportunism with philanthropic radicalism.³⁵ But by the 1850s the precise character of those professional pressures transposed him into the shadow side of his earlier self. From an impoverished though respectable farming family, and a difficult early career as a physician attempting to secure a practice without private means, Conolly took up a teaching post in the newly-established medical school of University College, London, and was appointed superintendent at Hanwell in 1839. He was involved with the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, writing a popular pamphlet on cholera for them while in London, and made efforts at University College to establish the validity and respectability of psychological medicine.

His early book, *An Enquiry Concerning the Indications of Insanity* (1830), was part of this project, but it promoted it by going against the grain of contemporary orthodoxy.³⁶ Drawing on phrenological and associationist models in *Indications*, Conolly pointed out that the definition of insanity itself was unstable, and that its recognition depended on a range of shifting signs and propensities. Confinement in an asylum, he argued, in many cases could actually create insanity: 'The crowd of most of our asylums is made up of oddly harmless individuals, not much more absurd than numbers who are at large ... To all these patients, confinement is the very reverse of beneficial. It fixes and renders permanent what might have passed away, and ripens eccentricity, or temporary excitement or depression, into actual insanity'.³⁷ The most important thing for the practitioner, he went on, was 'that of

considering ... whether or not the departure from sound mind be of a nature to justify the confinement of the individual, and the imposition of restraint upon him, as regards the use and disposal of his property'.³⁸ It was this analysis, combined with his enthusiasm for working-class education and self-improvement, that lay behind the zeal with which he advocated and practised the abolition of all mechanical restraint. The ideal asylum for Conolly was a utopia of paternalistic self-management, a harmonious community where individuals would achieve their greatest potential under the benign eye of the superintendent. If this drew out the managerial side of the Owenite ideal and combined it with the Panopticon, Jeremy Bentham's ideal prison, it was nonetheless inspired in part by Owen himself, whom Conolly invited to Hanwell.³⁹

But Conolly's full-time appointment at Hanwell was short lived, and by the late 1840s he was forced, partly by exigency, into a more dubious position as proprietor of his own private asylums for female patients, and, even more controversially, to be called as an expert witness in criminal cases where the insanity defence was used.⁴⁰ Here, and in even more delicate situations where he was called upon to establish whether an allegedly insane individual should be confined, he was placed in a role in which he reinforced the position that he had repudiated in his earlier writings. The case of Eliza Nottridge, for example, a wealthy and eccentric spinster, who insisted on living in the 'Abode of Love', a millennial community where 'a mock religion and a boundless fanaticism sanction modes of worship which tend to destroy all sense of modesty', illustrated for Conolly the dangers of 'leaving imbecile, visionary and fanatical women at large'. He argued that only confinement in an asylum could protect both her reputation and her property, and whether or not she recovered, 'her habits would have at least have been regulated, all excess avoided, all painful exposure prevented', and expressly overturned the

defence's arguments that 'no lunatic should be confined unless dangerous to himself or others', that was based on his own earlier case in *Indications*.⁴¹ In 1839, too, he was sued by a patient whom he had committed to Moorcroft House, an asylum in which he himself had a financial interest.⁴²

Conolly's symbolic role, moreover, underwent a complete transformation as his mythologised figure became pressed into service for different causes within lunacy reform. For Dickens and Morley he was still the wise genius of public philanthropy in 1857, but by 1863, Dickens, as editor of *All the Year Round*, felt obliged to publish a disclaimer dissociating the journal from the implications of Reade's serial *Very Hard Cash* (later published as *Hard Cash*).⁴³ Dickens was outraged by many aspects of the novel, including the portrayal of the Lunacy Commissioners as well-meaning incompetents led by the nose by the medical profession, but he was particularly offended by Dr Wycherley, a thinly disguised parody of Conolly himself. The 'sensation' of *Hard Cash* initially depends on the hero's incarceration in an 'old' corrupt madhouse, but the anxiety is then transposed as he becomes the victim of Wycherley's more sinister and slippery manipulations. Wycherley is an expert who has become a monomaniac, a 'collector of mad people', so puffed up by the medical language that he has developed that he interprets all behaviour as pathological, and the only sign of sanity is the acknowledgement of madness. Wycherley's book, *The Incubation of Insanity*, parodies and inverts Conolly's *Indications*, including its discussion of particular cases, such as Pascal and Napoleon; Wycherley obsessively insists that Hardie should acknowledge that Hamlet really was mad in order to prove his own rationality - Conolly's own 'Study of Hamlet' published earlier the same year, had made a similar case.⁴⁴

As a sensation novel *Hard Cash* formed part of a genre of scandalised exposures of the private madhouse system that had been appearing since the

late eighteenth century. But what caused the furore round the novel when it appeared was the satire on the medical profession and the Lunacy Commission itself.⁴⁵ It was a campaigning novel, based on the plight of the male middle-class victim of a wrongful confinement conspiracy, yet while it does not have the fictional or ideological complexity of *The Woman in White*, its sensations do not only depend on the exposure of corruption but on how 'In lunacy law the extremes of intellect meet', pressing legal and medical definitions along infinitely expandable boundaries.⁴⁶ Reade, too, was actively involved in the protection of alleged lunatics. He had started to collect material on conditions in asylums since the early 1850s, and in 1859 had hid and protected John Fletcher, an escaped asylum inmate; the case is documented in 'Our Dark Places'.⁴⁷ But *Hard Cash* marked the culmination of a panic about the plight of the inmates of private asylums that echoed older fears while being shaped by the liberal concerns of the reform movement itself, and which had contributed to the setting up of the 1858 Parliamentary Select Committee Enquiry into the Care and Treatment of Lunatics and their Property.

The propertied inmates of private asylums were vulnerable potential victims of relatives' manipulations in a way that pauper lunatics could never be, but the debates on the 'liberty of the subject' that this prompted implied a very different subject from the one to be found in a county asylum. 'The tenacity of a private lunatic asylum is unique', commented the narrator in *Hard Cash*. 'A little push and you slide into one; but to get out again is to scale a precipice with crumbling sides.'⁴⁸ Fears about middle-class confinement emphasised how psychological perceptions could be shaped by social interests, in a way that was rarely extended to the propertyless mad. But the anxiety itself was generated by the way that private asylums continued to be 'Dark Places', shaped by their longer history as locations for

the annihilation of personality, open to explicit abuse, but also by their contemporary position as places which, no matter how enlightened, contained the more embarrassing phenomena of middle class madness, and where seclusion itself needed to be secluded, or at least not made the object of public display.

The establishment of the Lunacy Commission in 1845 formed part of a developing national structure of inspection and surveillance.⁴⁹ Anxieties about confinement formed a palimpsest of overlapping associations - reproducing the kind of fears that had been sounded since the middle of the eighteenth century, while transposing them into a different register as the concept of insanity shifted itself. The perception of the insane during the eighteenth century swung between seeing them as manifestations of bestial unreason, or of excessive sensibility and thus bearers of a kind of privileged testimony. But the dominant fears about wrongful confinement, which were carried into the nineteenth century, laid the emphasis on wrongful, and the sympathy for the sane victims of conscious conspiracy. Confinement might push the victim over the edge into madness, but the edge itself was there: 'What must a rational mind suffer when it is treated in such an irrational manner?' demanded a much publicised letter to *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1763 highlighting the plight of the wrongly committed.⁵⁰ And even in Mary Wollstonecraft's *The Wrongs of Woman*, where the madhouse is used as a metaphor for women's imprisonment and lack of identity in marriage, the heroine describes herself as 'a wretch condemned to reason on the nature of madness, by having wrecked minds continually under [my] eye, and almost wish [myself] mad, to escape the contemplation of it ...'.⁵¹ This 'whips and chains' image of the private madhouse, was kept alive as a memory into the mid-nineteenth century, even as it echoed real abuses that were taking place

- the number of private madhouses in England trebled between 1808 and 1845.⁵²

The spate of much publicised wrongful confinement cases during the 1850s emphasised this continuing malpractice and profiteering, but increasingly came to debate the authority of the medical profession and in this respect they anticipated the anxieties emphasised by *Hard Cash*, and echoed those of *Conolly's Indications*, though Conolly was by now on the other side of the table.⁵³ Thus John Perceval, Chairman of the Alleged Lunatics Friends Society, a body which had been set up in 1845, and which intervened in individual cases and collected evidence of malpractice that was cited as evidence to the 1858 Select Committee, argued against Shaftesbury's case that abuses were still the outcome of insufficient state control, by claiming that the very definitions of insanity had become inseparable from the interests of the medical profession. 'I would first refer to the danger to which the liberty of the subject is exposed through unjust or unnecessary efforts being made to confine him ... I think patients have sometimes to be protected against medical advice and experiments as well as any other danger', he stressed.⁵⁴

The debates about confinement, definitions of insanity, and the liberty of the subject that surrounded the Select Committee Enquiry provided an immediate reference point for *The Woman in White*, even as the novel inverted many of the assumptions within which the debates were set though more tacitly than did *Hard Cash*. But Collins also made - perhaps unconsciously - a more particular inversion in naming his villain Percival Glyde. The figure of Percival Glyde is a neurotic - victim of what Foote terms 'your English spleen', who uses his own stolen position of rank and power to steal his wife's property and identity by substituting her for a dead woman and confining her in an asylum. John Perceval, son of the

assassinated Prime Minister, Spencer Perceval, was not only a campaigner on behalf of alleged lunatics who gave evidence to the Select Committee, but an ex-patient who had been confined himself, and who, between 1832 and 1840, published an extraordinary document, *A Narrative of the Treatment Experienced by a Gentleman, during a State of Mental Derangement, Designed to Explain the Causes and the Nature of Insanity*. Perceval had suffered from extended bouts of insanity between 1830 and 1832 and was confined in Fox's asylum, Brislington House and in Ticehurst Asylum, both enlightened institutions.⁵⁵

Perceval's *Narrative* offers a glimpse into the secluded private asylum, but unlike Tuke's *Description of the Retreat*, or any other official writings, it also provokes an extraordinary exploration of the meaning of insane delusions, as he describes his experience of confinement, and attempts to reconstruct the process of his madness, to work out 'how he came to be there, so strangely poring over it'. 'In the name of humanity, then, in the name of modesty, in the name of wisdom, I entreat you to place yourselves in the position of those whose sufferings I describe, before you attempt to discuss what course of conduct is to be pursued towards them.'⁵⁶ And his analysis of madness goes far beyond the perspective of moral management, as Perceval reconstructs how his delusions grew out of his own over-zealous evangelicallism, and took the form of a transcendent paternal authority to which he was perpetually an inarticulate other, an experience that was compounded by the treatment in the asylums, where he imagined that his keepers were avenging angels. Like a spectator at the play of his own delusions, he attempts to work out the sense that underlies them: 'I mention these facts to show the reasonableness, if I may so call it, of my lunacy, if it was entirely lunacy: to speak more clearly, to show the reality of the existence of that power, by the use or abuse of which, I became insane. If by

the abuse of it, because the Lord confounded me for my disobedience, if by the use of it, because, though real, it was the spirit of delusion.⁵⁷

I suffered from an habitual error of mind, ... that of failing to doubt, and of taking the guilt of doubt upon my conscience.⁵⁸ Perceval learns that it is necessary to discover the uses of doubt in order to disentangle himself from a complex network of delusion; to understand what kind of metaphorical drama his delusions represented, as a means of unpicking their emotional power: 'I suspect that many of the delusions which I laboured under, and which other insane persons labour under, consist in their mistaking a figurative or poetic form of speech for a literal one; and this observation may be important to those who attend to their cure ... The spirit speaks poetically, but the man understands it literally ... and his imagination not being under his own control, he in a manner feels it.'⁵⁹ Perceval's Narrative is a marginal text, and it is tempting but too simple to see it as prefiguring later psychoanalytic interpretations. Yet it develops its analysis of the significance of insanity by drawing off the literary conventions of the confession, conventions which Collins was to exploit in his first contemporary novel, *Ball, A Story of Modern Life*. And in its argument for the need to decode the meaning of derangement, the Narrative provides a clue to the meaning of the unconscious that also hovers on the margins of mid-nineteenth century psychological debates.

Constitutions of Consciousness and Clues to Identity

In *Indications of Insanity* Conolly had emphasised the difficulty of laying down fixed criteria for establishing unsoundness of mind. He had also argued that any understanding of insanity depended on analysing 'the constitution of the human understanding', that it was essential to relate, before one could distinguish, the healthy and morbid workings of the consciousness.⁶⁰ The cultural significance of madness in the mid-nineteenth century was shaped by the development of the asylum system and the hypotheses of moral management, in which the belief in the ability to reconstitute the social identity of the insane was a concomitant of the process by which definitions and perceptions of insanity itself became aligned with the perception and definition of powerless groups - particularly women and the casual poor - as potentially vulnerable and pathological; a process which, during the second half of the nineteenth century, undermined the very optimism on which it had been founded. It also articulated and contributed to an extensive range of physiological, psychological and social debates about the constitution of identity, the relationship between personal and social organisation, between the history of the individual and of the species.

Eighteenth-century materialist and associationist theories exerted a powerful influence on early nineteenth-century physiological psychology, which argued that the mind could not be considered separately from the brain, nor its structure from its function. But they were transformed in the context of new hypotheses and paradigms, most notably the 'Development Hypothesis' itself, which emphasised that the individual organism could only be understood in a collective social context, as a moment in a longer narrative of change. They had a salient bearing, too, on the analysis of the internal workings of the consciousness, and of the significance of natural or artificially induced states of 'unconscious cerebration': dreams, trance,

delirium, somnambulism; pressed into service to establish the perimeters of self-control, but also explored to analyse the workings of memory, the intractability of the past, the relationship between conscious and unconscious activity. These debates were marked, moreover, by cognitive ambivalence. On the one hand they shared the sense that developing scientific knowledge worked as a process of imaginative projection, that it was a heuristic construction of the world that needed to discard as well as use empirical evidence, and a way of breaking free of the vestiges of residual assumptions. Yet on the other hand they continually established their privileged authority as science by differentiating between truth and fiction, official and unofficial kinds of knowledge in a way that paradoxically mystified dominant perceptions even as it invested marginal ones with occult connotations. *Household Words* voiced this kind of equivocation between receptiveness and scepticism in a discussion of the analysis of 'spectral illusion' as a subject of psychological investigation, 'New Discoveries in Ghosts': 'It behoves us in the present day .. to learn how we can keep our tempers free from prejudice, and not discredit statements simply because they are new and strange, nor, on the other hand, accept them hastily without sufficient proof.'⁶¹

Collins continually exploits the tenuousness of this balance by his use of experiments, records, legal testimonies and diaries as evidence to prove, and at the same time to display the subjective construction of the objective truth. And the struggle to separate out thoughts, to distinguish between valid and delusory perceptions, not only to doubt whether one can trust the evidence of the senses, but to be confused about precisely what that evidence consists in, even as it is finally relied on, is a recurrent aspect of this. The most specific form it takes is in the development of the dilemma that Robert Audley expresses in *Lady Audley's Secret*: the problem both of how to interpret Lady Audley herself and the evidence that leads to her guilt: 'Was

it a monition or a monomania? ... What if this chain that I have constructed link by link is woven out of my own folly?"⁶² It is a dilemma that stresses that all perception is shaped by the projections of the viewer, who worries over whether he is making the correct associations, and who does not know how to interpret apparently irrational feelings of anxiety and apprehension, and I will be coming back to this; but in elaborating it Collins, like Mary Braddon, draws on a precise pathological terminology and set of perceptual codes that he both inverts to explore the provisional nature of subjective identity and exploits through the development of physiological conventions that can then be broken down or shown to be unreliable as markers of identity.

One starting point for this is precisely the distinction between 'monition' and 'monomania', and linked with this, between monomania and 'moral insanity', since it was in setting up the categories and drawing the distinctions between these terms that many legal as well as psychological writings attempted to approach and resolve the vexed questions, not only of how to establish 'unsoundness of mind', where temporary derangement might end and fully fledged insanity begin (crucial in establishing whether confinement was justified), but also of the problematic relationship between insanity and criminal responsibility, guilt and absolution.⁶³ The concept of monomania, which was a development of the earlier humoral category of melancholia (as opposed to mania), was first discussed by the influential French alienist Esquirol and by Pinel. But it was developed most fully in England by James Cowles Pritchard in his *Treatise on Insanity and Other Disorders Affecting the Mind* (1835) and *On the Different Forms of Insanity in Relation to Jurisprudence* (1842), and by the mid-nineteenth century had become a widely used term that could be stretched to mean any kind of irrational obsession. Pritchard opened his *Treatise on Insanity* with the

ubiquitous assertion that it was difficult to pin it down, but quickly went on to modify Locke's observation that 'madmen do not appear to have lost the faculty of reasoning; but having joined some ideas together very wrongly, they mistake them for truths, and they err, as men do that argue right from wrong principles'.⁶⁶ This was only one aspect of madness, he argued, claiming instead that insanity needed to be divided into two basic categories, intellectual and moral. Intellectual insanity was then subdivided into monomania, 'in which the understanding is partially disordered or under the influence of some particular delusion, referring to one subject, and involving one train of ideas, while the intellectual powers appear, when exercised on other subjects, to be altogether unimpaired'; mania, or raving madness, 'in which the understanding is generally deranged', and incoherence, or dementia.⁶⁵ All of these were different kinds of cognitive disorders in which people might act irrationally, but not necessarily perversely. And monomaniacs could pull themselves back over the boundary into sanity by recognising the madness in themselves, vigorously exercising the will to control it. 'The affection of the brain that causes these delusions is not madness', argued John Barlow in *Man's Power over Himself to Prevent and Control Insanity*, 'but the want of power or resolution to examine them is.'⁶⁶

Monomania, with its stress on the possibility of self control, was compatible with moral treatment, although how exactly one defined 'partial' was open to question.⁶⁷ But 'moral insanity' suggested a lack of reciprocity by virtue of its very self-possession, and with this, propriety itself became a possible sign of villainy and the new locus for the 'wild' aspect of madness. Moral insanity, argued Pritchard, in a definition cited in a discussion of its implications in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1835, consisted in 'a morbid perversion of the feelings, affections and active powers, without any illusion or erroneous conviction impressed upon the understanding: It sometimes co-exists with an

apparently unimpaired state of the intellectual faculties'.⁶⁸ And by replacing intellectual derangement with moral perversion he not only changed the meaning of madness, but turned it into an infinitely moveable feast. Moral insanity now still implied mental disease, but one 'which has completely removed all the barriers which separated vice from insanity and thrown the subject of madness into the direct confusion', commented *The Quarterly Review*, discussing Benjamin Brodie's *Psychological Inquiries* in 1834.⁶⁹ This meant that defining madness explicitly invoked a moral judgement, giving a new meaning to the older notion that it represented the expression of deviant or transgressive impulses, that it was basically the same as badness: 'Excessive intensity of any passion is disorder in a moral sense', wrote Pritchard.⁷⁰ But as insanity was criminalised, so crime was pathologised. Criminal lunatics, as lunatics suffering from moral insanity, could not be held responsible for their actions; though Pritchard stressed that moral insanity, like monomania, was the product of inadequate self-discipline - that there was no clear boundary between them. Like his contemporaries, Pritchard's analysis proceeds by dramatically describing case histories, such as that of 'an only son of a weak and indulgent mother [who] gave himself up habitually to the gratification of every caprice and passion of which an untutored and violent temper was susceptible ... Every instance of opposition or resistance moved him to acts of fury ... When he became of age he succeeded to the possession of an expansive domain. An act of notoriety put an end to his career of violence. Enraged with a woman who had used offensive language to him, he threw her into a well ...'.⁷¹ He notes: 'A female modest and circumspect becomes violent and abrupt in her manners, loquacious, impetuous, talks loudly and abusively against her relations and guardians, before perfect strangers ...',⁷² and stresses that the disease often took the form of 'an unusual prevalence of angry or malicious feelings which arise without provocation or any of the ordinary incitements'.⁷¹ Sensation fiction

drew on these categories but also took the opportunity to realign them; it was Lady Audley who displayed most self-possession in gaining control of her husband's estates, and in the process pushed her superfluous former husband down a well. But the categories themselves were also articulated through melodramatised psychological conventions.

In the satirical caricature of Conolly in *Hard Cash*, *Indications* becomes *The Incubation of Insanity*; and ironically it was the combination of these notions - of how the latent signs of insanity might be indicated on the body, but also of how they might be lurking, incubating secretly to make a predictable or unexpected appearance - that lay behind many causal hypotheses.⁷⁴ In his *Treatise on Insanity* Pritchard had distinguished between moral and physical causes of insanity, moral here denoting everything not immediately traceable to an organic cause, and these were then each broken down into 'predisposing' and 'exciting' categories.⁷⁵ But this distinction disintegrated in the analysis of the relationship between the structure and function of the mind, while the interpretative methods that represented the categories drew on conceptual metaphors derived from each other. They took place moreover in the context of the distinct but overlapping interpretative codes of physiognomy and phrenology which by the mid-nineteenth century had become well established across psychological, aesthetic and fictional discourses.

The idea of a semiotic system in which outward signs were the index of latent emotional or moral traits was already well established by the beginning of the nineteenth century. The tradition of classical physiognomy derived from Aristotle and based on humoral theory, combined in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with a model based on animal analogy.⁷⁶ But it was the work of Caspar Lavater at the end of the eighteenth century that was to be the main reference point for nineteenth-century applications. Lavater did

not fundamentally modify its idealist basis, nor did he claim that physiognomy constituted a science. He did, however, maintain that the face constituted a symbolic system in which each feature, individually and in combination, expressed a nature that had a universal meaning. Indeed one of his starting points was to assert that popular responses to and preconceptions about what people look like formed a folk science that would one day be elevated to a systematic level. He defined 'physiognomical sensation' as 'those feelings which are produced at beholding certain countenances and the conjectures concerning the qualities of the mind, which are produced by the state of such countenances, or of their portraits drawn or painted', and went on: 'Let any person, but for two days, remark all that he hears and reads among men, and he will every day hear and read ... "You might have read it in his eyes" - "The look of the man is enough" - "He has an honest countenance" - ... "He has evil eyes" ... "He cannot look any person in the face" ... The very judgments that seem to militate against the sciences are but exceptions which confirm the universality of physiognomical sensation.'⁷⁷

None the less, the proliferation of popular treatises on physiognomy which took Lavater as their starting point assumed that it conferred scientific credibility to already existing preconceptions. And a more elaborate version of a comparable self-fulfilling process was at work in the use of physiognomic portraiture for the definition and interpretation of insanity. Lavater had focused on movable expression and posture as well as on facial structure in his analysis of the physiognomy of insanity. So did Pinel and Esquirol in their extensive use of the method (developed by Alexander Morison's *Physiognomy of Insanity*) for classifying psychopathological types, but all these methods relied on existing techniques of portraiture. This use of physiognomic portraiture thus helped to fix the insane in asylums as specimens of themselves to be deciphered by the

investigating gaze which 'fixed and rendered permanent that which might have passed away', since the artistic representation of forms became the referential model shaping the perception of individuals, a process which gained a compatible though different kind of legitimacy as medical photography evolved out of photographic portraiture while claiming that it fixed the image as a trace of the real.⁷⁸

But the interpretation of physiognomic signs was also developed as a means of going against the grain of established representational conventions, establishing the authority of an aesthetic that stressed multiplicity, eccentricity, even grotesqueness, to be on a continuum with normality, not a morbid deviation from it. Charles Bell's *Essay on the Anatomy of Expression in Painting* (1806) had echoed 'eighteenth century' images of madness, stressing its animality and placing the mad half way up the hierarchical chain of being by extending existing conventions, but Darwin later interpreted this in *The Expression of the Emotions* to mean that insanity signified a more intense kind of human emotion, which led to his argument that the most human of expressions are those which have the closest animal equivalents.⁷⁹ Bell's work also provided an important reference point for Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics. Holman Hunt recommended *The Anatomy and Philosophy of Expression as Connected with the Five Arts* to Millais in 1848, and both employed Bell's physiognomic methods as one means of developing a naturalism that broke with the 'artificiality' of received conventions as a means of developing their own. Bell's technique and theory of anatomy was in many respects compatible with the principles that Ruskin outlined in *Modern Painters*; that truth to nature might invoke an ideal but that this did not demand a passive idealism of representation - that that 'truth' consisted precisely in the expression of violent, subtle and complex emotions.⁸⁰ Collins's use of the 'physiognomic sensation' runs through a spectrum at one

end of which is simple debunking. 'The personal appearance of Miss Wigger', comments the narrator in *The Evil Genius*, 'might have suggested a modest distrust of his own abilities to Lavater, when that self-sufficient man wrote his book on physiognomy. Whatever betrayal of her inner self her face might have presented in the distant time when she was young was now overlaid by a surface of flabby fat which, assisted by green spectacles, kept the virtues (or vices) of this woman's nature a profound secret until she opened her lips.'⁸¹ But it is generally used to qualify expectations of a revealed self, and this takes place in a cultural context in which physiognomy operated as a cipher which itself had various kinds of interpretative uses and meanings.

Phrenology was sometimes described as a subdivision of physiognomy, but although, like physiognomy, it claimed to offer a means of reading latent character in manifest physical signs, it used interpretative devices which offered a contrasting analysis not only of the meaning of appearance, but also of the workings of the consciousness and the constitution of identity. Physiognomy saw the face and body as an expressive mask on which the inner drama of identity was stamped, an essential self, but one that could be moulded and modified by experience and history. Thus Bell stressed that the face could express a wide range of intense emotions, and suggested a process of projection was essential to interpret its dynamic meaning. This point about the flexibility of the significance of physiognomy was also made by E.S. Dallas in *The Cornhill* in 1861.⁸² Phrenology, on the other hand, was interested in the skull, the surface of the brain, as an index of different organs which signified different psychological propensities, localised, but juxtaposed, like interacting pieces of a mosaic. It was first developed at the end of the eighteenth century by the Viennese physician Franz Joseph Gall as a theory of the brain and a science of character based, as Roger Cooter has explained, on the following tenets: '(i) the brain is the organ of the mind; (ii)

the brain is not a homogenous unity but an aggregate of mental organs; (iii) these mental organs or physical faculties are topographically localised into specific functions; (iv) other factors being equal, the relative size of any one of the mental organs can be taken as an index to that organ's power of manifestation; and (v) since the skull ossifies over the brain during infant development, external craniological means can be used to diagnose the internal state of the mental faculties'.⁸³

In England phrenology was popularised by George Combe, an ambitious Edinburgh lawyer, who drew on the ideas of Gall's pupil, J.G. Spurzheim, and whose *Constitution of Man* became the fourth most popular book of the second third of the nineteenth century, after the Bible, *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Betteredge's handbook *Robinson Crusoe*.⁸⁴ *The Constitution of Man* was both a treatise on the structure and function of the brain and a manual of proper living, self-management and moral conduct; and phrenology achieved an immensely powerful authority during the first half of the nineteenth century both as a liberating, radical kind of knowledge of the self that could be made a part of a Utopian science of society, and as a more utilitarian model of containment, classification and control. Combe's topography made a basic distinction between 'Feelings' and 'Intellectual Faculties'. The feeling category was subdivided into 'propensities', including amateness, combativeness, acquisitiveness, secretiveness; and 'sentiments', such as self-esteem, pride, covetousness, veneration. The intellectual faculties subdivided into 'external senses', 'faculties which perceive existence', and 'faculties which perceive the existence of external objects'.⁸⁵ Each individual character was constituted from the combination of these faculties and propensities - personality traits could be accounted for by the over or under development of particular organs. It was phrenology's claim to scientific accuracy that was criticised by Dallas in 1861: 'Every faculty of

the mind had its principality on the brow ... Here was Wit castled high on the head ... Murder lurked behind the ear; Love sought the shady reaches of the back hair ... It was a strange topography and it was a still stranger psychology ... There was no doubt or ambiguity about the system ... Phrenology makes a pretence of science, affects precision and leaps to conclusions.⁸⁶ But earlier, though it was claimed that each organ had a function and a meaning, this did not necessarily mean that the head constituted a natural language. Rather, it made up a precise sign system that could be read by the skilled observer: 'No sphere of speculation is more beset with difficulties than this', Combe argued in considering how to read the cultural significance of expression in *Phrenology Applied to Painting and Sculpture*, 'and in none are the judgments formed by the different observers of the same subject more strikingly various, or more frequently contradictory'.⁸⁷

Phrenology also provided the means of classifying insane types and the terms for arguing for the possibility of reforming them that had an important bearing on nineteenth-century psychology. Andrew Combe had argued in *Observations on Mental Derangement* in 1831 that 'mental derangement is always symptomatic of cerebral disease', but this was modified in the context of a general theory of personality and society which explained insanity or criminality in terms of the over or under development of particular emotional, intellectual and moral propensities, which directly contributed to the framework of moral management.⁸⁸ Spurzheim had stressed the adaptive qualities of the various faculties: 'I am intimately convinced that no faculty itself can be bad, and that all the innate powers of man have some aim', and this is taken up by The Zolst: 'If all criminals are objects of pity let us feel it our duty to ameliorate their character and not to strangle them'.⁸⁹ Many of the superintendents of county asylums and advocates of moral management, including William Ellis, John Conolly, W.A.F. Browne, Forbes Winslow and

Daniel Noble, were active members of phrenological societies.⁹⁰ Phrenology always had an uneasy relation to the orthodox scientific establishment, but its presuppositions shaped the terms of the debates on the relationship between structure, function and adaptation that would be developed in mid-nineteenth century social and psychological theory. Certain elements, too, contributed to the development of neurophysiology during the second half of the nineteenth century - particularly the work of Pierre Broca, J.H. Jackson and David Ferrier, whom Collins cites in *Heart and Science* in 1883.⁹¹ And it interacted with early nineteenth century development of associationist psychology and sensationist philosophy and the analysis of the structure and workings of the nervous system, which investigated how sensations and perceptions became impressed on the mind, how they became thoughts and feelings.

Locke, whom Conolly took as his starting-point in *Indications of Insanity*, had argued that all knowledge and all experience sprang from the combination of perceptions and sensations caused by external stimuli. These could be combined or associated to produce complex ideas in different ways: by combination into one compound, by the juxtaposition of two ideas to connect them by resemblance without uniting them, and by separating ideas and perceptions and thus forming abstractions. Thus madness or derangement consisted, we have seen, in joining ideas together wrongly, or forming an error of judgement, but Locke also argued that to a large extent the association process took place automatically, or unconsciously, and could easily produce a bizarre or unexpected complex of thoughts: 'This wrong connection in our Minds of Ideas in themselves, loose and independent of one another, has such an Influence, and is of so great force as to set us awry in our Actions, as well as Moral as Natural Passions, Reasonings and Notions themselves, that there is not any one thing that deserves to be more looked

after.⁹² David Hartley's *Observations of Man - His Frame, Duty and Expectations* (1749) shifted the emphasis away from Locke's epistemological abstraction and introspection, and towards an analysis of the relationship between the workings of the cognitive faculties and the operation of physical vibrations along a continuum between the nerves and the brain. For Hartley, there was a relationship of repetitive association between ideas, sensations and muscular reflexes and motions, which linked these with abstract faculties such as memory, imagination and will.⁹³

Mill, Bain and Spencer's work emerged from this intellectual tradition, but associationist theory was elaborated in a context that had a direct bearing on early nineteenth-century physiological psychology in the complex interconnections between medicine and philosophy in late eighteenth-century Edinburgh. Robert Whytt's work on nervous disorders attempted to narrow the vague use of the term down to hysteria and hypochondria, as products of the 'unnatural sensibility of the nerves', and the breakdown of the working of a delicate web of fibres that connected the brain and the nervous system, a skein of sympathies in which 'nothing makes more sudden and surprising changes in the body than the several passions of the mind'. He emphasised that extreme physical sensations were reactions to intense emotions, and usually served 'the principle of preservation, without which we should cherish within our bodies such causes as would often end in our ruin'.⁹⁴ Such theories of sensibility and sympathies had an important bearing on the work of early advocates of moral management such as Thomas Arnold and John Haslam, while interpretations of associationist philosophy developed by Thomas Brown, Dugald Stewart and William Hamilton emphasised the connections, as well as the distinctions, between chains of association as the basis not only of imagination but of all new kinds of thought and knowledge. Stewart emphasised that the power of the mind to arrange thoughts in new

combinations, drawing on dreaming and fantasy, was the basis of humour, poetry and science, but his work is cited by Pritchard to demonstrate, as Conolly did, that insanity involved a suspension of the power of correct association.⁹⁵

John Abercrombie's *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* (1830) and Conolly's *Indications of Insanity* each provided a synthesis and development of these ideas that became an important reference point for mid-nineteenth century psychological debates though Conolly was more specifically concerned with the problematic analysis of insanity.⁹⁶ As its title implied, *Intellectual Powers* combined a complex epistemological discussion of the nature of knowledge, of how to distinguish true and false reason and establish 'intellectual power over the self', with a more descriptive psychological investigation, so that there is a continual tension between the analysis of different associative mechanisms, including dream and delusion, and a concern to distinguish between real and false perceptions. Following Brown, Abercrombie makes an important distinction between simple and relative associations, which implied that associations should be classified according to whether they were made voluntarily.⁹⁷ Under voluntary associations, or memory, he separates 'natural or philosophical', 'local or incidental' and 'arbitrary or fictitious' associations, and argues that the 'culture and improvement of the attention and memory' consists in learning 'habits of correct association', a point also emphasised by Conolly.⁹⁸

This had an important bearing on Abercrombie's analysis of dreaming, where 'the ideas or images in the mind follow one another according to associations over which we have no control'.⁹⁹ He reiterates a widespread ambivalence between fascination with the mental processes that dreaming represented, as endlessly recounted through vivid case histories, while pulling

back from active interpretation of the mechanisms at work within the dreams themselves, seeing them instead as aberrant, or morbid states of consciousness. Both Abercrombie and Robert MacNish, whose *Philosophy of Sleep* (1830) was one of the most important phrenological analyses of dreaming, stress that dreaming is both 'a suspension of the judgment' and 'an active state of memory, imagination etc.'.¹⁰⁰ It is thus a threat to the consciousness, while at the same time representing a particular kind of thinking process by allowing forgotten or hidden associations to emerge. 'It is undoubtedly owing to the faculty, sometimes possessed by sleep, of renewing long forgotten ideas, that persons have had long forgotten facts communicated to them in dreams',¹⁰¹ MacNish pointed out, and Abercrombie outlined distinct kinds of dream association: recent events and emotions mixed up with each other and with past ones 'though in other respects they were entirely unconnected'; 'trains of images brought up by association with bodily sensations'; 'dreams consisting in the revival of old associations, repeating things which had entirely passed out of mind, and which seemed to have been forgotten'; and dreams which embody a strong 'propensity of character or a strong mental emotion' and are fulfilled apparently by coincidence.¹⁰² This explanation of the premonitory or prophetic power of dreams is taken up by John Addington Symonds, *Sleep and Dreams* (1851).¹⁰³

Symonds takes Abercrombie's stress on the need to be able to distinguish between reality and fantasy as his starting point, by arguing that in sleep images 'do not arise with the stamp of the past upon them, as in our waking hours, and they are combined together in fantastic associations without any control of the will', but goes on to suggest that the line between fantasy and reality is constantly shifting in accordance with the different kinds of associative processes at work in dreaming.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, although dreams do not have a literal cognitive or prescient meaning, and most cases

of dream prophecy can be ascribed to coincidence, they can nonetheless express emotional predispositions that can reinforce their obsessive hold in a way that determines their own outcome: 'Some dreams work their own fulfilment. The mind vehemently possessed of an idea thus received, almost instinctively acts up to it.'¹⁰⁵ This is one starting point for Collina's complex manipulation of theories of dreams and delusions.

Physiological dream theory was more interested in identifying the alternative associative processes at work in dreaming than in actively interpreting their internal structure or significance. As dreams, too, taking place during regular sleep, they provided a safer access to unconscious thought than the more disruptive phenomena of somnambulism and hallucination, where hidden aspects of the self and traces of the past made unsolicited intrusions on the present, and on the conscious mind's ability to regulate its own associations. Hallucination or 'spectral illusion' was a relatively clear-cut phenomenon, in which, Symonds argued, 'Individuals turn out to be the subject of a peculiar nervous disorder, that destroys the balance between the perceptive and conceptive faculties'.¹⁰⁶ Materialist explanations of 'ghosts' had become widely established by the mid-nineteenth century - 'On Visions and Dreams' in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1862, for example, cites Ferriar's *Sketch Towards a Theory of Apparitions* (1813) as well as Abercrombie, in distinguishing between optical illusions and the projection of subjective images, and notes: 'Any state of excitement, sensibility or irritation, may make our mental concepts take a phantom shape ... and considering that all our thoughts are visions, it is only a wonder that we are not more haunted by spectres than we are.'¹⁰⁷ But the state described by the term 'double consciousness' - a state of trance or somnambulism where subjects would express repressed desires, long forgotten abilities or memories - opened up a set of questions that could not be adequately resolved within

phrenological or associationist frameworks, except as states of partial insanity and the product of the physical divisions of the mind. Double consciousness was 'only the alteration of healthy and morbid conditions of mind', Symonds argued, 'even though in the morbid state there might be achievements of memory and the other mental facilities not attained to in the waking condition', while Abercrombie, following Combe and MacNish, noted the phenomenon, but did not attempt to explain it.¹⁰⁸

It was in the development and discussion of mesmerism, or animal magnetism, that the meaning of these aberrant states, reached through 'artificial somnambulism' or induced trance, could be discussed in a way that connected discussion of nervous disorders with a broader theory of the psyche and saw unconscious and 'morbid' states as providing a clue to the regular workings of the mind. But they were entangled debates, in which discussion of the phenomenon itself was inseparable from disputes over the validity of its claims to credibility, and on the nature of the power that it was thought to manifest - power of the mesmeriser over the mesmerised as well as of the 'sensitive subjects' themselves. The problem, as 'What is Mesmerism?' in *Blackwoods* in 1831 stressed, was how 'to lay down accurately what is claimed for it - not vaguely, as I find it in letters and lectures, where that which is asserted at one time as its power is denied at another; but to speak clearly of its congruent powers or asserted powers, without vacillation; then to follow these powers to their consequences - their necessary consequences - if they be powers at all; and to draw conclusions arising from the two natures upon which it works - or perhaps is worked upon - materiality and spirituality'.¹⁰⁹ Mesmerism could be used to support widely differing theories - of the self, of the nature of derangement, and of reality. At times it could almost function as a 'wild' term around which opponents and adherents alike clustered, using

it or refuting it to advance their own positions in a variety of ways, and in a variety of cultural contexts.

Mesmerism, or animal magnetism, made its original cultural and political impact in pre-revolutionary France, when Franz Anton Mesmer arrived from Vienna in 1778, and a year later published *Sur la Decouverte du Magnetisme Animal*. Mesmer's discovery claimed to offer a simultaneously utopian and scientific model that illustrated a connection between the body and the surrounding world; a cure for physical and psychic ills and thus a prescription for social harmony - and to that extent it formed a link with, and rearticulation of, much older transcendental and vitalist concepts. He argued that a universal energy, force or fluid 'of an incomparably rarified nature', existed, which ebbed and flowed according to precise laws, and which formed 'a mutual influence between the Heavenly bodies, the Earth, and Animate Bodies'.¹¹⁰ And since all material and organic substances were governed by these laws, understanding them could form the basis for an all-embracing theory of influence and control. Diseases, above all nervous disorders, were caused by the misdirection of this energy, or 'fluid', through the body, which worked in an analogous way to a magnet. Massaging the body's 'poles' would induce a crisis involving trance or somnambulism, and the patient would pass through this to a state of harmony and health.¹¹¹

Mesmer maintained that the magnetic force was a material power, but it was often interpreted and described in terms that blurred the boundaries between the physical and the metaphysical, the literal and the metaphorical, in its original inception, and more markedly in its impact in England from the late 1830s where its cognitive ambiguity both contributed to and sprang from its increasingly marginalised scientific and medical status. Yet mesmerism grew out of, even as it challenged, mainstream physiological psychology in England, and reflected as well as questioned its concerns. Dickens's close

friend John Elliotson's development of artificial somnambulism to disclose and cure nervous disorders grew directly out of his physiological interest in phrenology as a model for social harmony and self-regulation. He founded and was the first president of the Phrenological Society in 1824, and in 1843 founded *The Zolists: A Journal of Cerebral Physiology and Mesmerism and their Application to Human Welfare*, which combined discussion of the medical use of mesmerism (to enable painless operations and to cure specific disorders) with phrenological discussions about the propensity to crime and insanity and the need for moral treatment.¹¹² Like Mesmer's follower Puysegur in France, Elliotson used strictly empirical criteria of certification, and it was partly for this reason that he concentrated so much on case studies and displays of mesmerism efficacy. They were displays, however, that served to compound its disreputable status as occult trickery in the eyes of the medical and scientific establishment.¹¹³

Elliotson had first developed the technique of artificial somnambulism in the treatment of nervous disorder in the late 1830s in the course of his work at University College Hospital, using it as a means of treatment based on the premise that the trance could precipitate and prefigure the course of an illness and thereby hasten the process of cure. This method, however, was developed as a means of divining extraordinary psychic powers, and of controlling the states of mind opened up by the manipulated 'double consciousness' - culminating in clairvoyance, which Elliotson considered to be magnetism's most developed stage. His outline of this process in *Human Physiology* (which he amended in the fifth edition in 1840 to include a defence of mesmerism) follows a summary of conventional theories of dreams and double consciousness, but goes on to quote Gall in maintaining that 'all the nervous system is an identity and a totality - a pure transparency without cloud, an infinite expansion without bounds or obstacles', linking this with

Dugald Stewart's point that it was the fact that mesmerism worked that was important, not how it worked.¹¹⁴ Elliotson was attacked with growing rigour by medical and academic authorities nonetheless, culminating in the scandal surrounding his treatment of the Okey sisters, which combined the exhibition of the medical use of the mesmeric trance with demonstrations of 'ecstatic delirium' and its clairvoyant powers. Here charges of sexual manipulation, the abuse of medical power and pseudo scientific imposture merged together. The *Lancet* took a particularly vehement line in attacking Elliotson, who resigned his position at University College in 1838.¹¹⁵

It was mesmerism's ambiguity, and its variety of possible uses as a language to invoke processes of dominance and subordination, hidden forces within the self, traces of the past, links between the body and the environment and the transference of identity which contributed to its attraction for writers such as Dickens, Bulwer-Lytton, Browning and Collins.¹¹⁶ For Collins this culminates in *The Moonstone*, where mesmeric methods are simultaneously exploited and scrutinised in the context of a complex narrative investigation of the workings of the unconscious and the cognitive processes through which it can be known. The novel was published in the year that Elliotson died, and Collins was too young to be caught up in the movement to the extent that Dickens and Bulwer-Lytton were, though he would have been clearly familiar with it through his friendship with Dickens, whom he accompanied on a visit to the de la Rues (Madame de la Rue was magnetised by Dickens for hysterical attacks) in Genoa in 1853.¹¹⁷ During the previous year, too, he had written a series of short reports of private mesmeric displays - 'Magnetic Evenings at Home' for *The Leader*: 'Here was some strange influence working on the intellectual faculties, the nerves, and the whole vital principle - the question is - How did it work? I cannot tell ... I have a thinking machine about me, commonly called a 'brain' - by what

process is it set working? What power, when I am asleep, when my will is active and I am awake?"¹¹⁸ G.H. Lewes replied in 'The Fallacy of Clairvoyance', stressing that mesmerism could largely be explained as autosuggestion and that 'the fallacy of clairvoyance is, I take it, the interpretation of a dreaming power for a seeing power'.¹¹⁹ In reply, Collins emphasised that he wished 'to vindicate the special experiment ... as a genuine experiment'.¹²⁰

Lewes's point that mesmerism was able to work because of the heightened suggestibility of its sensitive subjects was taken up by those who developed its techniques as well as those who opposed its claims.¹²¹ James Braid had developed many of Elliotson's hypotheses, but denied the existence of a material 'fluid' and developed the practice of hypnotism, which stressed the importance of suggestibility in a way that would be taken up in Paris by Charcot, who developed the technique as a means of probing the unconscious causes of neurotic symptoms.¹²² These were different interpretations of the unconscious state disclosed by mesmerism and the sense of a continuous, coherent personal identity. The concept of suggestibility, for example, was reiterated by William Carpenter in *Mesmerism, Spiritualism*, etc in 1877, where he argued that the trance arose from 'a special rapport between the "mesmeriser" and his "subject"; and that this was clearly explicable by the "expectancy" under which the subject passed into the state of second consciousness', to reinforce Braid's point that there was no difference between mesmerism and hypnotism.¹²³ This, however, developed out of his own theory of 'unconscious cerebration' and its role in the shaping of identity. Carpenter, like Elliotson, founded his career in the development of cerebral physiology, but it took a mainstream course and by the mid nineteenth century he had become, with Bain, a leading figure of physiological

psychology, reassessing associationist psychology in relation to evolutionary theory.¹²⁴

In Carpenter's psychology, as in Bain and Spencer's, associationist methods and presuppositions about the individual consciousness have a homologous relationship to collective, social and organic processes of change, but in a way that emphasised the importance of linear continuity between past and present in analysing the workings of memory and the significance of unconscious states. In *The Foundations of a Creed*, G.H. Lewes argued that traces of the past were always present in the self, but unevenly and discontinuously, and that the mind could not be seen in isolation from the social organism nor reduced to individual perception and sensations: 'The mind is not a passive recipient of external impulses but an active co-operant ... It is a variable mechanism which has a history. What the senses inscribe on it are not merely changes in the external world, but these characters of preceding inscriptions. The sensitive subject is no tabula rasa, ... but a palimpsest'.¹²⁵ However, in *Principles of Mental Physiology* (1874) developed from a section of the earlier *Principles of Human Physiology* (1844), Carpenter's model of the self as layers of past impressions draws different implications. He cites Abercrombie in his analysis of memory and its role in forming the sense of personal identity, but argues that the principle of association can be extended to include unconscious memory:

And as our ideas are thus linked in 'trains' or 'series' which further inoculate with each other like the branch line of a railway ... so ... an idea which has been 'hidden in the obscure recesses of the mind' for years - perhaps for a lifetime - and which seems to have faded completely out of the conscious memory, may be reproduced, as by the touching of a spring, through a nexus of suggestions, which we can sometimes trace-out continuously, but of which it does not seem necessary that all the intermediate steps should fall within our cognisance.¹²⁶

He goes on to argue that 'there must be in addition a recognition of the reproduced state of consciousness'. This 'consciousness of agreement between the present and our past mental experiences, constitutes the basis of our feeling of personal identity'.¹²⁷ Carpenter therefore argues that although the process of association in recall might be an erratic one, the reappropriation of the past through recognition is essential for personal coherence. This affects his analysis of unconscious activity, those forms of reflexive, or automatic action, which, like the 'double consciousness' are never fully recognised by the consciousness, and thus emerge like a 'succession of fantasies presented to us in the play of the Imagination'.¹²⁸ This 'unconscious cerebration' is both powerful and threatening because it directly affects the formation of emotional states without the intervention of conscious memory or will:

Here again, it would seem as if the material organ of those Feelings tends to form itself in according to the impressions habitually made upon it; which may be completely unaware of the changes which have taken place in it, as we are by those by which passing events have been registered in our memory, until some circumstance calls forth the unconscious manifestation, which is the 'reflex' of the new condition which the organ has acquired. And it is desirable, in this connection, to recall the fact that the Emotional state seems often to be determined by circumstances of which the individual has no Ideational consciousness, and especially of the emotional states of those by whom he is surrounded; a mode of influence that acts with particular potency on the minds of Children, and which is most important to their Moral education.¹²⁹

This forms the starting point for a set of ideas which are put to complicated use in *The Moonstone*.

Carpenter represented the dominant strand of the analysis of unconscious states, but the significance of both connections and breaks between them was developed in E.S. Dallas's extraordinary and eclectic analysis of the internal workings of the unconscious and the way it produces

aesthetic pleasure, and which was part of a broader analysis of the social role of literature within a process of historical change, *The Gay Science*. Dallas drew on an enormous range of philosophical and psychological debates in developing 'a science of the laws of pleasure', but in particular he developed his former teacher William Hamilton's analysis to stress the dynamic process of latent thought, in a way that brings together the language of dreaming, abnormal psychic states and metaphorical transformation in poetry, to elaborate his concept of the 'hidden soul' and of 'the play of thought'.¹³⁰ He argues that the imagination consists in a symbolising capacity that echoes the workings of the unconscious: 'a secret flow of thought which is not less energetic than the conscious flow, an absent mind that haunts us like a ghost or like a dream and is an essential part of our lives'.¹³¹

Like Carpenter, Dallas notes that 'the mind never forgets', but in his analysis a lost recollection is neither simply a missing link in a chain of associations, nor a threatening force to disrupt present coherence, but a necessary stage in the production of all new significance. He argues that the boundaries between conscious and unconscious can never be drawn: 'Between the outer and the inner ring, between our conscious and unconscious existence, there is a free and constant but unobserved traffic forever carried on. When the amount of thought flows from within our ken to beyond our ken we forget it, we know not what has become of it. After a while it comes back to us changed and grown as if it were a new thought and we know not whence it comes'.¹³² So while Dallas, like others, acknowledges the importance of memory in forming identity, it is in precisely those areas of consciousness that cannot be drawn back on a chain of logical associations that new ideas emerge through a process of metaphoric transformation, a process, however, whose productiveness lies in its very secrecy: 'It is memory, but it is memory automatic and unconscious. It is reason, but it is the

reason of the hidden soul ... It is, in a word, the whole power of the mind, but it is that power working in secret.¹³³ In this way Dallas moves beyond the spatial and localised model of the mind, and stresses how significance arises from the way in which the mind follows the missing clues of the gaps and lapses of memory. It is this secrecy, too, that lies behind aesthetic pleasure, a pleasure that is essentially popular and can never be based on a boundary between higher and lower forms. Those psychic mechanisms of hidden transformation are common to fantasy in dreaming and in art and they are identified by what Dallas terms the weird; and it is this sense of the inexplicable or bizarre that makes art poetic rather than drama or beauty that lies behind art's 'appeal to the secret heart, to ally itself with unknown delights ... we always find that [the poetic] must pierce to the Hidden Soul and engage it in Hidden Pleasure'.¹³⁴

Inheritance, Adaptation and Destiny

Collins's novels continually conjure with identity. The self is a stage on which others' preconceptions and perceptions are projected and enacted. It is a collection of external physical signs, and a subjectivity struggling to gain coherence, containing secret and forgotten traces. In Collins's novels, too, the self is always formed through the different kinds of legacies it inherits from the past through its family history which sets it in a network of obvious or hidden connections. The problem of how to know the past and how it shapes the future, together with the sense of 'something obscurely threatening ... which time was holding over our heads', is often linked with this mystery of how to place the individual within a family history and a fabric of social relations. And it is with these motifs too - lost children, the disclosure of illegitimate origins, the discovery of immediate or distant kinship - that it is most clear that Collins is both drawing on a familiar stock of fictional conventions, while exploiting the connections that they suggest

between the inheritance of property and identity, of wealth and morbid symptoms. Apparently irrational fears, anxiety about the future or the burden of an imaginary inheritance, are both real dangers and signs of monomania. The sense of an impending fatality clashes with the manipulation of coincidence, the notion that the only sure determinant is chance.

The concept of the hereditary transmission of insanity was not a new one at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but exactly what this meant and how predispositions might emerge was open to different kinds of interpretation and emphasis. Pritchard identified hereditary factors as one of the 'predisposing' physical causes of insanity, that could lie dormant, or develop with the development of the individual or be excited by environmental causes.¹³⁵ Thus changes of the environment might either exacerbate or alleviate a hereditary predisposition, and during the first half of the nineteenth century hereditary predisposition was often seen as one factor amongst many that might lead to insanity. For the notion of 'hereditary predisposition' focussed, indeed, on inheritance in a way that suggested that continuous legacy itself was morbid. And though 'nervous disorders' might increase or be exacerbated by the frantic pace of modern life, mental malady, leading to decline, was likely to be the legacy of the inbred upper classes as much as the excesses of the unruly working class.

Feudal stagnancy, the weight of an unchanging past, thus bred a decadence which might lead to physical or mental degeneration. 'It is of little real importance whether it be a predisposition or the malady itself, which descends and becomes hereditary', noted George Man Burrows in *Commentaries on Insanity* in 1828. 'But no fact is more incontrovertibly established than that insanity is more susceptible of being propagated; or, in other words, that a specific morbid condition sometimes exists in the human

constitution, which, by intermarriage ... may be perpetuated *ad infinitum*.¹³⁶

The idea is assumed to have gained a widespread currency in 'Idiots Again' in *Household Words*, which stressed how apparent mental defectiveness among paupers is often the result of malnutrition and can be alleviated by nurturing, but which opened: 'People whose ancestors came in at the Conquest, are apt to have one idea overruling all others - that nobody is worthy of their alliance whose ancestors did not come in at the Conquest. Of course, this has been an idea ever since the Conquest began to be considered an old event; and, of course, there have been fewer and fewer families who had a right to it. Of course, also, those families have intermarried, and the intermarriage has been more and more restricted. Another "of course" follows, on which we need not enlarge ...'¹³⁷

But by the 1860s the concept of continuous inheritance had become reinterpreted within evolutionary theory, which focussed on the relationship of the individual to the collective species as much as the family and on the interrelationship between the structure of the organism, its function, and its mode of adaptation. Not descent alone but descent with modification was emphasised now, and with it the question of whether characteristics which had been acquired by adaptation to the environment could be inherited by succeeding generations; questions which had a significant bearing on the implications of the ways in which organic metaphors were deployed to conceptualise social forms, divisions and processes of change. The widespread discussion of Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection* following its publication in 1859 is the clearest indication of how crucially evolutionary ideas permeated and transformed mid-nineteenth century culture. But writers extrapolated from Darwin in different ways and for very dissimilar reasons, and Darwin's work itself grew out of a complex intellectual context. In Darwin's theory of natural selection

the role of chance is a crucial determinant in the evolutionary process; he stresses the uneven and contradictory process of evolution through a process of adaptation and modification that drew on and combined disparate and anomalous elements. But this took place in a cultural context that emphasised the progressivist assumptions that Darwin's theory questioned, and which drew on the ideas of his predecessor Lamarck who, with von Baer, had argued that evolution was marked by the increasing drive towards differentiation and complexity, and that modification took place as a result of the inheritance of acquired characteristics which thus became structural features.¹³⁸

This had an important bearing, for example, on the way in which Herbert Spencer incorporated evolutionary concepts into his social and psychological theory; it was he, not Darwin, who coined the term 'survival of the fittest' in *Social Statics* in 1851.¹³⁹ Spencer's psychological theory had been developed in the intellectual frameworks of phrenology and associationism, and although he modified these, as Carpenter did, to take account of evolutionary ideas, to focus on long-term processes of change and on the nature of the relationship between the internal structure of the organism and the environment, his theory of adaptation retained all the moralistic and prescriptive attributes of the phrenological tradition that he sought to replace. Like Darwin, and Lewes, Spencer refuted teleological or humanistic explanations of change, but his work did not echo their epistemological challenges, and his organic model extrapolated from a social one to naturalise a competitive, individualist ideology. While Lewes developed organic theory selectively and dialectically to explain social and psychological structures, Spencer's use of Lamarck and von Baer's principles had particular implications for his social theory, overturning certain aspects of earlier progressive liberalism and reinforcing others.

The first of these principles, that progress was marked by increasing complexity - a complexity marked by increasing differentiation - meant that perpetuating social and sexual divisions, separating fit and unfit, became its in-built feature, universally applicable across all practices: 'This law of organic progress is the law of all progress', he argued in 'Progress, Its Law and Cause', 'whether it be in the development of the Earth, in the development of life upon its surface, in the development of Society, of Government, of Commerce, of Language ... this same evolution from the simple to the complex, through successive differentiations, holds throughout'; and this underpinned his argument that willed endeavour could become an element of evolution.¹⁴⁰ But the second principle, that evolution took the form of 'the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations', or that environment determines the individual organism and thus becomes an organic feature which can be passed on to successive generations, turned environment into a force of destiny.¹⁴¹ Psychological transmission also followed this path of organic evolution through the inheritance of acquired nervous tendencies; Spencer argued in *The Principles of Psychology*: 'Hereditary transmission ... applies not only to physical, but to psychical peculiarities. It is not simply that a modified form of constitution produced by new habits of life, is bequeathed to future generations; but it is that the modified nervous tendencies produced by such new habits of life, are also bequeathed: and if the new habits of life become permanent, the tendencies become permanent.'¹⁴² It was this determinism, combined with reinterpretations of the evolutionary paradigm, that contributed to theories of degeneration at the end of the nineteenth century.

The apparent growth of insanity with modern life had been the worrying concomitant of progress since the late eighteenth century and an anxious undercurrent of moral management, though it was also pointed out that it

was the methods of classification that had expanded rather than the numbers of the insane themselves.¹⁴³ In his article on 'Lunatic Asylums' in 1857, Andrew Wynter stressed that 'mental ruin springs rather from mental torpidity than from mental stimulation', but against a growing fear that 'lunacy is on the increase: 'Is it true that civilization has called to life a monster such as that which appalled Frankenstein? Is it a necessity of progress that it shall ever be accompanied by that fearful black rider which, like Despair, sits behind it? Does mental development mean increased mental decay?'¹⁴⁴ Over the next twenty years, specific debates on insanity absorbed and helped to shape the terms of an organicist social theory that overturned its earlier progressivist assumptions, replacing it with a concept of degeneration which by the 1880s had become almost a ubiquitous feature of biological, psychological and social theory. John Conolly's son in law, Henry Maudsley, was the most influential advocate of degenerative theories of insanity in Britain, and replaced the earlier hopes of moral management with the Nemesis of a relentless Fate: '... that dread, inexorable destiny which has so great and grand a part in Grecian tragedy, and which Grecian heroes manfully contended against, although fore-knowing that they were inevitably doomed to defeat, was in some degree an embodiment of the deep feeling of the inevitable dependence of a man's present being on his antecedents in the past'.¹⁴⁵ This was reinforced in the context of the growing social, economic and political divisions of the late nineteenth century, as the concept of degeneration gained a new legitimization by reinterpretations of the earlier 'Development Hypothesis'.¹⁴⁶ E. Ray Lancaster, in particular, argued in *Degeneration* in 1880 that some species represented not advanced versions of their earlier selves but atrophied forms of higher species, atrophy being defined as 'a gradual change in the structure, in which the organism becomes adapted to less varied and less complex conditions'.¹⁴⁷ This overturned one aspect of Spencer's emphasis on progress

being marked by differentiation, but not that acquired characteristics were transmitted, and now perceptions of social development involved not simply differentiating social divisions; the 'unfit' now were fit for their simple and degraded environment, and could flourish there in ever increasing numbers. It was this new paradigm which came to dominate social theory, above all determining the perception of the 'residuum' flourishing at the heart of the nether world of a divided London.¹⁴⁸

Maudsley's theories directly contributed to this model, but they did so by focussing on those particularly vulnerable points in the process of adaptation and transmission - pauper lunatics and nervous women - drawing on perceptions that had already been established by the mid nineteenth century. In particular Maudsley was influenced by French psychopathologists B.A. Morel and Jacques Moreau. Morel's *Treatise on the Physical, Intellectual and Moral Degeneracy of the Human Race* had argued in 1857 that the simultaneously physical and moral taint of degeneration was triggered by environment and accumulated through descent: 'The first generation of a degenerate family might be merely nervous, the second would tend to be neurotic, the third psychotic, while the fourth consisted of idiots and died out'.¹⁴⁹ Maudsley modified this, stressing that idiocy was 'manufactured' by successive breeding and intemperate moral conditions: 'Idiocy is, indeed a manufactured article ... Many cases are distinctly traceable to parental intemperance and excess ... Insanity in the parent may issue in idiocy in the offspring, which is, so to speak, the natural form of mental degeneracy when it goes unchecked through generations'.¹⁵⁰ Morel saw the insane as atavistic throwbacks - 'morbid deviations from a primitive human type'¹⁵¹ - and while Maudsley also follows Darwin, and cites Esquirol in arguing that in madness 'man is seen in all his nakedness ... he lends not to his passions the *charm* which seduces, nor to his *vices* the appearance which

deceives', he follows Morel in stressing the essentially morbid nature of madness by extending Pritchard's concept of moral insanity.¹⁵² The boundary between madness and crime is now completely removed, both are seen as simultaneously compounded by morbid city conditions. Thus in **Responsibility in Mental Disease** he fuses the insane and the casual poor into a single image of a pathological otherness: 'A distinct criminal class of beings, who herd together in our large cities in a thieves' quarter, giving themselves up to intemperance, rioting in debauchery, without regard to marriage ties or the basis of consanguinity, and propagating a criminal population of degenerate beings.' This class constitutes 'a degenerate and morbid variety of mankind, marked by peculiar low physical and mental characteristics'.¹⁵³ These symptoms include, in a reinterpretation of physiognomic conventions, such signs of degeneration, as 'an irregular and unsymmetrical conformation of the head, a want of regularity and harmony of the features ... malformations of the external ear are sometimes observed ... There are fits, grimaces, and other spasmodic movements of the muscles of the face ... In other cases there are peculiarities of the eyes, which, though they may be full and prominent, have a vacillating movement ...'¹⁵⁴

Similarly, debates on the potentially pathological nature of the female body took on more urgent connotations as they became a crucial part of degenerative discourse, though they were developed in ways that could use the same paradigm to advance opposing political positions, drawing out the earlier ideological ambivalence towards definitions of insanity and femininity.¹⁵⁵ The encouragement of women's physical and mental capacities was threatening, but so, in another register, was their neglect - both energy and lassitude were now more explicitly potentially morbid. The concept of hysteria, as it developed with the expansion of the medical profession in the mid nineteenth century, had been linked, paradoxically, with

both suppression and energetic self-expression.¹⁵⁶ On the one hand Robert Carter maintained in *On the Pathology and Treatment of Hysteria* in 1853 that it was attributable to inadequate education and sexual suppression,¹⁵⁷ on the other F.C. Skey put forward the predominant line in 1867 that while hysteria 'is most prevalent in the young female members of the upper and middle classes, of such as live a life of ease and luxury', nonetheless 'it will often select for its victim a female member of a family exhibiting more than usual force and decision of character, of strong resolution, fearless of danger, bold riders, having plenty of what is termed nerve'.¹⁵⁸ So although a few years later Maudsley conceded that 'the range of activity of women is so limited and their available paths of work so few ... that they have not, like men, vicarious outlets for feeling' in *The Pathology of Mind*,¹⁵⁹ a controversial article in *The Fortnightly Review*, 'Sex in Mind and Education', reversed this argument, claiming instead that women's bodies contained a fixed amount of nervous energy which could drain away at either end through menstruation or 'unnatural mental exertion'.¹⁶⁰ Here the maintenance of the species depended on the enforced segregation of environment and the transposition of the resulting characteristics into organic features.

So by 1875, although morbid nervous tendencies were particularly associated with a growing population of 'other' groups, the very attempt to establish perimeters around these exerted a pressure that took the form of a continual return of the repressed. For the boundaries of insanity were still blurred, and the attempts to identify their problematic borderlands and detect the signs of madness within ~~the~~ meant that it was the potential strangeness within sanity that was seen, rather than the familiarity of the mad. For Andrew Wynter in *The Borderlands of Insanity*, in 1875, madness now took the form of a vast social unconscious lurking in the wings: 'There is an eminent amount of latent brain disease in the community, only awaiting a

sufficient exciting cause to make itself patent to the world.¹⁶¹ And as the implications of moral insanity came to occupy the territory previously inhabited by partial and intellectual insanity (Maudsley noted 'the effect which a severe attack of insanity sometimes produces on the moral nature of the individual ... His intellectual faculties are as acute as ever, but his moral character has changed'), that borderland comes to be seen increasingly as a breeding ground rather than a buffer state.¹⁶² Once again, eccentricity or bohemianism in the male upper middle class give rise to anxiety about their sanity, and the links between genius and madness are stressed, but nervous tendencies do not now even ambivalently signal advance, but are the signals that progress itself compounds its own atavistic traces, of which the signs are everywhere. 'It is of great importance then to recognise a borderland between sanity and insanity, and of greater importance still ... to study carefully the doubtful cases with which it is peopled', wrote Maudsley, '... There are many people who, without being insane, exhibit peculiarities of thought, feeling and character ... they bear in their temperament the marks of their peculiar heritage'.¹⁶³ In Collins's fiction physiological metaphors combine with competing models of inheritance, evolution and transmission. The weight of various kinds of real and imaginary inheritance runs throughout his work, taking the form of an implied fatality to be resisted and fulfilled in ways that can clash or merge with the hopes of a moral management that is always its concomitant. In the 1850s this takes the form of exploring the position of the sons of ancient families, beginning with his first contemporary novel, *Basil, A Story of Modern Life*.

CHAPTER TWO

NERVOUS FANCIES OF HYPOCHONDRIACAL BACHELORS:

BASIL, AND THE PROBLEMS OF MODERN LIFE

We hypochondriacks may console ourselves in the hour of gloomy distress by thinking that our sufferings mark our superiority.

James Boswell¹

In the ravelled skein, the slightest threads are the hardest to follow: In analysing the associations and sympathies which regulate the play of our passions, the simplest and homeliest are the last that we detect. It is only when the shock comes and the mind recoils before it ... that we really discern what trifles in the outer world our noblest mental pleasures, or our severest mental pains, have made a part of ourselves - atoms which the whirlpool has drawn into its vortex, as greedily and surely as the largest mass!

Basil, A Story of Modern Life²

Basil, A Story of Modern Life is a modern tale of terror and the story of a fallen man. It is the confession of an insecure melancholic, the younger son of an ancient family which 'dates back beyond the Conquest'.³ It reconstructs the hero's chance encounter and instant romantic obsession with a linen draper's daughter and his descent to a nether world of unconsummated probationary marriage into the petit-bourgeois Sherwin family - a nightmare world of anxiety-producing newness, frustration, false clues and misleading signs. It reveals Basil's discovery, on the night of the expiry of the false 'long engagement', of his wife's seduction by the villain, the Sherwins' mysterious and indecipherable confidential clerk, Robert Mannion. And this revelation discloses a further one, that Mannion is fixed, monomaniacally, on persecuting Basil in revenge for his own life-long persecution - his inheritance of the stigma of felony from his father, who was employed by Basil's father and hanged for forging Basil's father's name. Basil discovers

this, too, as a result of his own disintegration - brought about by the temporary derangement of brain fever on the one hand, his disinheritance and ostracisation on the other. It is from this position of namelessness and placelessness that he reconstructs his narrative, a narrative that also needs to disintegrate before he can be reintegrated into the family, but a family that seems to have lost the means of renewing itself legitimately.

Basll takes up many of the conventions of the self-conscious tale of supernatural terror. It places the hero in a series of intense and traumatic situations and explores not only the objective threats and fears that they generate but his own psychological and physiological responses to them. Moreover it does this in a way that turns both the manipulation of psychological states and the psychological means of explaining them into devices to produce shock, indeterminacy, and anxiety. It pushes these conventions further, anticipating what becomes explicitly known as the sensation novel in the 1860s, not simply by naturalising psychic tensions and transposing them into a familiar domestic setting, but by transforming the anxieties within the family into sources of suspense and terror, and by winding up the pitch of the response to this by blurring the distinction between 'monition' and 'monomania'. But the novel does so in a way that retains important elements of the earlier conventions.

The Westminster Review's analysis of the evolution of narrative forms, 'The Progress of Fiction as an Art', suggested that Basll was symptomatic of a degenerate sensibility by its very lack of an objectively terrifying referent - 'It was the fashion then to construct a story out of strange and unnatural circumstances, it is the fashion now to elaborate it out of overwrought feelings and morbid sensibilities'.³ But it then went on to suggest that it was the explicit manner in which the novel focussed on the hero's sexual obsession and used the seduction scene as one of its main sources of terror which meant

that 'Mr Collins has given us nothing which can "take men from the passions and miserable troubles of life into a higher region" ... The incident which forms the foundation of the whole, is absolutely disgusting; and is kept so perseveringly before the eyes of the reader in all its hateful details that all interest is destroyed in the loathing it occasions.⁴ Yet it was also this very intensity of emotion and sensation that prompted sympathetic as much as hostile critics to discuss the novel as a kind of 'neo-Gothic' fantasy: 'In truth the author of that work ought to have been called Mr Salvador Fusell', remarked *Bentley's Miscellany*, contrasting *Basil* with Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*, 'there is nothing either of Wilkie or Collins about it'. And concluded: 'There is a startling antagonism between the intensity of the passion, the violent spasmodic action of the piece, and its smooth, commonplace environment.'⁵

Basil, moreover, was the book with which Collins hoped to make his debut as a serious contemporary novelist and despite its obvious risks it was not universally condemned; it certainly won Dickens's admiration.⁶ Collins also took the opportunity to outline certain aesthetic principles in the Prefaces to the first and revised editions. These, very broadly, corresponded with the tenets of Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelites, and emphasised the importance of bringing together the transcendent and the mundane as a central element in generating suspense: 'My idea was, that the more of the Actual I could garner up as a text to speak from, the more certain I might feel of the genuineness and value of the Ideal which was sure to spring out of it ... By appealing to genuine sources within the reader's own experience, I could certainly gain his attention to begin with; but it would only be by appealing to other sources (as genuine in their way) beyond his own experience, that I could hope to fix his interest and excite his suspense, to occupy his deeper feelings or to stir his thoughts.'⁷ This intense realism was a

means, too, of revitalising stale fictional conventions: 'Directing my characters and my story, then, towards the light of Reality whenever I could find it, I have not hesitated to violate some of the conventionalities of sentimental fiction.'⁸

And in order to achieve these different kinds of interest Collins began to develop a set of narrative techniques that put a range of psychological models and conventions to specific uses as fictional strategies. They are used as means of alternately invoking the 'actual' and breaking it down; of creating patterns of sympathy and identification with the protagonist or of setting up a critical distance from him, or as means of summoning up a threatening other. *Beal* clearly includes many of the elements that are to be found in such late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century confessional stories as Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and more tacitly and in a different vein, De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, first published in 1821. It is an obsessive story of pursuit, revenge and retribution. It sets up a pattern of opposition and replication in which pursuer and pursued, victim and persecutor become caught in a self-sustaining struggle. It exploits the anxiety, the sensations of the hero, and explores the way in which the outcast or deviant figure is created by the class divisions generated by the power relations of the dominant order. But the novel turns these patterns round even as it reproduces them, for here it is the privileged upper-class son who is caught up in an imposture, self-created by his own family and class position as he is duped by the villain and as his sanity breaks down. So the patterns of authority and persecution are internalised by the next generation, and now become differently combined. The hero occupies a place, but a place that has been appropriated, has a nominal power, but feels that it has drained away.

Baill, and two shorter pieces written during the 1830s - 'Mad Monkton' (1835) and *A Rogue's Life* (1836) - each take as their starting point the problematic position of sons of ancient families whose real power has waned and which is primarily perpetuated in various symbolic forms which can be internalised into a morbid psychic inheritance. *Antonina Or the Fall of Rome* had taken 'the mightiest empire the world has ever seen, sunk to the weakness and imbecility of old age' as its subject, and had viewed the degeneration of the powerful from the safe distance of historical reconstruction.⁹ But in *Baill* the process of the decline of the landed patriarchal family is mediated through the hero's subjective disintegration. And the figure of Basil fulfils his dual narrative role as sympathetic and gullible hero by both invoking and implicitly satirising Romantic sensibility as embodied in the figure of the melancholic upper class youth, vulnerable to the 'English malady', the man of feeling and acute perception. Basil is constructed as a figure in the narrative by his own internalisation of others' projections, and as a melancholic hovering on the brink of monomania. He is a 'hypochondriac' in both senses of the term; nervous sensibility merges into the morbid interpretation of imaginary symptoms.¹⁰ But the signs which he cannot decipher include the 'modern' conventions of the sexual double standard - his transgression is in marrying Margaret rather than seducing her. And the tension of the narrative is generated by the impact of these obscure social clues on his own immediate sensations.

The novel thus takes the form of a confessional case study which involves both empathy and estrangement as the reader follows the reconstruction of Basil's earlier, gullible self, and 'analyses the associations and sympathies that regulate the play of [his] passions'; and it does this by drawing on those contemporary psychological ideas that have the clearest links with the associationist tradition. But it is never clear in *Baill* where

narrative authority resides, and how the figure and the text should finally be read. Basil's gullible self is framed by his later reassessment of it, but this in turn is framed within a perspective that extends beyond the perimeters of the first person narrative; it takes the form of an authority that is ubiquitous but absent. This authority in the narrative directly corresponds to the benign scrutiny of moral management, but here it is mapped onto the declining power of the patriarchal family and thus at first holds that family structure up from within. It is linked, too, initially, with Basil's sensibility and thus creates an equivocal perspective that is crucial to build up Basil as a social self in order to generate the necessary tensions in the narrative that in turn precipitate his breakdown.

This means, too, that in *Basil* the conditions of writing and the control of it are not only part of the structuring of narrative time itself but are also explicitly bound up with the process of exploration and breakdown of identity as memory, desire and projection that is at work in the text. The main body of the story consists of Basil's confession, written from a remote cottage and pursued by the shameful memory of the past which drives him to write the narrative and the threat of the enemy that has been produced by it. The antagonist's oppositional narrative is embedded within Basil's reconstruction and three quarters of the way through the story the process of continual recall breaks down, to be replaced firstly by Basil's disintegrating diary, then by letters. Basil is thus set firstly in the context of his own family and then against Mannion in a way that both counterposes and reproduces the patterns of displacement, transgression and exclusion that he enacts. He is both caught between class boundaries and is the stage on which the struggle between them is acted out, and his failure to negotiate these boundaries is marked by lack of sexual power. As younger son, moreover, trapped in a 'feminised' position of perpetual childhood, his dislocated place in the

patrilineal line is expressed in his lack of self-possession, and his inability to read and to interpret the psychological motivation and social signs that he has to negotiate. He thus represents the weak point in the family history in his very attempt to marry out of the declining family circle; he is the implicit as Mannion is the explicit threat, and the two become bound together in an opposition that becomes mutually sustaining.

The opening of the confession is crucial here as the narrator is setting up the terms on which his past may be reconstructed and reinterpreted and placing himself in relation to the authority of the reader, who becomes both analyst and judge, prefiguring and echoing the patterns of controlling observation unfolded in the story. But he is also setting up the narrative itself as a morally improving story. The story begins: 'What am I now about to write? The history of little more than the events of one year, out of the twenty four years of my life. Why do I undertake such employment as this?' and in addressing an absent reader while becoming his own interlocutor and thus in a sense substituting himself for the reader, Basil's lack of unity is suggested from the start. This is consolidated:

Perhaps, because I think that my narrative may do good, because I hope that, one day, it may be put to some warning use. There have been men who, on their death-beds, have left directions that their bodies should be anatomised, as an offering to science. In these pages, written on the death-bed of enjoyment and hope, I give my heart, already anatomised, as an offering to human nature.

Perhaps while desiring to write a confession, I desire to write an apology as well ... When these pages are found after my death, they perhaps will be calmly read and gently judged, as relics solemnized by the atoning shadows of the grave. Then, the hard sentence against me, may be repented of; the children of the next generation of my house may be taught to speak charitably of my memory; and may often, of their own accord, think of me kindly in the silent watches of the night.¹¹

As with most confessions, the act of speaking or writing of past transgressions creates the preconditions of their absolution, and the reader's provisional identification is paradoxically made possible by the critical distance of the remembering voice. The present self is both the wiser product of past culpability and a reformed 'I' which looks at the past self as a renounced identity. Basil thus offers both a cautionary tale, a case history and an 'already anatomised' heart for scientific investigation. He is on his death-bed, yet has already conducted the post-mortem, just as the readers of the narrative are future members of the family line the continuation of which he himself threatens, and which he has been blanked out of (his father casts him out through tearing his page from the family chronicle). So the position from which he is writing is not only imminent death but actual namelessness.

This opening, where Basil self-consciously and rather ridiculously announces himself and yet has no place to occupy, structurally, in the narrative, produces a qualifying distance in his account which works differently from many other kinds of confession. This sets up the question of how to take the narrator seriously as a problem from the beginning of the novel. In William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, the central voice is set in a consistent though not necessarily coherent relation to the external authority which vindicates it; for Caleb Williams rational liberalism, for the Justified Sinner divine judgment - though this is implicitly repositioned as insane delusion by the Editor's narrative in the latter.¹² But the opening of Basil resists any easy identification with the hero without offering any coherent alternative perspective to it. And this tacitly qualifies the means by which the mystery and sensation of the main body of the story - the hero's non-sexual entanglement, his own forced imposture to this family as well as the imposture of the Sherwins, manipulated by Mannion - will be generated and

read. This qualification is compounded, too, by Basil's remembrance of his childhood and his description of his family and class history. Here his account of his development as a melancholic, 'sensitive' but imperceptive young man draws on and mingles the concepts of an inherited identity and a constructed one, of inbreeding and moral management. Basil's final recovery and reassimilation into the family with which the story concludes is firmly set 'in the shadowed valley of Repose', and here home becomes a safe place, an asylum, but also a kind of pastoral stasis.¹³

But the preconditions of this process are set up at the beginning in the way in which the figure of the father becomes both the benevolent keeper and the bearer of an exclusive lineage, so that the shaping of a social identity through a family history also becomes the means of its disintegration. Thus the father is the transcendent source of meaning in the first part of the recollection but he is presented initially by Basil as being completely bound up with his genealogy and this is described negatively, as absence, or as latent traits working in opposition to popular physiognomic conventions: 'His was not that conventional pride, which the popular notions are fond of characterizing by a stiff, stately carriage, by a rigid expression of features ... It was that quiet, negative, courteous, inbred pride, which only the closest observers could detect; which no ordinary observers ever detected at all.'¹⁴ This displacement of cognitive conventions is compounded by the father's consciousness of his ancestors; they are built up as the only objects of value, taking the place of wealth: 'They were the very breath of his life; the deities of his social worship; the family treasures to be held precious beyond all lands and all wealth, all ambitions and all glories, by his children and his children's children to the end of their race.'¹⁵ Basil, who 'could inherit none of the landed property of the family' is doubly displaced by this himself, and he occupies a 'feminine' position in that he is simultaneously symbol of, and

substitute for, inherited property.¹⁶ This means too that he literally lacks self-possession; he describes his upbringing as a series of empty roles: 'The story of my boyhood and youth has little to interest - nothing that is new. My education was the education of hundreds of others in my rank of life.'¹⁷ But any possibility of an alternative rebellious identity - such as that of his brother, the profligate, self-confident heir - is cancelled out by the process through which his father educates his 'moral sense', in attempting to train him to fill his family position:

I believe in his own way he loved us all; but we, his descendants, had to share his heart with his ancestors - we were his household property as well as his children. ... We were taught by his direction, that to disgrace our family, either by word or action, was the one fatal crime that could never be forgotten and never be pardoned. We were formed under his superintendence, in principles of religion, honour, and industry; and the rest was left to our own moral sense, to our own gratitude, to our own comprehension of the duties and privileges of our station. There was no one point in his conduct towards us that we could complain of; and yet there was something always incomplete in our domestic relations.

It may seem incomprehensible, even ridiculous, to some persons, but it is nonetheless true, that we were none of us ever on intimate terms with him. I mean by this that he was a father to us but never a companion. There was something in his manner, his quiet and unchanging manner, that kept us almost unconsciously restrained.¹⁸

So it is not surprising to find that the sense of embarrassment that he feels in father's presence as a child is directly transposed at the moment of his secret, false, wedding to Margaret by his 'morbid fancy' which he can only, then, interpret as 'wild and monstrous, as if it had been produced by a dream - an impression that my father had discovered my secret, and was watching me from some hidden place in the church; watching me through the service to denounce and abandon me publicly, at the end'.¹⁹ The symptoms themselves are recognised as morbid almost on the condition that here their significance is left unexplained.

Basil's simultaneous subjection to and self-construction through the perceptions of others (he feels, for instance, that he still exists while in exile through his sister's remembrance of him though he has been erased from the official family memory) turns the methods of moral management into tacit restrictive self-control, and thus become the means by which the hero is set up as an ineffectual but sympathetic agent. In *The Woman in White* it also becomes the model through which a new middle class resolute masculinity can emerge and disentangle the ravelled skein of the self and the narrative. But here, though Basil notes how, just before his illicit marriage, 'bitter thoughts against my father rose in my mind - bitter thoughts against his inexorable family pride, which imposed on me the concealment and secrecy, under the oppression of which I had already suffered so much - bitter thoughts against those social tyrannies ... which my father now impersonated, as it were, to my ideas', such a quest is frustrated by the final narrative resolution.²⁰ Instead the lower middle class itself is pathologised, embodying a predatory modernity, and an unlicensed female sexuality as it is turned into a force of terror. Basil first sees Margaret Sherwin when he impulsively gets on a passing omnibus - a 'perambulatory exhibition-room of the eccentricities of human nature'; a place of the disturbing mingling and juxtapositioning of classes and types and of unsolicited associations.²¹ The Sherwins' household is in a limbo-like place of unfixed identities; 'a suburb of new houses, intermingled with wretched patches of waste land, half built over ... Its newness and desolation of appearance revolted me'.²² And the means by which Basil traces his history back to the traumatic events which precipitated his breakdown is bound up with the means by which the mystery is created and disclosed, a mystery that in another sense is no secret since its outcome is already known. In order for this to happen particular perceptual assumptions and interpretative codes need to be invoked and frustrated, and

these manipulate the assumptions of physiognomy, employ different kinds of associations, elicit dreams and invoke particular methods of deciphering their significance.

For it is Basil's lack of control over the codes that govern effective interpretation and his inability to distinguish between different methods of associating which are the means by which he is manipulated. But this involves the inability to make connections between different kinds of associations, and here the novel anticipates processes which are to be developed in *The Woman in White*. The hero's wise voice of the present makes retrospective interjections: 'Throughout the whole of that period I walked on surely, step by step, to the verge of the abyss; and never once suspected which course I was taking, never once detected the signs which vainly rose to caution me back, on either side of my path.'²³ This implies, though, a set of signs that have already been interpreted, which in turn conceal another story, which the moralised voice of the confession cannot bring itself to utter. He notes of his first meeting with Margaret:

Remembering what I do, I am ashamed to write, ashamed to think of what I said ... Hitherto, I have spoken the stern truth, sacrificing myself to my confessions unhesitatingly ... but here, at that very part of my story where it might be imagined that I would write minutely and circumstantially with most readiness and most ease - here, for the first and the last time, I must generalise and must hurry on. I can give no good reasons for the sensations that now influence me: I cannot analyse them, and I would not if I could.²⁴

This introspection contributes to the way that the naive interpretations are read, and here Basil attempts to make use of psychological methods, but incompetently. He reads the world as a set of signs to be interpreted but the interpretations are all somehow displaced, or askew. Thus the Sherwins' drawing room, with its terrible newness, expresses their nouveau riche brashness, but conceals its secret, the displaced gentility of Mannion.

Looking at it Baal feels that he is exposed to the 'glare' of the vulgar objects, so that he becomes the 'nervous man' that he presents as a figure in the scene; harried not simply by modernity but by the weirdness of it and extending the revulsion he experienced in the suburban street:

Everything was oppressively new. The brilliantly-varnished door cracked with a report like a pistol when it was opened; the paper on the walls, with its gaudy pattern of birds, trellis-work, and flowers, in gold, red and green on a white ground, looked hardly dry yet; the showy window-curtains of white and sky-blue, and the still showier carpet of red and yellow, seemed as if they had come out of the shop yesterday; the round rosewood table was in a painfully high state of polish; ... Never was a richly-furnished room more comfortless than this - the eye ached at looking at it. There was no repose anywhere. The print of the Queen, hanging lonely on the wall ... glared on you; the paper, the curtains, the carpet, glared on you; the books, the wax-flowers in glass cases, the chairs in flaring chintz-covers, the china-plates on the door, the pink and blue glass vases and cups ranged on the chimney piece, the over-ornamented chiffoniers with Tonbridge toys and long-necked smelling-bottles with their upper shelves, all glared on you. There was no look of shadow, shelter, secrecy or retirement in one nook or corner of those four gaudy walls. All surrounding objects seemed startlingly near to the eye; much nearer than they really were. The room would have given a nervous man a headache, before he had been in it for a quarter of an hour.²⁵

The deciphering of faces and figures takes this disorientating process further. Mannon baffles him because he can get no interpretative purchase on his face, yet it is presented as a mask concealing an inner nature in a way which uses physiognomic signs to invoke the melodramatic conventions of 'smooth faced villain,' by making blankness and regularity itself significant: 'Viewed separately from the head (which was rather large, both in front and behind) his face exhibited, throughout, an almost perfect symmetry of proportion ... Such was his countenance in point of form; but ... in expression - it was, as I beheld it, an utter void. Never had I before seen any human face which baffled all inquiry like his. No mask could have been made expressionless enough to resemble it; and yet it looked like a mask.'²⁶ Thus

It is 'so unexpressive that it did not ever look vacant - a mystery for your eyes and your mind to dwell on - hiding something' onto which Basil at first projects his own romantic story: 'If there really had been some romance connected with Mr Mannion's early life - if that strange and striking face was indeed a sealed book which contained a secret story, what a triumph and a pleasure, if Margaret and I should succeed in discovering it together!'²⁷ But while this method defuses the very attempt to generate suspense, it reflects back more emphatically on Basil's obsessional but unsuccessful attempt to follow clues: 'I felt towards him much as a man feels in a labyrinth, where every fresh failure in gaining the centre only produces fresh obstinacy in renewing the effort to arrive at it.'²⁸ It also suggests that Mannion functions as a 'blanked out' version of his own father, whom 'ordinary observers never detected', and who silently rules through surveillance.

The Sherwins' social insecurity, on the other hand, is continually manifested as a set of nervous disorders which signify their lack of self-possession but in a way that can again be misinterpreted. Sherwin's desperate attempt to achieve propriety belies, as it signals, his upward mobility, and is written on his face: 'All his features were singularly mobile: they were affected by nervous contractions and spasms which were constantly drawing up and down in all directions the brow, the mouth and the muscles of the cheek ... His lips were thin and colourless, the lines about them being numerous and strongly marked. Had I seen him under ordinary circumstances, I should have set him down as a little-minded man.'²⁹ The perception of Mrs Sherwin is more complex: she is a ghostly presence who expresses the family's inner drama, finally making a death-in-life appearance after Basil's breakdown, and she functions as an 'apparition' whose 'nervous disorders' express the unspoken manipulations within the family only through a process of physiognomic interpretation which takes the form of active projection, and

where each physical sign becomes morbid only in moving beyond its immediate physical referent. This active reading of Miss Sherwin's face as a drama which suggests a history is set against his later reading of Mannion as a closed romantic novel:

Her pale, sickly, moist-looking skin; her large, mild, watery, light-blue eyes; the restless, vigilant timidity of her expression; the mixture of useless hesitation and nervous, involuntary activity in every one of her actions, all furnished the same significant betrayal of a life of fear and restraint; of a disposition full of modest generousities and meek sympathies, which had been crushed down past rousing the self-assertion, past ever seeing the light. There, in that mild wan face of her's - in those painful startings and hurrying when she moved; in that tremulous faint utterance when she spoke - there, I could see one of those ghastly heart-tragedies laid open before me, which are not to be written, but which are acted and re-acted, scene by scene, year by year, in the secret theatre of home.³⁰

Here the same model can be invoked to produce various meanings, or lack of meaning while breaking down the boundary between viewer and object.

These different kinds of extrapolation are pushed much further and become more explicit in Basil's perception of the poles of femininity in the novel, his sister Clara, and Margaret Sherwin. Basil's first view of Margaret is reconstructed as obsession arising from projection; it works through inference and the condensation of meanings, as he sees her as a collection of parts and fragments of clothing, bound together by his desire. Clara, on the other hand, is reified rather than fetishised, and thus becomes a metaphoric expression of a desire for a perpetual childhood of safety, seclusion and personal calm, outside history. For Basil, images of safety and danger, secluded childhood or terrifying progress, find their allegorical expression and equivalents in archetypal female figures, figures who thus become inextricably bound up with his emotional response to social and cultural meanings and codes. He compares Clara with 'modern women' who 'appear to be ambitious of morally unsexing themselves before society ... women of this

exclusively modern order like to use slang expressions in their conversation; assume a bastard-masculine abruptness in their manners, a bastard-masculine licence in their opinions ...³¹ Clara condenses the softer side of moral management, as Basil's sensibility, with a retreat into a family past and a mythic moral childhood, but what is equally important is the explicitness with which these emotional associations are made clear:

Few men have not their secret moments of deep feeling - moments when, amid the wretched flippancies and hypocrisies of modern society, the image will present itself to their mind of some woman, fresh, innocent, gentle, sincere; some woman whose emotions are still warm and impressible, whose affections and sympathies can still appear in her actions, and give the colour to her thoughts; some woman in whom we could put perfect faith and trust as if we were children; whom we despair of finding near the hardening influences of the world; whom we could scarcely venture to look for, except in solitary places far away in the country; in little rural shrines shut up from society, among woods and fields and lonesome boundary-hills.³²

Yet just as Mrs Sherwin acts as an exaggerated transformation of Basil's own position within his family, so Clara's symbolic significance is generated by her concealment of self; the line between the petit-bourgeois 'secret theatre of home' and the gentrified 'rural shrines shut up from society' has to be continually reasserted and redrawn in order for both to make sense: 'The strong and deep feelings of my sister's nature lay far below the surface - for a woman, too far below it. Suffering was for her silent, secret, long-enduring; almost entirely void of any outward event or development ... the very strength of her emotions was in their silence and their secrecy ...'³³ Thus all three women are 'nervously' susceptible to the influences around them: Mrs Sherwin's neurotic disorders express the corruption of which she is the innocent victim; Margaret's hysterical passion, eventually breaking out in typhus fever, indicates her 'own' moral corruption; Clara's suppression both represses emotion and expresses an imaginary emotional unity. But no single

psychological model can make sense of all of them. The figure of Mrs Sherwin suggests that suppression itself is morbid, while Margaret's incipient hysteria implies that unrestrained passion feeds on and breeds itself - the counterpoint of which is Clara, whose idealisation is founded on self-restraint.

In conjuring up these projected images so explicitly, the figures of Margaret and Clara lead into a more self-conscious exploration of the ways in which archetypes of femininity work through male projection and fantasy, and this emerges most clearly in the dream Basil has the night after meeting Margaret. This is the first of a series of different kinds of 'deranged' states of consciousness that are put to various uses in *Basil*, and they anticipate many of the processes which are to be developed in *The Woman in White* and *Armada*. The use of dream clearly has a specific kind of function in the story as an embedded narrative, which on the one hand suggests that the explicit authority of the narrator is undermined, opening a space for the emergence of unsolicited thoughts and emotions, on the other is a more detached premonition or warning interjected into the main body of the story. The early dream in *Basil* combines these obvious functions; what qualifies it is the way that Collins uses and develops specific aspects of dream theory in relation to the 'privileged' knowledge offered by the dream text itself, and the relationship between waking and dreaming states that they suggest. The dream itself is both the explicit expression of sexual desire and a moralised comment on it - a text that has already been interpreted. Basil dreams of a landscape that is both a symbolic female body and an iconic moral hierarchy: 'On one side it was bounded by thick woods, whose dark, secret depths looked unfathomable to the eye: on the other by hills, ever rising higher and higher yet, until they were lost in bright, beautifully white clouds, gleaming in retfulgent sunlight.'³⁴ Two women emerge from the woods and hills,

predictably dark and fair respectively, and 'I was drawn along in the arms of the dark woman with my blood burning and my breath falling me, until we entered the secret recesses that lay amid the unfathomable depths of trees'.³⁵ The landscape of secret, remote woods that Clara's image had suggested, is translated here into sexual engulfment and spiritual defilement.

It is the unreserved quality of the dream that gives it a sophisticated role in the narrative as simultaneously an expression of suppressed desire and an allegorical warning in a way that blurs the boundary between the two kinds of knowledge. In the first place, it is clearly presented, following contemporary conceptions of dreams elaborated, for example, by MacNish and Abercrombie, as the temporary suspension or loss of self-control, and as the failure of the dreamer to be able to restrain his own growing sexual obsession, his passion, which was 'deteriorating ... in its effects on the exercise of my mental powers, and on my candour and sense of duty in my intercourse with home ...'³⁶ 'How could I best crush the desire to see her? ... Had I resolution enough to wear my heart out by hard, serious, slavish study? ... I sat by my open window, striving with my burning love thoughts of Margaret; striving to think collectedly and usefully - abandoned to a struggle ever renewing, yet never changing ... At last I began to think less and less distinctly ... Thoughts and sensations which had been more and more weakly restrained with each succeeding hour of wakefulness, now rioted within me in perfect liberation from all control.'³⁷ Thus Basil's dream is clearly marked, following Abercrombie, by 'the loss of power over the succession of the thoughts', and combines the associative processes that he outlines as 'recent events and emotions mixed up with past ones though in other respects they were entirely unconnected', and trains of images brought up by association with bodily sensations.³⁸ But at the same time it is clearly suggested that it

is in turn conditioned by Basil's self-imposed struggle with himself which in turn precipitates the breakdown of his tenuous self-control.

And this conditions the way that the dream is interpreted in the double narrative reassessment of it, and how the expression of desire becomes framed as a 'prophetic' text whose meaning is both resisted and confirmed by the way that Basil dismisses it. On immediately waking, the naive Basil asks 'Was it warning of coming events, foreshadowed in the wild visions of sleep? But to what purpose could this dream, or indeed any dream, tend? Why had it remained incomplete, failing to show me the visionary consequences of my visionary actions? What superstition to ask!³⁹ Basil's expectation, then, is that a 'prophetic' dream should take the form of a moral tract (which, indeed, the 'text' of the dream itself, in one sense, does), but within the context of this naive assessment, it is suggested that Basil's 'divination' or prophetic reading of the dream should take the form of exegesis rather than passive reception. De Quincey had pointed out in *The Confessions of an English Opium Eater* that this was the more accurate sense of 'prophetic' readings as elaborated in Biblical dream interpretation. "To unveil or decipher what is hidden - that is, in effect, the meaning of divination ... in the writings of St Paul the phrase "gifts of prophecy" never once indicates what the English reader supposes, but exegetic gifts, gifts of interpretation applied to what is dark, of analysis applied to what is logically perplexed, of expansion applied to what is condensed ..."⁴⁰ J.A. Symonds (who refers to De Quincey in his analysis but to stress simply that dreaming involves a suspension of judgment) developed Abercrombie's point about how dreams can precipitate their own outcome by stressing how 'the mind, vehemently possessed of an idea thus received, almost instinctively acts up to it ...', and Basil echoes this in his 'wiser' reassessment of the dream, suggesting too that the female images are

archetypal projections of the 'real' Margaret and Clara transformed into symbolic polarities which determine his perception of them.⁴¹

As I looked out on the reviving, reassuring sunlight, it was easy to dismiss as ridiculous from my mind, or rather from my conscience, the tendency to see in the two shadowy forms of my dream, the types of two real living beings, whose names almost trembled to utterance on my lips; but I could not also dismiss from my heart the love-images which that dream had set up there for the worship of the senses. Those results of the night still remained with me, growing and strengthening every minute.⁴²

But this, and Basil's subsequent behaviour after the dream, also overturns the implications of Symonds's argument, in particular his discussion of the relation between waking and dreaming states. Symonds, with others, stressed that the inability to 'wake up' properly from a dream constituted a kind of insanity since the mind becomes completely possessed by the dream, and so the whole world turns into a fantastic projection:

The healthy waking of the mind is the resumption of the form of consciousness which existed previous to sleep. The objects before the eyes have the same aspect and the same associations; the thoughts return to the same channel; the occupations of the previous day and those projected for the ensuing day, are remembered, and there is no confusion of personal identity. But a man may wake up to that outward world, and that world is all changed to him ... Alas! how delicate and fragile a thing is perception! He is awake, and he looks around his chamber in which he has every day hailed the morning sunshine ... He looks out on a new world projected from his own inner being. By a melancholy power, a fatal gift, of appropriating and assimilating the real objects perceived by his senses, he takes possession of them, nay, disembodies them, and fuses them into his imaginary creation ... They are all shadows; no more the flesh and blood realities of his heart; they are metamorphosed into the unsubstantial figures of a distempered imagination.⁴³

In Basil, on the other hand, the waking up and the reviving, reassuring sunlight prompts him to resist the possible significance of the dream even as it breaks down his resistance to Margaret, and this becomes the first stage in a process wherein he is unable to follow clues, distinguish and analyse the

logic of different kinds of 'associations and sympathies which regulate the play of his passions', except as a process of retrospection.

The first dream is clearly framed as 'unconscious' revelation through the retrospective narrative analysis, and it is this focus that partially disintegrates in being pushed to its limits in the controlled insanity of brain fever.⁴⁴ Basil's collapse replays the pattern of the breakdown of self-control of the earlier dream in exaggerated form as he struggles to be his own moral manager after hearing himself described as mad: 'MAD! - that word, as I heard it, rang after me like a voice of judgment ... I strove hard to separate my thoughts; to distinguish between my recollections; to extricate from the confusion within me any one idea, no matter what - and I could not do it. In that awful struggle for mastery over my own mind, all that had passed, all the horror of that horrible night, became as nothing to me.'⁴⁵ Here all past events and impressions are drawn into a vortex of mingled associations which form a replaying of a past and a rewriting of a history in which Basil, now agent as well as passive voyeur, 'toiled and struggled back, over and over again, to seek once more the lost events of the End, through the events of the Beginning'.⁴⁶ This is still reinterpreted through a retrospective narrative framework, which is to disintegrate as narrative time and story time merge in the increasingly elliptical diary, but the terms of reference of the narrative have been irrecoverably altered by delirium - it is only by looking in at a 'world projected from his own inner being' that Basil is able to disentangle the clues of his waking delusion.

The process of Basil's delirium takes the form of a lifting of a veil and of an analysis applied to what is perplexed, and this qualifies as it licenses the unrestrained visions. It also echoes elements in the process of analysis

that John Perceval struggles towards in his *Narrative of derangement*, for here, too, it is only by recognising the value of the uses of doubt that Basil can disentangle his self-created duplicity by recognising the plots that surrounded him. This process is rendered ironic, however, for here the truth has been partly determined by delusion, and the most dangerous delusions of all are those which cannot perceive their own irrational traces. And it means, too, that there will always be an element that cannot be recalled, a trace that remains hidden:

It was as if something were imprisoned in my mind, and moving always to and fro in it - moving, but never getting free.

Soon, these thoughts began to take a form that I could recognise. In the clinging heat and fierce seething fever, to which neither waking or sleeping brought a breath of freshness or a dream of change, I began to act my part over again, in the events that had passed - but in a strangely altered character. Now, instead of placing implicit trust in others, as I had done; instead of failing to discover a significance and a warning in each circumstance as it arose, I was suspicious from the first - suspicious of Margaret, of her father, of her mother, of Mannion, of the very servants in the house. In the hideous phantasmagoria of my own calamity into which I now looked, my position was reversed. Every event of the doomed year of my probation was revived. But the doom itself; the night-scene of horror through which I had passed; the brief terrible catastrophe of the weary drama of wickedness and deceit, had utterly vanished from my memory. This lost recollection, it was the unending toil of my wandering mind to recover; and I never got it back. None who have not suffered as I suffered then, can imagine with what a burning rage of determination I followed past events in my delirium, one by one, for days and nights together - followed, to get to the end which I knew was beyond; but which I never could see, not even by glimpses, for a moment at a time.⁴⁷

The endless reconstruction of a past that refuses to reveal its own secrets, where Basil's 'restless memory recoiled before the impenetrable darkness which forbade it to see further', suddenly dissolves into a series of hallucinations which borrow from and comment on their own sources, above all De Quincey's analysis of induced derangement, *The Confessions of an*

English Opium Eater.⁴⁸ In his analysis of 'The Pains of Opium' De Quincey discussed in detail the way that opium disrupted the workings of the consciousness in a way that was frequently referred to in mid-nineteenth-century psychological theory. Firstly, he noted, 'a sympathy seemed to arise between the waking and dreaming states of the brain' so that 'whatsoever things capable of being visually represented I did but think of in the darkness, immediately shaped themselves into phantoms of the eye'. Secondly, 'a deep-seated anxiety': 'I seemed every night to descend - not metaphorically but literally to descend - into chasms and sunless abysses, depths below depths, from which it seemed hopeless that I could ever re-ascend.' Thirdly the sense of space and time was distorted: 'Buildings, landscapes, etc. were exhibited in proportions so vast as the bodily eye is not fitted to receive'; and finally, the forgotten events of childhood re-emerge, removing the 'veil between our present consciousness and the secret inscriptions on the mind'.⁴⁹ These forms are directly reproduced in Basil's delirium, and here too the allegorical landscape of the earlier dream is transformed into an extraordinary conflation of omniscient vision, ecological punishment, and metaphorical transformation as he enacts the earlier drama of engulfment and defilement and offers an exegesis of his earlier narrative. This is worth quoting at some length:

Giant phantoms mustered by millions, flashing white as lightning in the ruddy air. They rushed on me with hurricane-speed; their wings fanned me with fiery breezes; and the echo of their thunder-music was like the groaning and rending of an earthquake, as they tore me away with them on their whirlwind course.

Away! to a City of Palaces, to measureless halls, and arches, and domes, soaring one above another, till their flashing ruby summits are lost in the burning void, high overhead. On! through and through these mountain-piles, into countless, limitless corridors, reared on pillars lurid and rosy as molten lava ... Still on and on; faster and faster, for years, days, centuries together, till there comes, stealing slowly forward to meet us, a shadow - a vast, stealthy, gliding shadow - the first darkness that has ever been shed over that world of blazing light! ...

A silence, like no silence ever known on earth; a darkening of the shadow, blacker than the blackest night in the thickest wood - a pause - then, a sound as of the heavy air being cleft asunder; then ... an apparition of two figures coming on out of the shadow - two monsters stretching forth their gnarled yellow talons to grasp at us; leaving on their track a green decay, oozing and shining with a sickly light ... Each laid a talon on my shoulder - each raised a veil that was one hideous network of twining worms. I saw through the ghastly corruption of their faces the look that told me who they were - the monstrous iniquities incarnate in monstrous forms; the fiend souls made visible in fiend shapes - Margaret and Mannion! ... Anon, the lake of black waters heaved up and overflowed, and noiselessly sucked us away into its centre depths - depths that were endless; depths of rayless darkness, in which we slowly eddied round and round, deeper and deeper at every turn.⁵⁰

This is Collins's most explicit exploitation of the internal configurations of hallucination, explicit because as a hallucination it remains partially controlled even as it represents breakdown, as De Quincey's confessions do. But the second breakdown, the breakdown of the narrative, though less flamboyant, is inextricably bound up with the story's inability to achieve either a fictional or an ideological resolution of the contradictions that have formed the narrative tensions from the start. Basil's recovery from brain fever leads to further ostracisation as his father disinherits him; the figure of Mannion that he encounters in the wildness of Cornwall has become the monstrous vision of the delirium by assuming a mask of disfigurement that Basil himself has imposed. The wildness of Cornwall, too, with its rocks and cliffs, 'beyond the railways' of modern civilization, forms a setting where Basil can engage in the final conflict with Mannion that replicates the landscape of the delirium. It too becomes a projected image of suppressed tumult - a self-conscious evocation of wildness. In one of the highest parts of the wall-side of granite thus formed, there opened a black, yawning hole that slanted nearly straight downwards, like a tunnel, to unknown and unfathomable depths below, into which the waves found entrance through

some subterranean tunnel ... But, high as they leapt up in the rocky walls of the chasm, they never leapt into sight from above.⁵¹ It is here that Basil finally eliminates Mannion, by flinging him into the abyss, but Mannion then replaces Margaret as the focus for his monomania as he becomes increasingly unable to obliterate his memory. 'The frightful scene that I witnessed yesterday still holds the same disastrous influence over me', he notes in the journal. 'I have vainly endeavoured to think, not of Mannion's death, but of the free prospect which that death has opened to my view. Waking or sleeping, it is as if some fatality kept all my faculties imprisoned within the black walls of the chasm.'⁵² Increasingly the journal becomes 'the only safeguard that keeps me in my senses', and this use of immediate testimony in the present reveals the earlier retrospection of the confession to be a means not only of self-analysis but of warding off impending disintegration.⁵³ The diary breaks off and the story is taken up by letters recounting his rediscovery by his family, his recovery and assimilation 'in the shadowed valley of Repose' in which the family, in becoming his asylum, is simply an extension of itself. And thus the only conclusion that the story can offer is a statement of suspended animation, which, 'in the interests of Art' as well as of Reality leaves its loose ends hanging open:

How are the pages which I am about to send you to be concluded? In the novel-reading sense of the word, my story has no real conclusion. The repose that comes to all of us after trouble - to me, a repose of life; to others, how often a repose only in the gravel - is the end which must close this autobiography: an end calm, natural and uneventful; yet not, perhaps, devoid of all lessons and all value. Is it fit that I should set myself, for the sake of an effect, to make a conclusion, and terminate by fiction what has begun, and thus so far proceeded in truth? In the interests of Art as well as the interests of Reality, surely not!⁵⁴

It is impossible to locate any source of stable authority in the narrative voice in *Basil*. The only means of making sense of its shifts in tense and register, or of setting up any kind of implied hierarchy of narrative frames, is

by reference to a qualified and ambivalent moral management. Yet it is the controlling gaze of the father that is clearly shown to be the source of Basil's imposture from the start. Similarly, the villain, Robert Mannion, is only unambiguous as a villain in so far as he can be fitted into the conceptual framework of moral insanity, which enables his self-possession and control over others to be pathologised and excluded from sympathy. But it is necessary for the doctor in the public hospital where Mannion is sent after being mutilated by Basil to underwrite this definition, vaguely offering two physiological explanations for his criminality: 'Either there has been madness in his family, or his brain has suffered from his external injuries. Legally, he may be quite fit to be at large, for he will be able to maintain the appearance of perfect self-possession in the ordinary affairs of life. But morally, I am convinced that he is a dangerous monomaniac.'⁵⁵ Mannion remains a negative antagonist, coming back from Basil's father's repressed guilty past to avenge his own father's death. But like the nameless monster in *Frankenstein* his own confessional story - a letter to Basil - directly replicates the overall narrative structure while creating an opposing ideological framework which explicitly challenges the dominant one, though it can never overturn it. Mannion's story is a negative reflection of Basil's, he is formed by the same patterns of judgment, surveillance and inheritance, which now become forces of exclusion. And this turns into a critique of the other legacy of moral management - the belief in self-help and competitive individualism:

The ambition which - whether I was a hack-author, a travelling portrait-painter, or an usher at a school had once whispered to me: - low down as you are in dark, m'ry ways, you are on the path which leads upwards to high places in the sunshine afar off; you are not working to scrape together wealth for another man; you are independent, self-reliant, labouring in your own cause - the daring ambition which had once counselled this, sank dead within me at last. The

strong, stern spirit was beaten by spirits stronger and sterner yet - Infamy and Want.⁵⁶

Basil is Collins's most explicit exploration of the internalisation of social power, sexual obsession and the breakdown of consciousness and identity. The questions and concerns that he raises here are both elaborated and transformed in the 1860s as they are put to work in new narrative contexts, and to create specific kinds of indeterminacy and suspense through more complex kinds of social relationships. But in the 1850s the figure of the hypochondriacal bachelor makes another appearance in 'Mad Monkton', the obsessed victim of a family story, and is debunked and satirised in *A Rogue's Life*. Despite his admiration of Basil Dickens had rejected 'Mad Monkton' for *Household Words* on the grounds that it explicitly dealt with the sensitive subject of hereditary insanity in a way that could be read as reinforcing the very kinds of superstitions that the journal wanted to dispel, despite its own discussion of the morbid inheritance of ancient families in 'Idiots Again'.⁵⁷ 'Mad Monkton' does more than this though - it rewrites Poe's tale of mystery in which the ancient family line, the material property, and the hypochondriacal sensibility of the heir become, literally, morbid extensions of each other - 'The Fall of the House of Usher'.

'Mad Monkton', like 'The Fall of the House of Usher', is narrated by a sympathetic friend who sees the protagonist's morbid obsessions as a form of hypochondria which he attempts to analyse, but finally gets caught within monomaniacal obsessions of the hero, which thus 'work their own fulfilment'. In both, the very self-consciousness of the analysis of the psychological processes by which the delusions are generated serves simply to reinforce them - Usher fears fear of the future as much as the future itself, and the narrator comments at the opening: 'There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition - for why should I not

so term it? - served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis.⁵⁸ But in Poe's tale the narrative voice is caught up within the psychic obsession from the beginning - the whole story is 'hypochondriacal' in a way that is subjected to a new kind of scrutiny in 'Mad Monkton'. 'The Fall of the House of Usher' assimilates a late eighteenth-century rhetoric of nervous sensibility to explain Usher himself, the responses of the narrator, and the collapse of the family line with the house at the end. It echoes Whytt's discussion of how the nerves constitute a web-like structure of sympathy both between parts of the body and between individuals, manifesting itself as a set of vibrations which become morbid through intensification. Usher's hypochondria: 'Displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations ... He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food alone was endurable; he could wear only garments of a certain texture ... his eyes were tortured by even a faint light ...'⁵⁹ And while the narrator subjects him to phrenological and physiognomic readings, his own perspective from the beginning is saturated by the dream-like atmosphere of the place in which the physical is inextricably bound up with the moral: 'I wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up.'⁶⁰

In 'Mad Monkton', too, the decline of the family is expressed by the physical decay, the morbid stagnancy of the environment which thus becomes projection and cause of the hero's hypochondria. But the terror is generated by being removed a stage further than in Poe's story. The narrator plays the role of analyst, voyeur and detective, whose relationship with his subject goes through distinct interpretative phases, in which moral management is finally overpowered by internalised inheritance and self-sustaining mythology as the narrator attempts to track the cause of the

monomania by investigating the family history. At first the Monkton family is presented as a product of local legend, as manifesting the vaguely defined 'taint' of hereditary insanity. The legend is internalised by the Monktons themselves, who become deviant members of the gentry community, expressing its values in an extreme form in by failing to adapt: 'The members of [the Monkton family] shrank from exposing their calamity to others, as they must have exposed it if they had mingled with the busy world about them ... at intervals almost every form of madness appeared in the family, monomania being the most frequent ...'⁶¹ In the second, the narrator encounters Monkton directly and contemplates his obsession with the legend that the family will die out if all its members are not buried in the family vault, which lies behind his apparently monomaniacal quest for the lost body of a profligate uncle whose spectral apparition he periodically sees. Here the narrator draws not on the rhetoric of nervous sensibility so much as on monomania and spectral illusion, separating Monkton's lucid and deluded selves. Monkton's spectral illusions are detached both from narrator and the protagonist, who does not lack the power to examine them, but cannot rid himself of their emotional power. At the same time the form the monomania takes - that all the members of the family should be included in the vault - compounds its stagnant degeneration. This replaces spectral illusion as a morbid symptom:

This set me thinking about the extent of his madness, or, to speak more mildly and more correctly, of his delusion. Sane he certainly was on ordinary subjects, nay, in all the narrative parts of what he had said to me on that very evening he had spoken clearly and connectedly. As for the story of the apparition, other men, with intellects as clear as those of their neighbours, had fancied themselves pursued by a phantom, and had even written about it in a high strain of philosophical speculation. It was plain that the real hallucination in the case now before me, lay in the conviction of the truth of the old prophecy, and on his idea that the fancied apparition was a supernatural warning to him to evade his denunciations. And it was equally clear that both delusions had been produced by

the lonely life he had led acting on a naturally excitable temperament, which was rendered further liable to moral disease by the hereditary trait of insanity.⁶²

The narrator uses Monkton's ability to 'speak clearly and connectedly' as proof of his sanity, but while never losing his detached, retrospective voice, finds that the distinctions between associations cannot be maintained as they discover the uncle's rotting body, attempt to bring it home, and lose it at sea. Monkton, falling into melancholy, dies, and the narrator concludes by contemplating the involuted framework set up at the beginning. The belief in self-control and moral management of the narrator is progressively broken down as he is drawn into the 'supernatural' framework of the obsession, but it never completely dissolves.

Basil and 'Mad Monkton' both explore the tenacity of the past by intermingling social, psychic and physical inheritance. In both it is the way in which identities disintegrate through the subject's sensory incorporation of others' projections and expectations that generates not only sensation and suspense, but also a sense of claustrophobia, of the morbidity of inheritance itself. The satirical confession of a gentleman convict, *A Rogue's Life*, breaks free of this stagnancy as the hero facetiously describes his social transformation through crime, and the story parodies the involuted self-analysis of *Basil* by turning case history and moral tale into a pastiche of the workings of the social system of this illustrious country of ours on individual nature; and if I may say so without unbecoming vanity, I should like to quote myself for the edification of my countryman.⁶³ Collins's writing in the 1830s often takes a single sensation or situation as its focus, and develops a set of psychological references and narrative strategies to explore these as far as possible within the limits of the specific generic form. *A Rogue's Life* facetiously parodies the confessional form of *Basil* and by doing this it also

subverts the doubling of hero and villain. Here the hero assumes a self-possessed, healthy criminal identity which even finally becomes respectable in the process of casting off a past. In these novels both inheritance and moral management become vehicles for the taking apart of social self, but in each the central male subject either regresses, dies, or becomes a healthy exile. This is an impasse which is broken in *The Woman in White* as the propertied woman becomes the point of disintegration and the stage for the professional middle-class man's social transformation. But it is an impasse which is negotiated by developing a set of psychological conventions as narrative strategies within the specific context of *Household Words*. And it results not only in Collins's most successful sensation novel, but his most ambitious exploration of the relationship between social perceptions, power and subjectivity.

CHAPTER THREE

THE WOMAN IN WHITE:

RESEMBLANCE AND DIFFERENCE - PATIENCE AND RESOLUTION

What had I done? Assisted the victim of the most horrible of all false imprisonments to escape; or cast loose on the wide world of London an unfortunate creature whose actions it was my duty, and every man's duty, mercifully to control?¹

Walter Hartright asks himself this question immediately after encountering the mysterious figure on the road to London, at the beginning of the second episode of the serialisation of *The Woman in White*. The immediacy of the 'sensation' produced by the sudden appearance of the spectral woman is both elaborated and qualified by the double problem that Hartright ponders on discovering that she is a fugitive from a lunatic asylum; the problem not simply of whether she is mad, but of whether her derangement is of the kind to justify confinement in the light of his own observation of her behaviour. 'I cannot say with truth that the terrible inference which those words suggested flashed on me like a new revelation', he remarks. 'But the idea of absolute insanity which we all associate with the very name of an Asylum, had, I can honestly declare, never occurred to me in connection with her.'² Thus the shock of first seeing the woman in white becomes a greater mystery as she is placed in a new light, though this is not a 'new revelation'; the mystery of how to see is linked to the problem of how to frame and place her. Yet the two contrasting notions of what she might be: 'victim of false imprisonment', or unfortunate creature, in need of constraint, imply not simply different degrees of madness, but different conceptions of what it means to be mad. And yet again 'absolute insanity' itself is a term constructed by the

institution which contains it, while the question that Hartright is forced to consider makes him distrust the validity of his own senses.

In this way both the sensation of the sudden encounter with, and the mystery of the identity of, Anne Catherick are compounded out of a set of suggestions and inferences which in certain respects can never be fully explained or satisfied by the narrative resolutions which are offered. The process anticipates the contradictions and ambiguities set up by the story as a whole, which plays with distinct forms of psychological discourse which are exploited, subverted and transformed in different ways as they are put to work as narrative strategies in the text. By this process *The Woman in White* becomes a complex investigation of the interaction of psychic and social forces; an exploration of the ways in which social identities are formed by and within particular frameworks of perception, which in turn determine and are determined by, social and sexual hierarchies. In this chapter I want to explore how this works.

On an obvious level as a sensation novel, *The Woman in White* plays with the relationship between ways of seeing, modes of identity and forms of power. Collins uses the dual device of doubling and substituting Laura Fairlie and Anne Catherick's identities in the Asylum not only to question the enigmatic definitions and borderlands of insanity in the 'whited out', drained, figure of Anne, but also to explore how Laura's subjective self is broken down and rebuilt through the controlling interests and perceptions of others. And this in turn breaks down any stable division between the resonances of 'home' and 'asylum' as places of safety and danger. After her rescue from the Asylum, stripped of family, property, husband, all social assets, Laura is described by Walter, relating her to Anne:

The fatal resemblance which I had once seen and shuddered at seeing, in idea only, was now a real and living resemblance which asserted itself before my

own eyes. Strangers, acquaintances, friends even who could not look at her as we looked, if she had been shown to them in the first days of her rescue from the Asylum, might have doubted if she were the Laura Fairlie they had once seen, and doubted without blame.³

Laura has in a sense 'become' Anne Catherick once the social and psychological contexts that divided them have broken down; she can only regain her place and her identity when she can be shown to others in the revived light of the past.

This takes place, however, in the context of a range of forms of reconstruction at work in the narrative as a whole. Laura, the bearer of wealth, is cast in different lights by others, but never writes herself. The fight over how to possess and repossess her is bound up with the struggle carried on by other figures in the novel: the struggle over how to see, over the control of time and memory, and over the control of writing; a struggle bound up with the battle for self-management and self-definition. This in turn depends on manipulating and soliciting the reader's perception and knowledge. The reader is told at the start that the story will be unravelled through the subjective perspective of the linked testimonies of the different narrators - that their eye witness accounts are empirically accurate but partial. Suspense and excitement are generated and maintained by the way that the reader's view is limited at any one time to the perspective of each individual narrator whose testimonies are at once reliable and unreliable, and whose means of making sense of the world needs to be continually questioned. Yet actually the narrative forms a more ambiguous embedded chain, wherein each individual utterance gains meaning from the way it has been placed in the chain, and which is presented as continual progression but which is in reality a continual, contradictory process of reappropriation and redefinition. These narrative paradoxes point to a more general ambiguity; for both the cognitive framework and the process of detection through which the mysteries of Anne Catherick and

Percival Glyde's identities are unravelled in order to reconstruct Laura involve a process of realignment within a framework which is essentially and ironically compatible with the one through which she is taken apart.

It was the fictional, cultural and ideological constraints on the novel which created greater scope for psychological complexity in the narrative form of *The Woman in White*. Basil and 'Mad Monkton' had both used images of madness and the breakdown of identity in pushing a reformulated set of supernatural terror conventions to their limit, set within a reconstructed narrative framework that defused suspense though not intensity of experience. *The Woman in White* was written under particular cultural pressures - it was essential that it should be a compulsively readable story if its serialisation was to secure the circulation of the newly-launched *All the Year Round*.⁴ It needed also, as Miss Oliphant was later to point out, to be a book 'abounding in sensation', but one in which 'everything is legitimate, natural and probable ... and there is almost as little in this highly-wrought sensation novel as if it had been a domestic story of the most unexciting kind'.⁵ Collins develops many of the methods and concerns of Basil in *The Woman in White*, and in apparently defusing them, actually takes them further. The novel continues to exploit contemporary psychological methods by using them to produce the very anxiety and fears that they were developed to analyse, that puts it on a continuum with the earlier fiction, but in the treatment of insanity the novel is both constrained and presented with a new set of opportunities by the discursive framework of insanity which had been set up by *Household Words* - a domesticated, feminised insanity, set within the optimistic paternalistic framework of moral management.

Collins negotiates these constraints firstly by putting the flickering, unstable figure of Anne to different uses in the text as a problematic uncanny figure who hovers on the boundary between madness and sanity, rationality

and superstition, literal and figural modes of representation. Joseph Posselthwaite, the pupil at Limmeridge School who functions as the voice of 'popular superstition', is familiar with what Marian sarcastically refers to as the 'manners and customs' of ghosts. He works within a naive traditional structure of knowledge that determines how he sees 'the ghaist of Miss Fairlie: 'All in white - as a ghaist should be ... Away yonder, in t'kirkyard - where a ghaist ought to be ...'.⁶ But while this is debunked by Marian and Hartright, the uncertainty of what Anne does signify, and how her testimony should be listened to, like their own apparently irrational forebodings, is given a significance but one they can only decipher as 'unsoundness of mind'. While her contrast with Laura, and the breakdown of the difference between them means that the cultural connotations - 'the idea of insanity which we all associate with the name of an asylum' form a pattern of contrasts which are undermined by the novel while remaining one of the bases for its effects. Anne Catherick, the propertyless outcast, appears ghostly because, in another way, she is Laura's ghost. Simultaneously her other and double, she is the trace, the shadow and the mirror of the social and subjective transformation which Laura undergoes - undergoes explicitly in the way her identity is taken to pieces, and tacitly in the way it is built up, so that 'the most horrible of all false imprisonments' merges, while being set against, 'merciful control'.

In order to work in this way *The Woman in White* orchestrates a very precise set of allusions to contemporary debates on confinement, definitions of insanity and the treatment of the insane within a narrative that enables shifting connotations to be produced by overlapping models of feminine identity through distinct kinds of masculine manipulation. By setting up Laura's obviously wrongful confinement against Anne's, which is also problematic, though not in quite the same way, Collins interweaves the 'older' resonances of fears of confining the sane in madhouses in order to steal their

property by bereaving them of social identity that is suggested by his use of the late eighteenth century case of the Marquise de Douhault, with contemporary questions about what justified confinement that surrounded the Parliamentary Select Committee Enquiry Into the Care and Treatment of Lunatics and their Property of 1839-60. But these associations also make up a palimpsest of allusions that take them beyond the immediate perimeters of the debates on private asylums as a source of sensation, emphasising the tensions of these debates, and linking them with the image of domesticated insanity - a reformed madness personified in the inmate of an asylum modelled on a stately home - the model county asylum.

In Chapter One I argued that the late 1850s were a contradictory moment in the lunacy reform movement, which in a paradoxical way had helped to shape the very anxieties that it had attempted to institutionalise out of existence. Predominantly, the legacy of progressivist, paternalistic liberalism seemed secured. The practice of moral management and the non-restraint system had domesticated madness itself as it contributed to the reform of the private madhouses and the development of the county asylum system; the study and treatment of insanity had become a respectable, professionalised and rapidly expanding branch of the medical profession - as exemplified above all by Conolly's career. Yet the shaping of insanity within a new kind of institution and a new kind of public professional relation did not dissipate the fears of confinement - merely shifted the focus of the fears, and linked it with the debates on madness itself. 'Wrongful confinement' became more ambiguous now - applying beyond the victims of conscious conspiracy. The problematic borderlands of insanity could be used by the medical profession to argue for increased specialised surveillance and control, but also, by those who saw the plight of the possible victim's medical manipulation, against it. Reade's conflation of modern and corrupt asylums,

his descriptions of mad-doctors as 'soul murderers who make their lie a truth', depended on collapsing together different images and institutional processes. This might have been disclaimed by Dickens but it echoed a widespread set of fears about the danger of medical expertise legitimising corrupt motivations that essentially sprang from the tensions within the liberalism of the reform movement itself. Thus *All the Year Round*, discussing the reports of the Commissioners in Lunacy in 1862, two years after the serialisation of *The Woman in White*, and before *Hard Cash*, modified the almost uncritical admiration of the reform movement of *Household Words* on the one hand and Reade's fears of conscious conspiracy on the other, and like John Perceval and the Conolly of *Indications of Insanity*, stressed the dangers of total medical control for the liberty of the subject, which 'fixes and renders permanent that which might have passed away'.⁷ The difficulties of establishing precisely what constituted 'unsoundness of mind' and whether it justified confinement did not depend on the conscious corruption of the medical profession but on the context in which these judgments inevitably take place:

Let us at once declare that we do not for an instant, or in the remotest degree, attribute to Dr Winslow, or to any other of these medical gentlemen, a conscious action under mercenary motives. The public danger arising from their influence would be infinitely insignificant if the fact were so. They are highly trained men, who have honestly devoted themselves to a special study of the most difficult questions that can occur to a physician. There is no clear dividing-line between sickness and health of mind; unsoundness of mind is, no doubt, as various and common as unsoundness of body ... Every natural defect of temper is unsoundness ... But we do not condemn our bodies as unfit for use when there are corns on our toes, or when the sallow tinge on our cheeks supplants the line of health ... so it is with the mind. Every man has his weak place, his twist, his hobby ...

What opinion are we to form upon the whole case of the facility with which a mad-doctor can insensibly adapt his theories to either side? Even in the less uncertain fields of science, we have seen in great criminal trials eminent chemists as well as eminent

mad-doctors retained for the prosecution. The value of the skilled witness has usually its visible measure in questions of material fact that concern the body. In questions that concern the mind, the less heed we pay to the theorist, and the more distinctly we require none but the sort of evidence patent to the natural sense of ordinary men in determining what citizen shall suffer the privations, or what criminal shall enjoy the privileges of unsoundness of mind, the better it will be for us. Let us account no man a lunatic whom it requires a mad-doctor to prove insane.⁸

This echoes the starting point for Walter Hartright's dilemma on hearing of Anne's alleged insanity in *The Woman in White* just as it picks up on John Perceval's argument to the Parliamentary Select Committee that non-specialists should be involved in the commitment of the supposed insane.⁹ 'The natural sense of ordinary men' is dissected in the novel. Yet Collins nonetheless assumes a tacit identification with Hartright's view of Anne which is, in one register, explicitly confirmed - that of the middle class, liberal, well informed observer. This works in the treatment of the confinement and substitution of Anne and Laura, in the effect on confinement on Laura and in the perception of Anne. Both women are victims of 'wrongful' confinement conspiracies, echoing John Perceval's arguments amongst others that those who have power over the alleged insane 'may be influenced by corrupt motives, such as the desire to possess themselves of a ward or kinsman's estate, or to get a person out of the way who interferes with their selfish gratifications'.¹⁰ They are both confined, however, with the unconscious complicity of not only the medical profession, but the broader institutions of middle class common sense - the law and the family, all of whom are unable to recognise Laura once she has been pronounced 'socially, morally, legally - dead'.¹¹ The asylum in which Anne and Laura are confined is a respectable private establishment, an uncontroversial non-restraint institution, that could have been indirectly modelled on one of Fox's establishments, or even one of Conolly's, each

patient with her own keeper, though it is in a London suburb, not a rural retreat.¹² Its proprietor is neither a corrupt profiteer, nor a 'Wycherley' figure, sinisterly collecting mad specimens, but a bland individual who happily opens his doors to Marian, and whose indirectly reported explanation of the changes in Anne/Laura, reinforces Hartright's doubts about stable identities and definitions, but within the framework of a medical opinion that bases its authority on physiognomy. It is emphasised that 'such changes, no doubt, were not without precedent in his experience of persons mentally afflicted. Insane people were often, at one time, outwardly as well as inwardly, unlike what they were at another; the change from better to worse, or from worse to better, in the madness, having a necessary tendency to produce alterations of appearance externally.'¹³ This echoes Alexander Morison's point that 'the appearance of the face ... is intimately connected with, and dependent upon the state of the mind'.¹⁴

The instability of the definition and perception of insanity, and the 'facility with which a mad-doctor can insensibly adapt his theories to either side' is pressed into service to transform Laura in a way that echoes the process by which Conolly himself was able to twist the implications of his own *Indications of Insanity* into their opposite. But with Anne the asylum works as a crucible in a different way, for, although her confinement is never justified, she is built up through a set of conventions and allusions as a person of 'unsound mind' as an ideal patient of a model county asylum. The article on 'The Cure of Sick Minds' in *Household Words* describes the case of 'a young woman, liable to returns of insanity [who] left her home at four o'clock one wet morning and ... hurried to the asylum ... She said she dreaded being at home, for they treated her badly when mad. She knew the asylum was the best place, and she came as fast as she could, to get help in time ...'.¹⁵ In one way Anne's escape from the madhouse - 'the most horrible of all false imprisonments' - reverses this, but it also in a curious way reinforces it.

Because from the start Anne's peculiar mental condition is suggested by the way that she is set up as a model patient of moral management. She suffers from monomania, able to control herself though not to recognise the extent of her delusions. Like the female patients that Dickens describes in 'A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree' - she is bizarre in the way that she goes through the motions of passive propriety which in the process become transformed into the mark of hovering on the brink of self-possession. What is weird about Anne is her obedience and docility, her perpetual childlikeness, which is also the sign of her ambiguous class identity, echoing the shadowy class transformation of moral management: 'There was nothing wild, nothing immodest in her manner: It was quiet and self-controlled, a little melancholy and a little touched by suspicion; not exactly the manner of a lady, and, at the same time, not exactly the manner of a woman in the humblest rank of life.'¹⁶ Her obsession with wearing white - instilled into her in the 'asylum' of the substitute home at Limeridge House turns Conolly's notion of this 'really proper feeling' as a means of therapy: 'many of the women should be indulged in wearing neat articles of dress', into his opposite and simulacrum.¹⁷ Her weakened intellectual faculties are explained in the First Part of the narrative through the kind of combination of phrenological and associationist criteria that Conolly uses in *Indications of Insanity*; her monomania takes the form of not being able to impose coherent criteria on her own associations, which can be modified by education. The late Mrs Fairlie cites a doctor's opinion 'that she will grow out of it. But he says her careful bringing up at school is a matter of great importance just now, because her unusual slowness in acquiring ideas implies an unusual tenacity in keeping them, when they are once received into her mind.'¹⁸ These have become 'fixed and rendered permanent'; Hartright notes: 'The old grateful sense of her benefactress's kindness was evidently the ruling idea still in the

poor creature's mind - the narrow mind which had but too plainly opened to no other lasting impression since that first impression of her younger and happier days.¹⁹ Yet they can also be modified and controlled by benign surveillance: 'I appealed to the only anxiety she appeared to feel, in connexion with me and with my opinion of her - the anxiety to convince me of her fitness to be mistress of her own actions.'²⁰

What Anne represents, then, is the defusing and domestication of mania into monomania or partial insanity, able to control itself and not justifying restraint, or even, necessarily, confinement.²¹ But she also suggests the pathologisation of feminine passivity. And as Laura's other and double she anticipates a process that the figure of Laura then silently infers as each absorbs the other's connotations. Laura and Anne's doubleness is set on a strictly physiological as well as a figurative level. Hartright notes the similarities, as if he was writing a physiognomic report, 'in the general outline of the countenance and in the general proportion of the features; in the colour of the hair and in the little nervous uncertainty about the lips; in the height and size of the figure and the carriage of the head and body ...'.²² Anne is differentiated from Laura by 'sorrow and suffering' rather than, primarily, faculty or constitution, and conversely, it is Laura's delicacy of constitution and faculty that is paradoxically both emphasised and denied as being particularly vulnerable to the changes brought about by confinement: 'Faculties less delicately balanced, constitutionless tenderly organised, must have suffered under such an ordeal as this. No man could have gone through it and come out unchanged.'²³

This contradictory suggestion that Laura's vulnerability is both constitutional and constituted by social role and social expectation as the bearer of the family wealth becomes further complicated by Anne and Laura's position in the Fairlie family, which is, tacitly, the 'bleached' version

of which the 'white' Anne is the extreme. Anne is finally explained by Hartright in hereditary terms, as the bearer of the biological and moral Nemesis of the father's excesses: "There rose on my memory the remembrance of the Scripture denunciation ... "The sins of the father shall be visited on the children" ... With what unerring and terrible directness the long chain of circumstances led down from the thoughtless wrong committed by the father to the heartless injury committed on the child!"²⁴ But in fact the chain of circumstances is far from direct or unerring, for the Fairlie family as a whole, not just its illegitimate stain, is incipiently morbid, in a way that mingles and resists distinct codes of inheritance and transmission. Here Laura is set in different family oppositions - against Anne her half sister, her other half sister Marian, her uncle Frederick and Eleanor her formerly wayward aunt, now wife of Fosco.

Each opposition produces a distinct implication, which together resist as well as reinforce a straightforward physiological notion of feminine vulnerability, while linking sensibility and nervous weakness. The inherited weakness of the family, for instance, is all from the father's side - the dark and energetic Marian takes after her mother. It is qualified also by the way in which an implied rhetoric of 'nervous disorder' is juggled with, dislodging it from its sexual referent while still using it as a source of tension. Frederick Fairlie's excessive sensibility echoes Laura's vulnerability in a way that makes his disturbing androgyny generate a sense of unreality: 'His beardless face was thin, worn and transparently pale, but not wrinkled ... ', notes Hartright. 'Upon the whole, he had a frail, languidly-fretful, over-refined look - something singularly and unpleasantly delicate in its association with a man, and at the same time, something which could by no possibility have looked natural and appropriate if it had been transferred to the personal appearance of a woman.'²⁵ This takes the image of the upper class

'hypochondriacal bachelor' a stage further than Basil and 'Mad Monkton', turning artistic sensibility into a caricatured decadence that is both the sign of physiological degeneration and self-indulgent, idle affectation. 'We all say it's the nerves and we none of us know what we mean when we say it', Marion points out, and Fairlie's 'nerves' both parody their earlier reference-points and become the means by which Fairlie abdicates his paternal as much as his patriarchal role, leaving his niece the more vulnerable.²⁶ They also help to turn Limmeridge House into the 'private asylum' of a nervous patient, an image of seclusion and repose where nothing is allowed to irritate, a claustrophobic retreat prefiguring the patterns of confinement and observation that are to be enacted at Blackwater. But to get a coherent view of the way that Collins simultaneously weaves and unpicks this set of psychological and cognitive assumptions it is necessary to look at the way that the narrative itself is controlled and manipulated in more detail.

The tensions of *The Woman in White* hinge on the destruction and re-forming of Laura's identity, but the narrative devices by which it generates and resolves them make it also the story of Walter Hartright's social and psychological transformation - of his progress from marginalised lower-middle class drawing master to the father of the heir of Limmeridge and revitaliser of the stagnant and incipiently morbid Fairlie family. As his name obviously and emblematically suggests, Hartright operates as the voice of safety, of normality and of 'right feeling' in the novel. He is the narrative figure who enables fictional and ideological resolutions to be achieved by presenting them as the outcome of his own resolution. At the same time *The Woman in White* is the story of how Hartright's new subjective identity is constructed in order to achieve this closure; how he learns to control the past and thus the present instead of being incapacitated by anxiety about the future, that ominousness which is such an important source of suspense in the

first part of the novel; how he becomes both his own and Laura's moral manager, and thus successfully opposes the power, also manifested as a form of moral management, of Fosco.

At the beginning of his narrative Hartright is a domesticated artist, a landscape painter dependent on teaching, a male governess figure, drained of social and sexual meaning or effectiveness, who can live almost invisibly at the heart of the patron's family. 'I had trained myself to leave all the sympathies natural to my age in my employer's outer half', he writes of his arrival at Limmeridge. 'I had long since learnt to understand, composedly, and as a matter of course, that my situation in life was considered a guarantee against any of my female pupils feeling more than the most ordinary interest in me, and that I was admitted among beautiful and captivating women much as a harmless domestic animal is admitted amongst them.'²⁷ By the opening of the Second Part - when he has rediscovered the 'whited out' Laura and experienced the double shock of recognising her face above her own gravestone and seeing its transformation 'into' Anne Catherick, it becomes clear that his radical opposition to established privilege merges into his possession of Laura, and that the means and end of his gaining power, is founded on her social obliteration:

Forlorn and disowned, sorely tried and sadly changed; her beauty faded, her mind clouded; robbed of her station in the world, of her place among living creatures - the devotion I had promised, the devotion of my whole heart and soul and strength might be laid blamelessly, now, at those dear feet. In the right of her calamity, in the right of her friendlessness, she was mine at last! Mine to support, to protect, to cherish, to restore. Mine to love and honour as father and brother both. Mine to vindicate through all risks and all sacrifices - through the hopeless struggle against Rank and Power, through the long fight with armed Deceit and fortified Success, through the waste of my reputation, through the loss of my friends, through the hazard of my life.²⁸

But the securing of that position of possession and power by rebuilding the social recognition of Laura, by becoming honorary father and brother and by

realigning the cognitive framework through which she is seen, depends in turn on Hartright being able to see differently, partly by appropriating others' perceptions - above all, those of Marian Halcombe who is also, though in a different way and context, struggling for control. 'I answer for my self-control', he states before the final conflict with the villain. 'My nerves were firmly strung, and I felt all the strength of my resolution stirring in me vigorously from head to foot.'²⁹ But this new-found masculine vigour is the product of a complex process, and the reversal of his own earlier situation.

This means that two orders of narrative are at work in the novel - the process by which Hartright discloses the mysteries of the past, and the process by which he covers his traces. 'This is the story of what a Woman's patience can endure and of what a Man's resolution can achieve', the Preamble opens, but the actual pattern of perception and control manifested in the First Part of the novel is Hartright's passive mediation of sensation and Marian's resolution; Marian describes herself as 'a woman, condemned to patience, propriety and petticoats, for life'.³⁰ There is thus no straightforward movement of narrative authority at work in the text, and while the relationship between the control over writing and the consolidation of social identity is more explicit here than in any of the stories I have considered so far, this relationship can be mutually undermining as well as reinforcing, in accordance with the link between the social and psychological frameworks through which they work.

In the Preamble Walter Hartright appears to be the overall narrator and thus the central authority of *The Woman in White*. As General Editor he selects, organises and arranges the narratives of others (including his own specific narrative) but in such a way that they seem to tell their own story. He seems to be replacing divine judgement with empirical evidence that emerges as both reliable and relative; absolute morality with contingent

experience, wherein the corruption of the Law is replaced by the analysis of the Reader, but within the framework of credibility which the Law confers.

But the Law is still, in certain inevitable cases, the pre-engaged servant of the long purse; and the story is left to be told, for the first time, in this place. As the Judge might once have heard it, so the Reader shall hear it now. No circumstance of importance, from the beginning to the end of this disclosure, shall be related on hearsay evidence...

Thus, the story here presented will be told by more than one pen, as the story of an offence against the law is told - Court by more than one witness - with the same object, in both cases, to present the truth in its most direct and intelligible aspect; and to trace the course of one complete series of events, by making the persons who have been most closely connected with them, at each successive stage, relate their own experience, word for word.³¹

By this use of passive tense, claiming the neutral authority of the Law even as he reveals its interests, the voice of Hartright controls the story the more as it appears to be its passive medium. He stresses that his authority is based on contingency: 'When his experience falls, he will retire from his position as narrator', yet in the Second Part he continuously uses 'hearsay evidence', and controls the comings and goings of other narrators as well as the story's beginning and end. But the changing relationship between Hartright the General Editor and Hartright the specific narrator, or the voice that frames the story and the narrative utterance itself, becomes increasingly embroiled as the novel progresses.

I have suggested that if one takes the narrative of *The Woman in White* as a whole it seems that two processes are taking place simultaneously: Hartright's editing and reorganising 'one complete series of events' as a chain which forms a narrative totality and is based on a linear set of logically connected associations, and the process of reperception and detection that he goes through himself, which forms a more tangled web. But although the revelation of the former depends partly on making the latter explicit, the two

narrative functions are judged at crucial moments of the story, and this is intimately connected with the contradictory way that the past is reconstructed and Laura restored. It is also crucially bound up with the other narrative relations that are at work in the novel.

So in taking the form of an embedded chain the narrative progresses both along and 'inwards', and this in turn produces a hierarchical order of specific narratives. Firstly, Hartright as General Editor who presents the various narrative testimonies as evidence claiming the legally and empirically verifiable authority of truth; then Hartright the specific narrator, who is on a level, supposedly, with the other specific narrators - Gilmore, Marian, Fairlie, Mrs Michelson, Hester Pynhorn, the Doctor, Jane Gould, 'The Tombstone', Count Fosco. Within this are embedded other narratives, in the form of letters, dreams or reported speech. But the degree of embedding only partially determines the degree of credibility of each narrating instance, and are themselves partly determined by the psychological frame within which the figures themselves are set.

The powerless Anne Catherick and the powerful Fosco are contrasting examples of this. Anne's one autonomous narrative takes the form of a dream related in a letter ('feeble, faint and defaced by blots') to Laura warning her of Glyde's wickedness. This attempts to claim credibility by drawing on Biblical authority: 'Do you believe in dreams? I hope for your sake, that you do. See what Scripture says about dreams (Genesis XL.8, S.1.24; Daniel IV.18-25); and take the warning I send you before it is too late', but loses reliability for Hartright and Marian by being triply embedded - in a dream, in a letter, in a deranged person.³² Here, as I have suggested, this very process of embedding gives it a perverse kind of authority as a means of 'foreshadowing' by making the associations that Marian and Hartright's rationality refuse. It contributes to Anne's general uncanny role in the text,

but also prefigures Marian's own dream. With Fosco, on the other hand, the pattern takes a different form. His final narrative has a structurally ambiguous position, being both embedded within Hartright's specific narrative and being a specific narrative in its own right) but as a figure in Marian's narrative, he has the social and psychological power to burst through the frame through which she sees him, breaking down her sense of the reliability of her own senses and finally snatching the pen from her hand. I'll pick up this thread again later, but first it is necessary to investigate the way in which distinct and overlapping methods of perception, control of others and self-control operate in the specific and implied perspectives of Hartright, Marian and Fosco in the First Part, before considering how they are reappropriated through the control of time and memory in the second half of the novel.

There are two interrelated features of Hartright's early method of perception, which, in creating ominousness, anxiety and ambiguity, generate and imply the sense of his powerlessness and absence of self-control, in a way that elaborates many of the patterns at work in Basil's consciousness, but from the standpoint of petit-bourgeois interloper rather than displaced upper-class younger son. Like Basil, Hartright projects meaning into figures and events in the light of his own preconceived expectations, and has his own identity undermined when they are undercut by his sense of the strange and anomalous - this is one of the chief sources of the sense of uncanniness and mystery in the early part of the story. Hartright's perceptual universe - again like Basil's - is dominated by a particularly naive interpretation of associationist and physiognomic methods and assumptions, linked to his problematic social and sexual position, which need to be reconciled and realigned if he is to see to some purpose and act resolutely. Thus the early Hartright's 'common sense' notion of normality is created paradoxically out of

doubt, uncertainty and insecurity. I've already introduced how this works in his first encounter with, and assessment of, Anne, and in the generalised ways in which the boundaries between 'home' and 'asylum' are undercut in the novel by the anticipating of the asylum at Blackwater Park, and the foreshadowing of Blackwater at Limmeridge, which is a safe, familiar asylum, the place of Anne's early moral treatment, but nonetheless claustrophobic in its seclusion. These in turn express and contribute to his whole mode of perceiving and operating.

At the opening of the novel Hartright's inability to interpret Anne is the product not only of her own ambiguity, but of the shock to his faculties, and his own inability to control this, that the encounter with Anne had precipitated, but not caused. 'It was like a dream. Was I Walter Hartright? ... Had I really left, little more than an hour since, the quiet, decent, conventionally-domestic atmosphere of my mother's cottage? I was too bewildered - too conscious also of a vague sense of something like self reproach, to speak to my strange companion for some minutes.'³³ This anxiety and insecurity, consistently presented as Hartright's inability to interpret any perception that cannot be aligned within established associations as one form or other of partial insanity, is increased by the very retreat-like repose of Limmeridge. Here it becomes clear that the seclusion and isolation does not only compound Frederick Fairlie's hypochondria but also Hartright's own insecure self-control, which also verges on the hypochondriacal. It takes the form, firstly, of loss of memory and control over the perception and marking of time: 'A confessed sensation of having suddenly lost my familiarity with the past, without acquiring any additional clearness of idea in reference to the present or the future, took possession of my mind. Circumstances that were but a few days old, faded back in my memory, as if they had happened months and months since.'³⁴ This is linked

to the lack of control over his 'feminised' social situation and over himself. Even as he teaches Laura and Marian to 'represent Nature' in water-colours as part of their feminine formation, this saps his own masculinity and self-management: 'I had just enough work to do, in mounting my employer's drawings, to keep my hands and eyes pleasurably employed, while my mind was left free to enjoy the dangerous luxury of unbridled thoughts.'³⁵

At this opening stage then, finding himself in an unaccustomed position of privilege and idleness, Hartright both senses that 'unbridled thoughts' are a 'dangerous luxury' and is unable to bridle them. He has the consciousness of the resolute moral superintendent but not the ability to apply this to himself. It is the female asylum qualities of the place that sap his resolution, as it has provided an earlier training ground for Anne. Hartright, in John Barlow's words, does not want 'the power and resolution to examine' his possible delusions; his problem is that he can only explain them as derangement.³⁶ This applies obviously to his developing response to Anne and her warning dream; it also means that he can only read his own mounting anxiety as monomania. So immediately before discovering Anne's 'Dream' letter, Hartright meditates on the significance of his discovery of Laura's engagement to Percival Glyde, and here his immediate self-control breaks down: 'Thoughts I had hitherto restrained, thoughts that made my position harder than ever to endure, crowded on me now that I was alone.' These thoughts, however, take the form of anxious analysis of his own associations, which enable them to be both suggested and resisted:

Judging by the ordinary rules of evidence, I had not the shadow of a reason, this far, for connecting Sir Percival Glyde with the suspicious words of inquiry that had been spoken to me by the woman in white. And yet, I did connect him with them. Was it because he had now become associated in my mind with Miss Fairlie; Miss Fairlie being, in her turn, associated with Anne Catherick, since that night when I had discovered the ominous likeness between them? Had the events of the morning unnerved me already that I

was at the mercy of any delusion which common chances and common coincidences might suggest to my imagination?³⁷

Like Robert Audley, in *Lady Audley's Secret*, Hartright is unable to distinguish between 'monition' and 'monomania'. But while for Robert Audley this is a temporary state of uncertainty, to be replaced by his own sense of the reliability of circumstantial evidence, for Hartright 'the ordinary rules of evidence' cannot help him establish the underlying logic beneath the 'chance' connection, so he sees himself as the victim of a delusion, but in a way that makes him feel the more powerless to predict a dangerous future. The 'sense of something obscurely impending, something invisibly threatening, that Time was holding over our heads' or irrational fears of the future were identified by Pritchard as a sign of monomania³⁸. This, together with his reaction to Anne's dream, compounds his own sense of himself as monomaniac and leads him to prescribe his own self-disciplinary moral treatment; to use his 'reason' to 'curb the blind impulse of [his] disordered senses':

Those words and the doubt which had just escaped me as to the sanity of the writer of the letter, acting together on my mind, suggested an idea, which I was literally afraid to express openly, or even to encourage secretly. I began to doubt whether my own faculties were not in danger of losing their balance. It seemed almost like a monomania to be tracing back everything strange that happened, everything unexpected that was said, always to the same hidden source and the same sinister influence. I resolved, this time, in defence of my own courage and my own sense, to come to no decision which plain fact did not warrant, and to turn my back resolutely on everything that tempted me in the shape of surmise.³⁹

What Hartright needs to learn is how to draw 'correct' influences from chance associations and hypothetical surmise, but in the reconstructed framework of his own narrative it never moves beyond the realignment of the process of self-regulation implied by moral management.

Hartright's early perception is not straightforwardly naive, however. At particular moments of his opening narrative his method of self-scrutiny shifts from contemporary self-consciousness to retrospective assessment, and this undermines its status as immediate evidence, on a par with the other narratives. This emerges particularly clearly in the contrasting way in which he sees Marian and Laura. In both cases the perception of their femininity, or lack of it, is clearly a product of his own projection; but in the case of Marian it works as a satirical subversion of Hartright's preconceptions (as Marian herself satirically subverts femininity); with Laura this process has been assimilated within Hartright's own framework.

Both the perception of Marian and Laura elaborate and manipulate a particular kind of physiognomic idealism, but with Marian this is done at Hartright's expense, in a way that suggests and subverts the idea that natural beauty is a cultural construction. The shock of Marian's 'ugliness' is derived from its disturbing conjunction with the 'rare beauty of her form', and the way that this contradicts 'the old conventional Maxim, that Nature cannot err'. It also immediately echoes and follows his response to Anne. As drawing-master, and professional representer of nature, Hartright's response to Marian's disturbing androgyny, the inverse of Frederick Fairlie's - the ability to recognise, but not to reconcile - tacitly questions the implied sexual oppositions that enable his vision, even his sanity, to function, again by the disruption of established trains of association:

The lady's complexion was almost swarthy, and the dark down on her upper lip was almost a moustache. She had a large, firm, masculine mouth and jaw; prominent piercing, resolute brown eyes; and thick, coal-black hair, growing unusually low down on her forehead. Her expression - bright, frank and intelligent - appeared, while she was silent, to be altogether wanting in those feminine attractions of gentleness and pliability, without which the beauty of the handsomest woman alive is beauty incomplete. To see such a face as this set on shoulders that a

sculpture would have longed to model - to be charmed by the modest graces of action through which the symmetrical limbs betrayed their beauty when they moved, and then to be almost repelled by the masculine form and masculine look of the features in which the perfectly-shaped figure ended - was to feel a sensation oddly akin to the helpless discomfort familiar to us all in sleep, when we recognise yet cannot reconcile the anomalies and contradictions of a dream.⁴⁰

Hartright's physiognomic reading of Marian functions accurately in the novel in that she does manifest all the energy and resourcefulness that he reads in her features. But she realigns them in the context of her own narrative as a desire to be freed from the "artificial" constraints of femininity. With Laura, the process at first seems to be reversed, though the frame still holds, for it is her very difference from Marian that suggests her femininity and her powerlessness - her 'whiteness'. Hartright begins by acknowledging that his representation of Laura is as a memory compounded as a palimpsest of associations and subjective sensations: "How can I describe her? How can I separate her from my own sensations and all that has happened in the later time?"⁴¹ He then describes his own representation, his portrait, of her, both noting and resisting the signs of inbred weakness and nervous susceptibility: "It is hard to see that the lower part of the face is too delicately refined away towards the chin to be full and fair proportion to the upper part ... and that the sweet sensitive lips are subject to slight nervous contraction, when she smiles ...".⁴² He then goes on to contemplate his reading of the significance of the portrait - a self-fulfilling process that manipulates the physiognomic sensation itself by replacing the features with the representation of them and disclosing this and its ideal referent, following Bell's precepts, as a process of self-projection:

Does my poor portrait of her ... show me these things? Ah, how few of them are in the dull mechanical drawing, and how many in the mind with which I regard it! A fair delicate girl in a pretty light dress, trifling with the leaves of her sketch-book, while she

looks up from it with truthful innocent blue eyes - that is all the drawing can say; all, perhaps, that even the deeper reach of thought and pen can say in their language either. The woman who first gives life, light and form to our shadowy conceptions of beauty, fills a void in our spiritual nature that has remained unknown to us till she appeared. Sympathies that lie too deep for words, too deep almost for thoughts, are touched, at such times, by other charms than those which the senses feel and which the sources of expression can realise. The mystery which underlies the beauty of women is never raised above the reach of all expression until it has claimed kindred with the mystery of our own souls.⁴²

Hartright's vision of Laura shifts between different implied kinds of projection as he switches between his recall of his first impression of her and his later analysis of it. But it is a shift between forms of absence, both of which mean that 'Laura' can only be perceived as 'the visionary nursing of [his] own fancy'. From the subjective projections of his own desire to neo-platonic ideal, she remains a spirit, a ghost, a spectral illusion for Hartright. Thus he can only know her through sensations which are but pale reflections of an ideal, and which are literally manifested as lack, as 'wanting': 'Mingling with the vivid impression produced by the charm of her fair face and head ... was another impression, which, in a shadowy way, suggested to me the idea of something wanting. At one time it seemed like something wanting in her; at another, like something wanting in myself, which hindered me from understanding her as I ought.'⁴³ Though this turns out to be, explicitly, a premonition of his recognition of Laura's physical association with Anne, it conceals within it, as its own trace, the construction of meaning through making hidden connections which Hartright's later assessment of his impressions makes clear. This means, too, that while his method of seeing in general needs to undergo a radical transformation between the two halves of the novel, with his vision of Laura there is a fundamental correspondence between his memory of his early impression and his later reconstruction; both

simultaneously work through projection, and function, in associationist terms, as drawing correct inferences through comparison.

So Hartright sees others in accordance with their conformity to established conventions; by confusing 'sensations' with 'facts' while attempting a simplistic kind of linear reasoning, and this builds up the sense of mystery, of strangeness within familiarity, at the beginning. With Marian's narrative, further into the story, suspense is heightened by the interaction between the greater subtlety and acuteness of her perceptions and the method by which they are narrated. Marian's perspective is not addressed to others as retrospective testimony; it is recorded for herself in her journal, which is crucially important as means of observation and memory, as a method of self control and means of marking and controlling time.

It also springs from her contradictory position as a perceptive woman, in a world where feminine sensitivity means sinking into vulnerability - and this becomes the source of a new kind of tension. Hartright's 'feminised' place caused him to sink into passivity and lassitude, though aware of the need to impose restraint and discipline on himself. Marian's interstitial position as 'masculine' poor relation on the other hand, gives her a clear insight into the power relations and social conventions at work within the family, while also bringing the awareness that she can only retain the foothold of a limited and circumscribed influence by attempting to control those codes from within, and this means that the concept of 'self-control' for both her and Laura, is fundamentally ambiguous - as it was for mid-nineteenth century feminism. Marian's perception, moreover, goes through various stages during the first part of the story. In her first appearance as a figure in Hartright's narrative her wit and energy take the form chiefly of her resistance to feminine roles - her jokes about female accomplishments, feminine propriety, and so on. Her own narrative falls into two parts, the

'Limmeridge' and 'Blackwater' sections, both of which trace her mounting anxiety, the passage of Laura into an 'other' state, and Marian's own emotional or physical collapse; and it is this that contributes to the sense that Laura's transformation into Anne Catherick and incarceration in the asylum is but a re-enactment of its dress rehearsal - her transformation into Lady Glyde and incarceration in marriage. 'My mind feels almost as dulled and stunned by it, as if writing of her marriage were like writing of her death.'⁴⁴ This, however, also involves important shifts in seeing Laura, herself and the signs around her, in the 'Limmeridge' and 'Blackwater' sections of Marian's journal.

Initially Marian's analysis is dominated by the need to critically qualify her own perceptions and to control her sensations and reactions, and although she retains her scepticism she comes increasingly to use and analyse unconscious, or symptomatic processes. At first she responds to and treats Laura both almost as a possessive lover ('she will be his Laura instead of mine!') and as a benign keeper: 'There was too much colour in her cheeks, too much energy in her manner, too much firmness in her voice.'⁴⁵ As Laura becomes reconciled to her fate of marriage to Glyde though, this gives way to the realisation that it is Laura's passivity which is pathological, not her 'hysterical vehemence' against it: 'She used to be pliability itself; but she was now inflexibly passive in her resignation ... I should have been less pained if she had been violently agitated.'⁴⁶ In Marian's journal Limmeridge is a 'safe place', dominated by the wishes of the absent father, and a stage where she begins to be aware of tensions and manipulations. She begins to see expressions and mannerisms symptomatically rather than through a fixed set of physiognomic codes; she notes, for instance, Sir Percival's nervous cough, and his 'suppressed anxiety and agitation' not only 'in every line of his face', but still, after his face had relaxed: 'I saw one of his feet, softly, quietly,

incessantly beating on the carpet, and I felt that he was secretly as anxious as ever.⁴⁷ At this early stage, too, Marian uses her journal as a form of self-regulation, as an attempt to force herself to like Sir Percival despite her rising aversion towards and distrust of him: 'I cannot account for the state of my own feelings: the one thing I am certain of is, that it is my duty - doubly my duty, now - not to wrong Sir Percival by unjustly distrusting him', she writes. 'If it has got to be a habit with me always to write of him in an unfavourable manner, I must and will break myself of this unworthy tendency, even though the effort should force me to close the pages of my journal till the marriage is over.'⁴⁸ Self-regulation, therefore, means stopping writing; when she attempts to write favourably of Sir Percival, her comments grow increasingly sarcastic and strained, finally breaking out in the acknowledgement, 'I hate Sir Percival'.⁴⁹ This comes to be echoed and elaborated at Blackwater Park: 'It did me good, after all that I had suffered and suppressed in that house - it actually did me good to feel how angry I was.'⁵⁰

The move to Blackwater and the heightening of tension as the gap between narrative time and story time narrows is narrated through Marian's increasingly acute perception and analysis of empirical processes which is combined with a greater willingness to acknowledge the significance of unconscious states. Marian does not always trust her own perceptions, and she uses her distrust as a form of self-analysis, and here the friction between her impressions and her reflexive analysis of them in the journal is crucial. The journal shifts from being a passive receptacle of impressions and a means of self-regulation, and becomes a vehicle both of confession and analysis. On the one hand this means fixing and explaining meanings: 'Putting together what I had observed for myself in the library, and what I have just observed for myself from Laura's maid, one conclusion seems inevitable. The figure

we saw at the lake was not the figure of Madame Fosco, or of her husband or any of the servants.⁵¹ On the other hand though, it means charting her own unconscious mental processes. This emerges most clearly in the premonitory 'supernatural' somnambulant trance that Marian experiences, for which she claims neither divine authority which Anne does for her dream, nor totally dismisses it as delusion: 'My eyes closed of themselves; and I passed gradually into a strange condition, which was not waking - for I knew nothing of what was going on about me; and not sleeping - for I was conscious of my own repose. In this state my fevered mind broke loose from me, while my weary body was at rest; and, in a trance, or day dream of my fancy - I know not what to call it - I saw Walter Hartright.'⁵² And it is immediately after being woken from the trance by Laura's account of a meeting with Anne, that Anne's testimony begins to signify.

Marian's trance is presented as a kind of clairvoyance, as a reverie that blurs the boundaries of consciousness, and as a fantasy through which she transcends the limits of time and space. But she herself is caught in a double bind, since having an acute perception and becoming a 'sensitive subject' to the influences around her does not increase her power but makes her more susceptible to the manipulating influences of Fosco. Moral management, self-regulation, are the only available means of resisting this, since 'so much depends on my discretion and self-control'.⁵³ Marian resists Fosco's power by distrusting 'the influence which [he] has exercised over my thoughts and feelings', yet it is through this double process of acknowledgement and resistance that Fosco's force becomes the stronger, more flamboyant and pleasurable - he bounces up against Marian's frame and finally cracks it, as he is to do to Hartright's.⁵⁴ Distinct psychological codes are inflated and turned into means of manipulation in the figure of Fosco: moral management with his wife and Sir Percival, medical manipulation with Laura and Anne,

mesmerism with Marian. He becomes a magical figure, fat and nimble, old and young, through the sheer variety of codes on which he draws as well as simultaneously exploiting and revealing them. Marian notes: 'I think the influence I am now trying to find, is in his eyes. They are the most unfathomable grey eyes I ever saw; and they have at times a cold, clear, beautiful, irresistible glitter in them, which forces me to look at him and yet causes me sensations, when I do look, which I had rather not feel.'⁵⁵ And this is explicitly reinforced by the Count himself, who self-congratulatingly refers to his 'luminous experience of the more subtle resources which medical and magnetic science have placed at the disposal of mankind'.⁵⁶

Thus it is in the paradoxically 'carnavalesque' figure of the upper-class villain that the dominant codes both of the narrative and the social order are displayed and overturned. With his process of moral management, humans and animals become direct equivalents, breaking the very boundaries that moral management depends on. Sir Percival, the neurotic continually teetering on the brink of self-control, responds to the Count's stare 'with the sullen submission of a tamed animal', just as Fosco subdues the violent bloodhound with a withering look.⁵⁷ His domestication of the white mice, who crawl fondly over his body, is a parody and commentary on his management of his wife, the formerly flamboyant and undisciplined Eleanor Fairlie, who is ruled by the combination of fear and a flattery which feeds on what Marian has previously, in relation to Laura, described as 'that despicably-small pride which makes so many women deceitful'.⁵⁸ Indeed, Marian's observation of the transformation of her aunt Eleanor Fairlie into Madame Fosco, clothed in her stiff black gowns, is the inversion, the literal negative, of the therapeutic framework of moral management that is applied 'positively' to Anne, more ambiguously to Laura. She is represented as the

subdued, disciplined previously wayward female patient - the frozen model of propriety of the model asylum:

As Eleanor Fairlie (aged seven-and-thirty), she was always talking pretentious nonsense, and always worrying the unfortunate men with every small exaction which a vain and foolish woman can impose on long-suffering male humanity. As Madame Fosco (aged three-and-forty), she sits for hours together without saying a word, frozen up in the strangest manner in herself ... A plain, matronly cap covers her head, and makes her look, for the first time in her life, since I remember her, like a decent woman ... Clad in quiet black or grey gowns, made high about the throat - dresses that she would have laughed at, or screamed at, as the whim of the moment inclined her, in her maiden days - she sits speechless in corners; her dry white hands (so dry that the pores of her skin look chalky) incessantly engaged, either in monotonous embroidery-work, or in rolling up endless little cigarettes for the Count's own particular smoking. On the few occasions when her cold blue eyes are off her work, they are generally turned on her husband, with the look of mute submissive enquiry which we are all familiar with in the eyes of a faithful dog.⁵⁹

And on contemplating this transformation Marian arrives at an explicit analysis of the process of social and psychic suppression on which it rests:

For the common purposes of society the extraordinary change thus produced in her, is, beyond all doubt, a change for the better, seeing that it has transformed her into a civil, silent, unobtrusive woman who is never in the way. How far she is really reformed or deteriorated in her secret self, is another question. I have once or twice seen sudden changes of expression on her pinched lips, and heard sudden inflexions of tone in her calm voice, which have led me to suspect that her present state of suppression may have sealed up something dangerous in her nature, which used to evaporate harmlessly in the freedom of her former life. It is quite possible that I may be altogether wrong in this.⁶⁰

The transformed Eleanor Fairlie thus adds another link to the chain of women, the web of relationships between femininity and insanity, set up by the novel. As frivolous and ridiculous spinster before her marriage she is Marian's opposite - manifesting all the aspects of unrestrained femininity that Marian resolutely distances herself from; a version of Pritchard's definition of

female insanity as breaking the boundaries of propriety in her 'want of self-government, continual excitement, unusual expression of strong feelings, thoughtless and extravagant conduct' and an echo of Conolly's Eliza Nottridge too - confined to regulate unseemly exuberance.⁶¹ As Madame Fosco, who sees Marian as a rival for the Count's affections, she not only functions as the shadow of Laura and the negative of Anne, but by exaggerating compatible patterns of perception so that they laid bare as a mechanism of control, both inverts and exposes them.

Fosco's power is compounded by his perverse attractiveness, just as Marian acknowledges, 'The man has interested me, has attracted me, has forced me to like him'.⁶² And he is such a pleasurable, energetic figure precisely because of the range of ways that he works against the grain of conventions that Hartright's perspective above all depends on. Here there is a direct correspondence between the way the figure operates as a fictional construct that challenges various physiognomic assumptions and queries conventions through his contradictory and anomalous identity, and the way in which he 'pulls the strings' of the narrative itself while remaining a figure within it. 'I had begun to write my story when it struck me that my villain would be commonplace, and I made him fat in opposition to the recognised type of villain', Collins noted in a retrospective assessment of the novel.⁶³ Fosco resists being a 'recognised type' by the unexpected juxtapositioning of different elements, both within himself and in relation to others, and this at once reinforces and overturns his villainy. There is clearly a close relationship between his sexual power and his 'foreignness' for example, but here he eludes any stable stereotypical framework, partly by his opposition to Pesca, the other Italian. While the diminutive Pesca, as presented patronisingly by Hartright, is made ridiculous and childlike by his unsuccessful attempts to imitate English manners and customs and English

common sense and propriety, Fosco's power is derived precisely from his command of the language and the codes of 'English common sense' as well as his ability to manipulate, through relativising, 'English' morality: 'I have met, in my time, with so many different sorts of virtue, that I am puzzled, in my old age, to say which is the right sort and which is the wrong. Here, in England, there is one virtue. And there in China, there is another virtue.'⁶⁴

In this way Fosco 'lays bare the device' of dominant social, psychological and medical conventions even as he makes use of them to manipulate the narrative and conjure with Laura's identity. His diagnosis of Marian's typhus fever is more accurate than the local doctor's; even as he uses her physical breakdown as the final means of overpowering her. 'I say what other people only think, and when all the world is in a conspiracy to accept the mask for the true face, mine is the rash hand that tears away the plump pasteboard and reveals the bare bones beneath.'⁶⁵ Yet it is because of the 'conspiracy' of shared recognition that Fosco is able to substitute Laura for Anne; which in turn suggests that Laura's 'true face' is nothing but a constructed mask, laid over 'bare bones'. Hartright's early physiognomic reading of Laura's face - his idealist extrapolations - are here satirically undercut by Fosco's more cynical implied phrenology which lays bare the material base of the mind. It is a materialism that culminates in the physiological determinism of pharmacology, seen here by Fosco as a means of transformation and control, not as for Ezra Jennings in *The Moonstone*, as a means of psychological investigation, still less of inspiration:

Mind they say, rules the world. But what rules the mind? The body. The body ... lies at the mercy of the most powerful of all potentates - the Chemist. Give me - Fosco - chemistry; and when Shakespeare has conceived Hamlet, and sits down to execute the conception - with a few grains of powder dropped into his daily food, I will reduce his mind, by the action of his body, till his pen pours out the most abject drivel that ever degraded paper.⁶⁶

So in the First Part of the narrative Hartright, Marian and Fosco each draw out the contrasting implications of a shared discourse of moral management as an implicit perceptual framework of regulation and control. Hartright is set within it in a way that undermines his self-possession - he is manifested as an ineffectual moral agent, who can only see the future as an obscure and incomprehensible fatality, a transcendent authority which excludes him. Fosco makes this explicit, and in the process inverts the pattern of moral regulation so that indeterminacy is replaced completely by a determined narrative; the hidden tensions of the 'secret theatre' of the family stripped down to the workings of marionettes: 'What are we (I ask) but puppets in a show box? Oh omnipotent Destiny, pull our strings gently! Dance us mercifully off our miserable little stage!'⁶⁷ Fosco's villainy remains ideologically ambiguous by the very way that it is set up to exploit the ambiguity of psychological discourses themselves, to display how social and psychic power works, yet also to wield it by pushing the psychological codes to their grotesque conclusion.⁶⁸ But he also expresses what the narrative structure itself makes clear - that history is usually written by the winning side: 'If the police win, you generally hear all about it. If the police lose you generally hear nothing. And on this tottering foundation you build up your comfortable moral maxim that Crime causes its own detection. Yes - all the crime you know of. And, what of the rest?'⁶⁹ This double perspective is achieved by the ambiguous position of Fosco's final narrative - his letter of confession - both embedded within Hartright's specific narrative and a specific narrative in its own right, as I suggested earlier. In order to analyse this, and the process that underlies Hartright's ascendancy and his reconstruction of Laura, it is necessary to pick up the threads I left hanging above, and consider how Hartright's ability to determine the future by

reinterpreting the past is bound up with his control over memory and time, and the ideological and fictional contradictions that this engenders.

The control of time is vital in *The Woman in White*. Collins hastily amended his early error in timing, and the central sleight of hand that enables Fosco to substitute Laura for Anne lies in his 'stealing' a day. But the method by which it is controlled undergoes important modifications at different stages of the narrative. In the First Part, it's been seen that ominousness is created by uncertainty about the future, which generates present anxiety; derangement is synonymous with the inability to mark or control time, and this is achieved by the ways in which the two orders of time, progression and reconstruction, narrative time and story time interrelate. The control of time is crucial for Marian's self-control and opposition to Fosco. It becomes a subtle form of female resistance - the way that patience can be turned into resolution. Marian stresses: 'The question of time, is our question, and trust me, Laura, to take a woman's full advantage of it ...'.⁷⁰ Marian's use of her journal as a way of recording and verifying information is crucial, particularly in the way that it is bound up with her control over her own memory: 'It was almost as great a relief to my mind as to Laura's, to find that my memory had served me, on this occasion, as faithfully as usual. In the perilous uncertainty of our present situation, it is hard to say what future interests may not depend upon the regularity of the entries in my journal and upon the reliability of my recollection at the time make them.'⁷¹ Thus the tension of the narrative increases as she becomes increasingly obsessed by the control of time. Her breakdown through fever is marked by the gradual convergence of narrative time and story time, finally attained when her own writing peters out and Fosco takes the pen from her hands:

June 20th - Eight o'clock ... I count the hours that have passed since I escaped to the shelter of this room

by my own sensations - and those hours seem like weeks.

How short a time, and yet how long to me ... Yes, I heard the clock strike three ... I remember my resolution to control myself, I wait patiently for hour after hour ... Nine o'clock. Was it nine that struck, or eight?

My head, I am sadly afraid for my head. I can write, but the lines all run together. I see the words. Laura, I can write Laura and I see that I write it. Eight or nine, which was it.⁷²

Here too, the merging of the two registers of narrative order is marked by the presence of Fosco.

I trace these lines, self-distrustfully, with the shadows of after-events darkening the very paper I write on.⁷³ Hartright's early ambivalence towards his own testimony, his awareness that all recall involves retrojection, is explicitly overturned in the second half of the novel, where the drive of the narrative becomes increasingly to reach Hartright's and the story's resolution. But the impossible figure that it represents (where, exactly, can the narrating voice be located in this sentence?) is indicative of the narrative paradox that is the fulcrum of *The Woman in White*. The linked chain of evidence that makes up the First Part of the story can only be constructed by an authority that has been produced by it, and in the Second and Third Parts this is made clear in the way in which the two Hartright's, the General Editor and the specific narrator, merge. Closer scrutiny of this process reveals that as a chain, Hartright's method of presenting the evidence involves all kinds of omissions and distortions. Initially he starts out, keeping to the rules that he has set up as General Editor, dropping out of the story as he leaves Limmeridge and letting Gilmour take it up. But Gilmour's narrative later turns out to have been written over four years after the events took place. This process of reading is more significant in the case of Marian's journal. This seems to be the most authentic and immediate testimony, yet

paradoxically the device which enhances its authenticity - Hartright's note, which makes it clear that the reader is presented with a selection from Marian's absent, fuller journal - creates the illusion that more has been written just beyond the line of vision, in the breaks that interspace the testimony.

By the beginning of the Second Part, with its merging of the two narrative roles, Hartright's increased management of himself, his growing control over the progress of the story and his gradual reconstruction of Laura is more immediately bound up with the appropriation of absent testimonials. 'No circumstance of importance, from the beginning to the end of this disclosure, shall be related on hearsay evidence.' The statement in the Preamble is tacitly reversed here. The crucial section of the story - Hartright's analysis of Laura's experience leading to her confinement in the asylum, and his construction of the chain of circumstantial evidence that leads to his discovery of the absent names in the marriage register that testify to Sir Percival's illegitimacy ('That space told the whole story') and to the true identity of Anne, is dependent on his own interpretation of testimonials that cannot be presented directly to the reader.⁷⁴ Indeed, in opposing 'the eye of reason and of law' and 'every received formality of civilised society'; and in perpetuating a false deception in order to unmask the true one by appearing 'in the estimation of others [as] at once the dupes and the agents of a daring imposture', Hartright becomes the reader's moral manager, and upturns both narrative construct and psychological framework.⁷⁵ And this in turn also involves the suppression of memory in order for Hartright to emerge as a resolution agent. The Second Part opens:

I open a new page, I advance my narrative by one week.

The history of the interval which I thus pass over must remain unrecorded. My heart turns faint, my mind sinks in darkness and confusion when I think of it. This

must not be, if I, who write, and to guide, as I ought, you who read. This must not be if the clue that leads through the windings of the Story is to remain, from end to end, untangled in my hand.⁷⁶

Thus the clue, or thread, which leads through the labyrinth of the story itself can only be woven by the deliberate forgetting of part of Hartright's own narrative of 'how he came to be there ... poring over it'. And he can only transform the ravelled skein of the story into a coherent web, by assimilating the separate memories of the witnesses, and turning them into a chain of associations which regulate it, as he switches from directly presenting the separate narratives as evidence to the reader, to analysing the different testimonials, the accounts of Marian, Mrs Clements, Mrs Catherick, Laura, and pieces together Anne's confused associations. 'I shall relate both narratives, not in the words (often interrupted, often inevitably confused) of the speakers themselves', he notes of Marian and Laura's remembrance of the confinement, 'but in the words of the brief, plain, studiously-simple abstract which I committed to writing for my guidance of my legal advisor. So the tangled web will be most speedily and most intelligibly unrolled.'⁷⁷ In the case of Mrs Clements this involves replacing open testimony with interrogation:

Knowing by experience that the plainest narrative attainable from persons who are not accustomed to arrange their ideas is the narrative which goes far enough back at the beginning to avoid all impediments of retrospection in its course, I asked Mrs Clements to tell me, first, what had happened after she left Limeridge; and so, by watchful questioning, carried her on from point to point till we recalled the period of Anne's disappearance.⁷⁸

This in turn leads to the decoding of Anne's knowledge of Sir Percival's secret, the realisation that the secret contained another, but that Anne's threateningness was itself unconscious - that she knew a secret existed without knowing what it contained. Thus the truth is built up by cross-currents of delusion. Sir Percival confines Anne because he believes the

delusion which is 'perfectly in character with [her] mental affliction', which in turn 'afterwards fixed in his mind the equally false suspicion that his wife knew all from Anne'.⁷⁹

Hartright discloses that Laura has been confined for another's fear of a knowledge she never possessed as well as for her property. But the process by which her identity is restored can never take the form of the complete exploration of her memory, since this itself would upset the moral treatment of her cure, through which distressing associations are laid to rest. 'The fair companion of your retreat shall not be pursued. She has found a new asylum, in your heart', Fosco writes to Marian.⁸⁰ It is in the anonymous safe place of the London streets that the sinister connotations of the asylum now became transformed back into friendly ones, as Laura's cure takes the form, in the first place, of the imaginary reconstruction of the past at Limmeridge that could almost be based on combining Conolly's *The Treatment of the Insane Without Mechanical Restraints* with Samuel Tuke's *A Description of the Retreat - 'nursing the faculties' by recreating the 'first home'*, that Hartright had earlier found so enervating:

The only events of former days which we ventured on encouraging her to recal, were the little trivial domestic events of that happy time at Limmeridge when I first went there, and taught her to draw. Tenderly and gradually, the memory of the old walks and drives dawned upon her; and the poor weary pining eyes, looked at Marian and me with a new interest, with a faltering thoughtfulness in them, which, from that moment, we cherished, and kept alive. I bought her a little box of colours, and a sketch-book like the old sketch-book which I had seen in her hands on the morning when we first met ...

We helped her mind slowly by this simple means; we took her out between us to walk, on fine days, in a quiet old City square, near at hand, where there was nothing to confuse or alarm her; we spared a few pounds from the fund at the bankers to get her wine, and the delicate strengthening food that she required; we amused her in the evenings with children's games at cards, with scrapbooks full of prints ... by these, and other trifling attentions like them, we composed

and steadied her, and hoped all things, as cheerfully as we could, from time and care, and love that never neglected and never despaired of her. But to take her mercilessly from seclusion and repose; to confront her with strangers; or with acquaintances who were little better than strangers; to rouse the painful impressions of her past life which we had so carefully hushed to rest - this, even in her own interests, we dared not do. Whatever sacrifices it cost, whatever long, weary, heart-breaking delays it involved, the wrong that had been inflicted on her, if mortal means could grapple with it, must be redressed without her knowledge and without her help.⁸¹

Laura can only finally have her social identity restored and regain her property by the recognition of the family and the law which takes place by Hartright struggling on her behalf, in control of himself and finally in control of the story. But just as Hartright's own resolution springs from social obliteration and displacement with Marian as 'help meet', so Laura's reconstitution also depends on her class transformation: 'We are numbered no longer with the people whose lives are open and known. I am an obscure, unnoticed man, without patron or friend to help me. Marian Halcombe is nothing now, but my elder sister, who toils for our household wants by the toll of her own hands.'⁸² Laura's growing self-possession is marked by her realisation that she is economically and sexually powerless and treated like a child. 'You work and get money, Walter ... why is there nothing I can do? You will end up in liking Marian better than you like me', and this is marked by Hartright's 'innocent deception' whereby he pays her phantom wages for her drawings.⁸³ So just as Anne learnt, as a child, to be a proper lady at Limmeridge House, so it is only through poverty and imaginary work that Laura can refill her place as member of the landed gentry as Hartright's property; a proper 'self-made' woman who has really been made by others in the theatre of a simulated family. *The Woman in White* is Collins's most complex and skillful example of the way in which precise psychological methods and allusions can be appropriated to produce a compulsively readable

narrative. And it is by keeping within the limits of moral management, bending this to incorporate more subversive psychological methods, that the novel offers the most elaborate exploration of the contradictions of moral management itself. It is these contradictions that form the basis for the initial suspense, and they are never fully resolved by providing the means of narrative resolution; for masculine resolution is itself revealed to be founded on its counterpart - enforced patience, propriety and petticoats.

CHAPTER FOUR

SKINS TO JUMP INTO:

PEMININITY AS MASQUERADE IN NO NAME

It might be worthwhile, sometimes, to inquire what Nature is, and how men work to change her, and whether, in the enforced distortions so produced, it is not natural to be unnatural.

Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son*¹

Nothing in this world is hidden for ever. The gold which has lain for centuries unsuspected in the ground, reveals itself one day on the surface. Sand turns traitor, and betrays the footsteps that have passed over it; water gives back to the tall-tale surface the body which has been drowned...Look where we will, the inevitable law of revelation is one of the laws of nature: the lasting presentation of a secret is a miracle that the world has not yet seen.

No Name²

If you're all rakes, Miss Garth, the sexes are turned topsy-turvy with a vengeance; and the men will have nothing left for it, but to sit at home and darn the stockings.

No Name³

It will be seen that the narrative related in these pages has been constructed on a plan, which differs from the plan followed by my last novel, Collins emphasised in the Preface to *No Name*. The only secret contained in this book is revealed halfway through the first volume. From that point, all the main events in the story are purposefully foreshadowed, before they take place - my present design being to rouse the reader's interest in following the train of circumstances by which these foreseen events are brought about.⁴ The narrative of *No Name* takes the form of an obsessive pursuit of a lost social self - a transgressive quest that culminates in a breakdown that leads finally to the restitution of identity and a legitimate social role. The secret

revealed half way through the first volume is the disclosure of illegitimate origins. But while in *The Woman in White* this was the final exposure and explanation of the villain's pathological behaviour - and of the meaning of the shadowy Anne - here it is the initial absence, a revelation that creates the precondition for a new kind of mystery, as the reader is drawn into contemplating the relationship between the outcome and the precipitating causes of events, and psychological responses. The strategy works precisely because of the uncertainty of the 'how' rather than the 'what' of the story, and by the tension that is generated between the means by which events are 'purposefully foreshadowed' and the processes through which they remain indeterminate in order to retain suspense. In *The Woman in White* a cloud of ominous 'foreshadowing' hung over the multiple narrative voices. In *No Name* a range of rhetorics play with and parody the resources of the omniscient narrative voice in a way that both reinforces and relativises it. It is a perverse story as well as a story of perversity.

No Name opens with a leisurely account of middle-class domestic life, a secure, taken for granted world which is made to seem the more nostalgically safe and natural by a naturalistic narrative voice that shifts between surveying the family with benign tolerance and making premonitory interjections, hinting at unsolved mysteries and imminent loss. The sudden death of both parents reveals that the Vanstone sisters, Magdalen and Norah, are both illegitimate and disinherited from the family estate, which reverts to their uncle, their father's old enemy, and on his death, to their sickly cousin Noel. The story traces how the sister's contrasted 'natures' respond to suddenly being projected into a hostile environment: Norah by patiently submitting to her fate and becoming a governess, Magdalen by more perversely casting herself out onto the world to speculate on the open market. She moves from one disguised identity to another and with the help

of her surrogate uncle, the confidence trickster Captain Wragge, succeeds in alluring and marrying her cousin under an assumed name, a performance that fails with his untimely death. This leads to more disguise, increasing self-alienation expressed as growing hysteria which finally culminates in nervous collapse. Norah, meanwhile, qua governess, marries the new heir (another cousin) and regains possession of name and inheritance, so that the story is finally resolved by the very 'legitimate' means which were the sources of its tension at the beginning.⁵

No Name is explicitly set up as a sympathetic moral tale and psychological case history; the heroine's name recalls 'in its first association, mournful ideas of penitence and seclusion'.⁶ This is initially made clear in the Preface and is compounded by an omniscient 'moral' narrative voice:

Here is one more book that depicts the struggle of a human creature, under those opposing influences of Good and Evil which we have all felt ... It has been my aim to make the character of 'Magdalen', which personifies this struggle a pathetic character even in its perversity and its error; and I have tried hard to retain this result by the least obtrusive and least artificial of all means - a resolute adherence, throughout, to the truth as it is in Nature.⁷

As in *Ball*, exile from the family and loss of name exposes the forms of power through which identity is built up within it, but here the focus of a rhetoric made up of an ambivalently combined moral management and a discourse of inheritance has shifted. For *No Name* takes apart social codes that make up femininity by starting from the 'domestic' end of the spectrum of conventions found in the sensation novel. And this quickly turns into a more complex satirical and often comic exploration of the relationship between progress and decadence, of what constitutes fitness and what is meant by survival. The novel invokes an ambiguous rhetoric of natural selection and evolution, in which the natural itself is shown to be socially shaped, reinforcing class and gender boundaries, yet at the same time providing the terms that makes it. →

possible to question them. In this way 'truth to Nature' is a continually shifting term in *No Name*, and is used for different purposes in contexts that implied various sets of oppositions. It implies inexorable processes, 'laws' that are beyond human intervention, yet the boundary between the natural and the social is impossible to pin down. The sisters turn out to be illegitimate, 'natural' children, but there is no 'natural' state or order to which they can return. It implies an essential self, the individual, yet the terms through which that individual 'nature' is built up imply different often contradictory models of development.

Initially the tensions and pleasures of *No Name* depend on making the ideological concerns of *The Woman in White* more explicit. Paradoxically the very intrusiveness of the moral voice of the narrator opens up a space in which the conventions and presuppositions of moral management that were the sources of contradiction and coherence in the previous book can be pushed to their limits. Both novels hinge on probing the boundaries of the social self, and explore how a 'legitimate' identity is in many ways a trick of the light created by the manipulation of self-possession and propriety, underpinned by economic interests. 'Shall I tell you what a lady is?' Magdalen asks her maid whom she is training to be her substitute, so that she can pose as a servant. 'A lady is a woman who wears a silk gown, and has a sense of her own importance.'⁸ Both novels explore the position of women stripped of property and inheritance, but while in *The Woman in White* the literal extension and analogue of this position was found in the non-restraint asylum, Magdalen and Norah Vanstone have inheritance and identity stolen, not through a dubious conspiracy but by the legitimate workings of the law. Structurally, Magdalen's plot to reclaim her name puts her in a position corresponding to that of Percival Glyde, but the patterns of sympathy and identification are reversed, not least because she comes from a position of

powerlessness. The sisters' literal illegitimacy is now the dramatic analogue of their economic powerlessness as women as well as an anomaly in itself. Magdalen's assertion that 'any conspiracy, any deception, is justified by my conscience by the vile law which has left us helpless' might be explicitly questioned by the narrator, but not the fact that that law is vile.⁹

The use of these different devices as fulcrums for the transformation of identity also amends the way in which *No Name*, like *The Woman in White*, undercuts any stable division between 'same' and 'other', wildness and domesticity, putting moral management as the means of that subversion to distinctive kinds of use. In both, apparently aberrant or perverse forces are threatening because they display the workings of the social conventions that create them by setting up boundaries founded on their exclusion, and at the same time, too, both depend on reinforcing these boundaries by the contrast between passive and resolute women. Anne Catherick, the illegitimate outcast of unsound mind, echoed passive domesticity rather than unassimilable wildness, just as her asylum was modelled on 'home'; Laura's powerlessness was compounded therefore by moving 'inwards' into an exclusion that was an extreme version of that from which it was excluded, a contrast reinforced by Marian, whose strength resided in her marginality. In *No Name* both sisters are cast out of the middle class family into a competitive and indifferent world, but their struggle for survival both brings them back into it and in different ways reveals its concealed underside. At first there seems to be a clear contrast between the passive Norah, who takes on the protective colouring of a governess, and Magdalen, who is described as 'resolute and impetuous, clever and domineering ... not one of those model women who want a man to look up to, and to protect them'.¹⁰ But this is broken down in an ambivalent way that on the one hand reinforces the 'moral fable' aspect of the story, emphasising Norah's patient moral force, but on

the other explicitly displaying the very propriety from which the sisters are exiled to be a masquerade.

For in moving 'out' the heroine is again, in effect, moving 'inwards', and this is manifested in the way that the theatre rather than the asylum becomes the crucible for the construction, as much as the transformation, of the self. Magdalen transgresses not because the roles she plays are in themselves unseemly, but because they are obviously a series of seemings shamelessly pursued to advance her own ends and her own autonomy, behaviour explained by Norah as her being 'not sufficiently mistress of herself to exert her natural judgment'.¹¹ Her aim in escaping from her sister and governess initially is to become an actress, but her first public performance is a dramatic presentation of 'A Young Lady at Home', an entertainment based on the public display of domestic femininity. But Magdalen developed her dramatic skills in the prelapsarian days of the family by her 'cool appropriation of Norah's identity to theatrical purposes', in an amateur performance of *The Rivals*.¹² She disguises herself as Miss Garth, her governess, to gain entrance to Noel Vanstone's household, but her most daring imposture, in collaboration with Wragge, is to assume the ready-made identity of one of his many 'Skins to Jump into', to lure Noel Vanstone into marriage by acting the role of innocent middle-class girl.¹³ 'You may depend on my never making the general Sense of Propriety my enemy again: I am getting knowledge enough of the world, to make it my accomplice this time ... My life as a public performer is at an end. It was innocent enough God knows ...', Magdalen writes to her governess.¹⁴ Later, she asks herself, 'thousands of women marry for money, why shouldn't I?'¹⁵ And again, having married Noel Vanstone, she writes to the governess:

I don't wish to tell you I was the reformed and repenting creature whom you might have approved ... I am no longer the poor outcast girl, the vagabond public performer ... I have made the general sense of

propriety my accomplice ... Do you know who I am? I am a respectable married woman, accountable for my actions to nobody under heaven but my husband. I have got a place in the world, and a name in the world at last ... You forget what wonders my wickedness has done for me. It has made Nobody's Child, Somebody's Wife.¹⁶

Thus Magdalen's transgression is transformed into adaptation. And though this might involve moral regression the 'skin' into which she 'jumps' has been formed by 'the general sense of propriety', and has already been shaped by social use.

Thus, in amplifying earlier concerns and conventions, *No Name* merges its own ambiguous rhetoric of moral management with an equally contradictory discourse of organic development and evolution. As Collins pointed out in the Preface ('here is one more book ...') the novel sets up its characters as types to personify moral struggles, but the 'least artificial' means that he attempts to employ - 'a resolute adherence, throughout, to the truth as it is in Nature' - demonstrates that there is no single truth of Nature or of the self to be revealed. 'What is this mask of yours hiding?', Francis Clare, the cynical philosopher, asks Magdalen, and the novel, in playing with the notion of identity as masquerade, also frustrates the physiognomic expectation that the mask reveals a truth.¹⁷ *No Name* also typifies a well worn narrative contradiction that is highlighted by the sensation novel: that excitement, and therefore the survival of the story itself, is generated by multiplicity and perversity, but that this needs to be continually realigned with a linear narrative of moral growth and improvement. Norah is continually referred to as the touchstone of worthiness by the narrator, but her struggles and dilemmas are never made interesting. She hovers, boringly, on the periphery of the story, to be wheeled on at the conclusion, along with the more improbable deus ex machina figure, the masculine paragon of colonial fitness, Robert Kirke upon whom Magdalen finally depends. But the

narrative rhetoric which poses these contradictions and which shapes the terms that shape the figures in the story does so by juxtaposing contrasting notions of what survival and what fitness means, and through the dissonance of these notions, questions the 'natural' of natural selection by employing an ambiguous language of nature itself. The dominant narrative voice enacts a concept of development that corresponds to Lamarck's model of willed transformation, setting itself against the perverse resolution of the heroine. But this is qualified by other figures in the novel who focus these identities in other contexts, and also by elements within the narrative voice itself, which needs to resort to exploring hidden associations and to chance, in order to reach its premonitored conclusion.¹⁷

Magdalen is the central figure of *No Name*, the problematic heroine on whose quest and metamorphosis the story depends; but she also makes sense through her anomalous position in the family, and the novel, in exposing the illusionary social coherence of the family, also investigates its organic identity. There is a shift in the significance of inheritance, from Baill and *The Woman in White*; genealogy here is no longer completely transmuted into social and psychic transmission - the withdrawal of the family as a social mould is both the withdrawal of 'environment' itself, leaving the sisters in a liminal state, and a disruption of the 'natural order' as they are catapulted into a hostile social environment. Vestiges of family roles are perpetuated in *No Name*, however, in the shape of various honorary elder relatives who have particular ideological as well as narrative functions: Miss Garth the governess; Francis Clare senior, Magdalen's unworthy lover's father; Wragge who claims the role of honorary uncle; Mme Lecount, Noel's housekeeper and manipulative substitute mother.

Miss Garth, the governess, with her 'air of habitual authority', is not simply a substitute for the absent parents but takes their place as the focus

of 'friendly authority' even before their death. 'She treats Mr Vanstone as if he was a kind of younger brother of hers', she remarks of Magdalen's relationship with her father.¹⁹ The psychological questions that are explicitly set up as the sisters respond to their calamity are focussed through the indirectly reported thoughts of the governess who has 'studied the natures of her two pupils in the daily intimacy of twelve years', thoughts which have a correspondingly copy-book quality about them, and could be taken as extracts from a popular treatise on the incubation of inherited latent traits, revealing at the same time their allegorical moral quality.²⁰

Does there exist in every human being, beneath that outward and visible character which is shaped into form by the social influences surrounding us, an inward, invisible disposition, which is part of ourselves; which education may directly modify, but can never hope to change? Is the philosophy which denies this, and asserts that we are born with dispositions like blank sheets of paper, a philosophy which has failed to remark that we are not born with blank faces - a philosophy which has never compared together two infants of a few days old and has never observed that those infants are not born with blank tempers for mothers and nurses to fill up at will? Are there, infinitely varying with each individual, inbred forces of Good and Evil in all of us, deep down beneath the reach of mortal encouragement and moral repression - hidden Good and hidden Evil, both alike at the mercy of the liberating opportunity and the sufficient temptation? Within these earthly limits is earthly circumstance ever the key; and can no human vigilance warn us before hand of those forces imprisoned in ourselves which that key may unlock?²¹

The governess, like Norah, operates as the tacit and marginal voice of common sense in the novel, but her perspective - moral management modified by predetermined inheritance - is qualified in the first place by Francis Clare, honorary absent father and alternative voice from the prelapsarian world. The member of the 'younger branch of a family of great antiquity' whose 'views of human nature were the views of Diogenes, tempered by Rochefoucault', and who is set up as a personification of 'eighteenth-century' scepticism (his favourite poets were Horace and Pope;

his chosen philosophers Hobbes and Voltaire'),²² Clare's analysis of the likely future of his vapid son is also set up as an explicit hypothesis. His voice becomes an alternative peripheral form of 'traditional good sense', a modified Hobbes as Miss Garth's is a modified Locke, and in his view established privilege favours the incompetent, as against 'native' witi

I have always maintained that the one important phenomenon presented by modern society is - the enormous prosperity of Fools. Show me an individual fool, and I will show you an aggregate society which gives that highly favoured personage nine chances out of ten - and grudges the tenth to the wisest man in existence. Look where you will, in every high place there sits an Ass, settled beyond the reach of all the greatest intellects in this world to pull him down. Over our whole social system, complacent Imbecility rules supreme, snuffs out the searching light of Intelligence, with total impunity - and hoots, owl-like, in answer to every form of protest, See how well we all do in the dark! One of these days that audacious assertion will be practically contradicted; and the whole rotten system of modern society will come down with a crash.²³

These contrasted established positions, typified by archetypal figures as representing alternative discourses of development, each pessimistic, each emphasising a 'truth of nature' to be modified by circumstance either as unlocking hidden dispositions or as selecting them, are set up as ideologically dissonant hypotheses that foreshadow the unfolding of the central drive of the narrative. But another process is also taking place here in which the narrative itself questions its own teleological implications, elaborating Spencer's use of von Baer's principle that development takes the form of 'the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations' suggesting different hypotheses of development as the story shifts its conceptual emphasis and mores beyond its early presuppositions.²⁴ The narrative progress of No Name goes through three stages. The first sets up the socially constructed natural order, the domestic catastrophe and the hypothetical speculations on possible outcomes. The second is the 'Wragge' dominated part

of the story which hinges on trickery, manipulation and disguise, and is the stage in which identities become provisional and attenuated. The third stage follows Magdalen's decline, breakdown and final penitential re-assimilation; here the third person narrative literally comes to occupy her consciousness. Each stage both develops out of the previous one and overturns its presuppositions. Within this overall process, each expresses different degrees of cognitive ambivalence about how to interpret the significance of physical signs of identity - linking them to a conception of male and female 'proper natures' manifested as adjustment or otherwise to roles that are, as I have already argued, in the process of being revealed as masquerades. Thus 'the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations' is itself an ambiguous process - it can take the form either of conformity or perversity.

In the first stage Magdalen is set in the context not only of established 'development hypotheses', but in a network of family characteristics that suggest that continuous lines of transmission lead to morbidity, weakness, degeneration in a way that suggests that the meaning of physiological features can only make sense in the light of the established cultural references of masculinity and femininity. This method of perception qualifies the dichotomy that was central to Hartright's method of perception and interpretation in *The Woman in White*, and is built up in the contrasted figures of Norah, Frank Clare and Noel Vanstone; figures in which directly contrasted physical signifiers carry different social and moral referents. Norah and Frank each apparently manifest the same process of wearing out through genealogical transmission. Norah:

Inheriting the dark majestic quality of her mother's beauty, she had yet hardly inherited all of its charms. Though the shape of her face was the same the features were scarcely so delicate, their proportion was scarcely so true. She was not so tall. She had the dark-brown eyes of her mother ... and yet there was less interest, less refinement and depth of feeling in her expression: it was gentle and feminine, but

clouded by a certain quiet reserve, from which her mother's face was free. If we look closely enough, may we not observe, that the moral force of character and the higher intellectual capacities in parents seem often to wear out mysteriously in the course of transmission to children? In these days of insidious nervous exhaustion and subtly-spreading nervous malady, is not possible that the same rule may apply, less rarely than we are willing to admit, to the bodily gifts as well?²⁵

This passage moves rapidly through a range of speculations about Norah's incipient 'nervous exhaustion' and possible moral weakness and sets up an image of vulnerability that is to be explicitly refuted by the very unsettled status of the narrative gaze itself. At first she seems to be a cruder version of her mother; transmission here breeds 'less refinement and depth of feeling', but not less femininity. But the location of this bluntness or vagueness suddenly shifts from the structure of the features to their expression, signalled by its blankness, its quiet reserve. The narrator then stands back, making the general speculative statement that Norah's actual development is to overturn, as adverse circumstances become the key that unlock the forces of hidden strength; but this means that her extreme reserve and self control - the symptom here of her degeneration - have to become the primary sources of her resolution. This inverts the pattern of references that made sense of Laura's passivity and Marian's resolution in *The Woman in White*, for here resolution can only be expressed as patience, a passivity that is also in itself morbid.

Frank Clare's organisational weakness on the other hand is expressed in a way that develops Frederick Fairlie's disturbing androgyny in *The Woman in White* into femininity:

The small regular features, which he was supposed to have inherited from his mother, were rounded and filled out, without having lost their remarkable delicacy of form ... His gentle wandering brown eyes would have looked to better advantage in a woman's face - they wanted spirit and firmness to fit them for

the face of a man ... He was undeniably handsome, graceful, well bred - but no close observer could look at him without suspecting that the stout old family stock had begun to wear out in the later generations, and that Mr Francis Clare had more in him of the shadow of his ancestors than of the substance.²⁶

This is pushed even further in the figure of Noel Vanstone: 'His complexion was as delicate as a young girl's, his eyes were of the lightest blue, his upper lip was adorned by a weak little white moustache, waxed and twisted at either end into a thin spiral curl. When any object specially attracted his attention, he half closed his eye-lids to look at it. When he smiled, the skin at the temples curled up into a nest of wicked little wrinkles.'²⁷ Here decadent sensibility withers into atrophy - 'feminine' is the initial association, replaced by 'wizen', finally compounding his 'reptile temperament'.²⁸

These figures all depend on a set of references which link organic and moral decline by compounding a connection between femininity and 'subtly spreading nervous malady'. But the figure of Noel also realigns this network of associations, since his nervous debility and intellectual decline stems from an atrophied circulation that is presented by conflating organic and directly economic processes: 'He had inherited his father's love of money, without inheriting his father's capacity for seeing the uses to which money can be put. His one idea in connection with his wealth, was the idea of keeping it.'²⁹ And Noel himself is first introduced in his father's house in Lambeth, at the centre of what is presented by a suddenly detached and polemical narrator, to be the inevitable concomitant of modern progress - urban degeneration; the 'street-labyrinth of a remote London', of which the inhabitants are both products and victims:

In this district, as in other districts remote from the wealthy quarters of the metropolis, the hideous London vagabond lounges, lowering and brutal ... the public disgrace of his country, the unheeded warning of social troubles that are yet to come. Here, the loud self-assertion of Modern Progress - which has reformed so much in manners, and altered so little in

men - meets the flat contradiction that scatters its pretensions to the winds. Here, while the national prosperity feasts, like another Belschazzar, on the spectacle of its own magnificence, as the Writing on the Wall which warns the monarch, Money, that his glory is weighed in the balance, and his power found wanting.³⁰

Thus the nervous weakness of the hypochondriacal bachelor and the late-nineteenth century threat of a degenerate casual poor meet in the figure of Noel, and become the double product of his father's commercial enterprise, and his waning patriarchal line.

Magdalen is set within this matrix of family resemblances as a 'wild type', the healthy strain in the family, who can only be defined by difference, the absence of any fixed characteristics, transparency. The first presentation of her implies what turns out to be true, though in an unexpected way - that she is a bastard. But it is done by emphasising her flexibility and strength, so that initially anomalousness implies healthiness. So while Magdalen is introduced as a 'caprice of Nature' that seems to be scientifically inexplicable, she draws on a set of references that correspond most closely of all to the Darwinian model of natural selection that makes anomalousness itself the central element of development:

By one of those caprices of Nature, which science still leaves unexplained, the youngest of Mr Vanstone's children presented no recognisable resemblance to either of her parents. How had she come by her hair? How had she come by her eyes? ... It was here exactly that the promise of her face failed of performance in the most startling manner. The eyes, which should have been dark, were incomprehensibly and discordantly light: they were of that nearly colourless grey which, though little attractive in itself, possesses the rare compensating merit of interpreting the finest gradations of thought, the gentlest changes of feeling, the deepest trouble of passion, with a subtle transparency of expression which no darker eyes can rival. Thus quaintly self-contradictory in the upper part of her face, she was hardly less at variance with established ideas of harmony in the lower ... The whole countenance - so remarkable in its strongly-opposed characteristics - was rendered additionally striking by

its extraordinary mobility ... She bloomed in the full physical maturity of twenty years or more - bloomed naturally and irresistibly, in right of her matchless health and strength. Here, in truth, lay the mainspring of this strangely-constituted organisation. 31

Magdalen's 'fitness' therefore is manifested as a refusal to fit into any perceptual category, while her 'unexplainable' identity disrupts the cognitive perspective that makes sense of Norah. But it also suggests that there are no stable signs or clues that can manifest feminine strength and this is reinforced by the fact that the roles she plays are exaggerated versions of established feminine ones. This paradox takes on a new set of connotations in the second stage of the story where Magdalen, in collaboration with Wragge, adapts herself to an assumed role in plotting to marry Noel - an act of individual survival that threatens to compound the family's degeneration.

Wragge's anomalous and perverse attraction lies more openly in the way that he manipulates and exposes dominant social, psychological and narrative codes. He reproduces Collins's recurrent technique of subverting the dominant discourse of the narrative by replicating it in an unexpectedly familiar form rather than in a directly grotesque or uncanny way - but in another key. Like Fosco, his pleasurable-ness lies in his total shamelessness, but here it is as a 'rogue' or trickster, a figure that has different kinds of class connotations from 'villain', and which replicates and overturns a moral management now pressed into the service of self-made competitive individualism rather than the 'fortified Success' of the Count's counter-republicanism. While it is structurally necessary that Frank Clare should fail to fulfill his father's expectations by not surviving - he drifted away into the misty commercial future - as aimless, as helpless, as gentlemanlike as ever' - so Wragge's pastiche of free enterprise as imposture masquerading as respectability depends on his particular status as a bastardised form, a trickster who is composed from a montage of overlapping rhetorics, pushing

their terminology to a ridiculous conclusion while also managing finally to flourish in defiance of the conditions he exploits.³² He appears for the second time as victim of a more widespread economic catastrophe, the overreaching of the commercial speculation of 1846 described as collective insanity: 'The railway mania of that famous year had attacked even the wary Wragge; had withdrawn him from his customary pursuits; and had left him prostrate at the end, like many a better man', the same catastrophe from which Michael Vanstone profited. But this reinforces the sense of his capacity for survival while turning respectable poverty into a caricature of respectability: 'From top to toe every square inch of the captain's clothing was altered for the worse; but the man himself remained unchanged - superior to all forms of moral mildew, impervious to the action of social rust.'³³

Wragge's own rhetoric deflates horticultural metaphors of individual self-culture by inflating them to their absurd conclusion, so that he becomes a pastiche of a moral management that bolsters competitive individualism. He describes himself as 'a moral agriculturalist; a man who cultivates the field of human sympathy ... Consult my brother agriculturalists in the horticultural line - do they get their crops for the asking? No! they must circumvent arid Nature, exactly as I circumvent sordid man. They must plough, and sow, and top dress, and bottom dress, and deep drain, and surface drain and all the rest of it. Why am I to be checked in the vast operation of deep draining mankind?'³⁴ His wife is a parodied patient of a non-restraint asylum, a grotesque image of wifely propriety, whose 'personal appearance' he fails to 'mould' into 'harmony with the eternal laws of symmetry and order' although she desperately attempts to enact a domestic tableau.³⁵ Wragge's speculation eventually leads to commercial success, based on his widespread use of advertising and his shift 'from moral agriculture to medical agriculture. Formerly I preyed on the public sympathy, now I prey on the

public stomach ... Don't think me mercenary - I merely understand the age I live in.³⁶ And it is balanced by the intrigues of his antagonist and counterpart, Mrs Lecount. Like Count Fosco, Mrs Lecount wields a magnetic power through her simultaneous foreignness and familiarity. This too combines ability to turn moral management into medical control, but it is a power that is now brought about more decisively by her feminine manipulation of her own appearance, which was 'little less than a triumph of physical resistance to the deteriorating influence of time', and an artificial counteraction to degeneration.³⁷ Mrs Lecount's favourite pet, moreover, is not a white mouse, an echo of Laura, but a more atavistic equivalent of Noel - a toad.

The central section of *No Name*, the battle of plot and counterplot between Magdalen assisted by Wragge and Lecount as they 'vie with each other in politeness and propriety', is the main focus of tension in the novel - the *Saturday Review* went so far as to claim that 'the whole point of the story, the one source of interest it possesses, is the contest between these two wicked, deceitful, obstinate women'.³⁸ It works as this focus of tension precisely because it enacts a view of the world in which 'seeming' is multiple and flexible and seamliness is masquerade. But the novel also has to negotiate the consequences of Magdalen's power and resolution. The means by which she is brought to book in the final stage of the story both enacts the already established premonition of her fall and reverses the implications of the codes by which her early healthy self was built up by transmuting them into the symptoms of hysteria, corresponding to a medical perception that defines female resolution and 'nerve' itself as morbid, and turning resolution itself into the 'hysterical passion swelling at her heart'.³⁹ This connection between resolution and hysteria, however, means that she can remain pathetic as well as perverse by linking moral decline and monomania rather

than moral insanity as the quest becomes obsessive: 'Time ... had made her purpose part of herself: once she governed it, now it governed her'.⁴⁰ And this in turn makes nervous collapse both the product of her fall and the precondition of her reconstitution by being the source and cause of intellectual disintegration: 'Her whole nervous system has given way: all the ordinary functions of her brain are in a state of collapse', the doctor notes of her breakdown.⁴¹

The narrative voice, moreover, also negotiates its own ambivalence towards Magdalen, shifting between identification and distance by shifting between different registers itself. It directly decodes manifest physical signs. It presents indirectly reported internal monologue. It reports Magdalen's own voice, in the form of letters or directly reported speech, then slides into explicit interjection: the narrator stresses, 'let this be said of her; let the truth which has been told of the fault be told of the expiation as well. Let it be recorded of her that she enjoyed no secret triumph on the day of her success',⁴² on the eve of her marriage to Noel Vanstone. Her decline, too, is marked in the third stage of the story by an increasingly split narrative voice as she becomes increasingly socially isolated on the one hand, the narrator 'homes in' on her consciousness, becoming an 'inner voice' on the other: 'Faintly and more faintly the inner voices now pleaded with her to pause on the downward way ... But one refuge now. She turned to the relentless Purpose which was now hurrying her on to her ruin and cried to it with the daring of despair - Drive me on!'⁴³ And as she 'declines' her image becomes less plastic and translucent; her features freeze or settle into one meaning as her plots become more monomaniacal: 'There was a settled composure on her face which ... made it look still and cold as marble ...'.⁴⁴

Or just before her marriage: 'In one mysterious instant, all her beauty left her; her face stiffened awfully, like the face of a corpse.'⁴⁵

In *The Woman in White* Collins developed a narrative structure that enabled him to draw on a set of psychological methods, references and allusions, use them as sources of tension and then to turn them round into the method of fictional and ideological resolution. *No Name* does not have this kind of structural complexity, yet in spite of the obtrusiveness of the narrative voice, it, too, continually qualifies the sources of its own apparent coherence. One way this tacitly works is in the ambiguous relationship between degeneration and gender that I have traced - the means whereby the same codes that signify survival and decline work in different ways for men and women. The novel displays this double movement as the masquerading of social identity by relying on a 'truth to nature' that resists the idea of an essential self. This equivocation also operates on a more structural level. Unlike *Basil*, *No Name* is not a novel that explores the subjective experience of 'associations and sympathies'; even Magdalen's breakdown occurs off-stage, and the tensions that lead to it take the form of the voice of conscience ignored by a pathological resolution. *No Name* is the most apparently purposeful of Collins's 1860s novels; it is concerned with creating detached curiosity as much as suspense; it does not exploit cognitive ambiguity or anxiety to the extent that the earlier novels that I have examined do, and its 'underside' is comic rather than uncanny. Unconscious, secret processes are described as manifesting themselves automatically, through the workings of an 'inevitable law of revelation', a return of the repressed that is one of the laws of nature.

But while this explicitly reinforces the dominant preformative structure of the story, the narrative itself both demonstrates that the laws and languages of nature can operate in contradictory ways and draws on a more

ambiguous process of 'revelation' in order to focus its sources of tension and keep the story moving forward, while postponing its end. The third person narrative is broken up by letters - the 'Progress of the Story through the Post' and by Wragge's chronicle that works on a different time-scale from the dominant narrative as well as disrupting its omniscience and qualifying its authority over Magdalen. The story continually resorts to chance and coincidence to reach its predestined end, it is only when that end has been revealed that this is reinterpreted as providential intervention. Magdalen, on the brink of despair, counts the ships passing her window to decide whether she should commit suicide; she is discovered in the last stages of nervous exhaustion accidentally by the paragon of colonial fitness Kirke, as her quest takes an increasingly obsessive form after the death of Noel. Increasingly, preternatural and 'uncanny' devices are used when, disguised as a servant rather than a wife, she penetrates the house of the new heir and attempts to find the 'Secret Trust' outlining the future of the inheritance. Hidden links of association, lost keys, dark and winding passages abound in this section, and Magdalen is 'unconsciously' put on the trail of the document by the somnambulant heir, so that the means by which she pursues her social self become more weird as her own subjective coherence disintegrates. Mesmerism, too, makes an appearance, but fleetingly and in a deflated way through the indirectly reported speech of Noel, as Magdalen has a momentary collapse under the strain of dissembling in the 'Bygrave' plot, explained as a 'neuralgic attack': 'Mesmerism was frequently useful in these cases. Mr Noel Vanstone's father had been the most powerful mesmerist in Europe; and Mr Noel Vanstone was his father's son. Might he mesmerise?'⁴⁶ It becomes the sign here of Noel's gullibility and lack of power.

There is, however, one moment where Collins does directly exploit internalised psychological processes, drawing on specific developments in

associationist psychology to make it possible to make the necessary conceptual leap in order to be able to recognise masquerade. This is where Mrs Lecount first meets Magdalen disguised as Miss Bygraves after meeting her masquerading as Miss Garth. Before falling asleep, Lecount's mind drifts along its own, uncontrolled chain of associations:

She had got no further with this during the day; she could get no further now: the chain of thought broke. Her mind took up the fragments and formed another chain which attached itself to the lady who was kept in seclusion - to the aunt who looked well and yet was nervous; who was nervous, and yet able to ply her needle and thread ... Were the members of this small family of three, what they seemed on the surface of them?

With that question in mind, she went to bed.

As soon as the candle was out, the darkness seemed to communicate some inexplicable perversity to her thoughts. They wandered back from present things to past, in spite of her. They brought her old master back to life again; they revived forgotten sayings and doings in the English circles at Zurich; they veered away to the old man's death-bed at Brighton; they moved from Brighton to London; they entered the bare comfortless room at Vauxhall Walk ... At this point her thoughts broke off once more, and there was a momentary blank. The next instant she started up in bed; her heart beating violently, her head whirling as if she had lost her senses. With electric suddenness, her mind pieced together its scattered multitude of thoughts, and put them before her plainly under one intelligible form. In the all-mastering agitation of the moment, she clapped her hands together and cried out suddenly in the darkness: 'Miss Vanstone again!'⁴⁷

'She was quite incapable of tracing the mental processes which had led her to discovery', notes the narrator, switching from tracing these processes to analysing them. 'She could not get sufficiently far from herself to see that her half-formed conclusions on the subject of the Bygraves, had ended in making that family objects of suspicion to her; that the association of ideas had thereupon carried her mind back to that other object of suspicion which was represented by the conspiracy against her master; and that the two ideas of those two subjects of mistrust, coming suddenly into contact, had struck

the light.⁴⁸ This self-consciously echoes a process that Abercrombie discusses in the analysis of memory in *Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth*, a borderland state of reverie that is neither dreaming, nor trance, nor logical association, but a state in which connected ideas directly recall each other:

Besides this tendency, by which thoughts formerly associated are brought into the mind in a particular order, there is another species of association, into which the mind passes spontaneously, by a suggestion from any subject which happens to be present to it. The thought or fact, which is thus present, suggests another which has some kind of affinity to it; this suggested a third, and so on, to the formation of a train of series which may be continued at great length. A remarkable circumstance likewise is, that such a train may go on with very little consciousness of, or attention to it.⁴⁹

Here too, as elsewhere in the novel, a process of 'inexplicable perversity' simultaneously disrupts and reaffirms the central 'train of circumstances'. *No Name* is an extraordinary exploration of a process that *A Rogue's Life* satirically suggested - a study of 'the workings of the social system ... on individual nature'. But in his next novel, *Armada*, Collins takes the figure of the transgressive heroine one step further, this time in the context of an inquiry into the interaction of subjective identity, social power and 'psychic' forces, and here ^{is} a set of narrative conventions that does more than demonstrate the provisional nature of the natural - it completely takes it to pieces.

CHAPTER FIVE

ARMADALE: THE SENSITIVE SUBJECT AS PALIMPSEST

The Mind is not a passive recipient of external impulses but an active co-operant ... It is a variable mechanism which has a history. What the senses inscribe on it are not merely changes in the external world, but these characters are co-mingled with characters of preceding inscriptions. The sensitive subject is no tabula rasa, not a blank sheet of paper, but a palimpsest.

G.H. Lewes, *Foundations of a Creed*¹

In the Prologue in *Armada*, Allan Armadale II (Senior) father of Allan Armadale II (Junior), alias Ozias Midwinter, warns his son in his deathbed confession of his name-sake's murder:

Guiltless minds may see nothing thus far but the result of a series of events which could lead no other way. I ... with my crime unpunished and unatoned, see what no guiltless minds can discern. I see danger in the future, begotten of the danger in the past ... I look into the Book which all Christendom venerates; and the Book tells me that the sins of the father shall be visited on the child. I look out into the world; and I see the living witnesses round me to that terrible truth. I see the vices that have contaminated the father, descending and contaminating the child; I see the shame which has disgraced the father's name descending and disgracing the child. I look in on myself - and I see My Crime, ripening again for the future in the self-same circumstance which first sowed the seeds of it in the past; and descending in inherited contamination of Evil, from me to my son ...

My son! The only hope I have left for you, hangs on a Great Doubt - the doubt whether we are, or are not, the masters of our own destinies ...²

Armada opens with a confession, a complicated narrative of a guilty past involving doubling, pursuit and retribution. But the confession does not form a reconstruction and reassessment of that past that will lead to atonement and re-assimilation. It turns it into a force that will determine the future

progress of the story, but not in a straightforward way. It becomes the novel's opening assertion, setting up a framework of expectation wherein the language of scriptural judgment merges with moral transmission. Armadale's son, the receiver of the confession, is placed in a similar position to Robert Mannion in *Basil* as the three-fold 'look' of the father - into the 'Book', into the world, into himself - becomes his own social and psychic inheritance. That destiny is thus simultaneously resisted and fulfilled by the progress of the narrative. It is internalised by the hypochondriacal obsessions of the son who becomes the sensitive subject who indirectly transmits the tensions and mysteries of the story, who is the subject of a psychological investigation of the way that a monomania can work its own fulfilment. He is the victim, too, of a plot to steal the name and identity that is the subject of so much complication and confusion; a plot that depends for its sensation on fulfilling the very expectations that have been rendered problematic.

Armadale is a fascinating and elusive novel which combines, in a bizarrely kaleidoscopic way, many of the narrative elements and psychological methods that have so far emerged in Collins's fiction. The narratives of *The Woman in White* and *No Name* hinged on one of the basic conventions of sensation fiction: gaining a name and an identity by assuming another false one. In *Armadale* there are plots, and plots within plots, which in turn become the breeding ground for further plots, all proliferating around the name 'Ailan Armadale' - a name without an identity, not, as in *No Name*, an identity that has been rendered problematic by the loss of name. It is a blank space standing for a property that has no real owner, a stage on which various psychological propensities and dispositions are acted out, though the replications and inversions take on different meanings in different contexts. The confessional narrative of the Prologue - the letter addressed to the son - sets up the basic conflict around the inheritance of name, property and

morbid traits that works in two directions, between self and other, and father and son, and it shapes the presuppositions that both determine and undermine the story. The fathers, the two Allan Armadales of the Prologue, are set in opposition by directly replicating the other's transgression in a way that presents the excess of power itself as morbid, as a form of moral insanity. The conflict is given the exotic setting of Barbados, but the colony primarily gains its 'wild' connotations from its position as the site of unlicensed feudal power, a reversion to an earlier historical epoch and outside the historical process itself. The confessing Armadale, ne Wrentmore, inherited the Armadale name and estates in both England and Barbados in the place of the Armadale who had 'disgraced himself beyond redemption', though Wrentmore's own youth had echoed this absence of restraint: 'My mother was blindly fond of me ... she let me live as I pleased. My boyhood and youth were passed in idleness and self-indulgence, among people - slaves and half castes mostly -to whom my will was law ... I doubt if there was ever a young man in this world whose passions were left so entirely without control of any kind.'³ Both echo Pritchard's case of 'an only son of a weak and indulgent mother [who] gave himself up habitually to the gratification of every caprice and passion of which an untamed and violent temper was susceptible ... The money with which he was lavishly supplied removed every obstacle to the indulgence of his wild desires.'⁴ But he is then displaced himself by the original Armadale, who takes on another assumed name to steal back his inheritance and to marry an English heiress and gain an English estate; in revenge he drowns him by locking him in a sinking ship, and dying himself of a degenerative disease, confesses this to his son.

There are no stable oppositions between self and other, reality and imposture here, and this process of displacement of significance is taken further in that there is nothing but displacement, even the desire to (re)claim

a name becomes another form of imposture. The story itself re-enacts the 'gaining a name and identity through dissemblance' plot through two countervailing registers, which follow the way in which the projected narrative that is the father's legacy is resisted and fulfilled. The first revolves round the relationship between the two Armadales, focussing on the morbid self-consciousness of Wrentmore's son, discovered as an outcast under the bizarre name of 'Ozias Midwinter' -assuming a name now to avoid inheriting the property and the prophecy. The Junior Armadales deconstruct the discourses through which their fathers are set up while at the same time upsetting the very expectations generated by their own opposition. They are respectively dark and fair, burdened with anxiety and harmlessly irresponsible, and this involves a complex notion of the splitting, shadowing or doubling of the self, which emerges most clearly in the premonitory Dream that foreshadows the future and which 'belongs' to both of them. The second focusses on the one surviving figure from the Prologue, the extraordinary villainess, the red-haired Lydia Gwilt, who conspires to acquire the English inheritance by assuming the Armadale name through marriage, not to Armadale, but to his replica Midwinter, under his 'real' name. The 'fatal' force of the father's prophecy and projected threat now turns out to be the power of manipulative female sexuality.

So Armadale juggles with the concept of transmission, scrutinising the way in which a legacy of the past is reproduced by the next generation, becomes internalised within the consciousness and then again transmitted through various 'psychic' phenomena - most notably the dream in which one morbid state is transposed into the subjectivity of another. It uses the devices of doubling and substitution of names and identity and exploits the links between names and inherited property to question the stable boundaries of the self, as well as explore its social construction. It draws on

contradictory psychological conventions and assumptions in building up and breaking down outcast and deviant figures, figures who are either shown to be threatening and anomalous because of others' fears and preconceptions, or make use of those projections and fears to build up Collins's most ambitious villainess in a way that can never be assimilated, as it is in *The Woman in White*, within the overall framework of moral management. *The Woman in White* explored how identity could be built up and broken down by manipulating a consistent rhetoric that simultaneously covered and disclosed its interests, using the asylum as the pivot of this. A secluded asylum for nervous patients also makes an appearance in *Armadale*, but as an 'overwrought' melodramatic device at the climax of the story.

This replicates the contrast in the way the novels operate, for *Armadale* draws on a set of psychological processes that suggest contradictory interpretations. By continually replaying a plot with modifications the novel elicits distinct interpretations which succeed and overlap with one another, and which form a set of interlocking but dissonant frameworks. In this respect, *Armadale* generates a sense of mystery by continually undermining the terms on which its own cognitive assumptions are founded while allowing them, on another register, to remain intact. Towards the beginning of the novel the naive and boorish Allan Armadale I (Jr) tells his surrogate father, Decimus Brock, a joke about 'three Bedouin brothers at a show': 'All will take a lighted torch, and jump down the throat of his brother Mull - Mull will take a lighted torch, and jump down the throat of his brother Hassan - and Hassan, taking a third lighted torch, will jump down his own throat, and leaving the spectators in total darkness.'³ *Armadale* is a story which 'jumps down its own throat', and unlike *The Moonstone*, and *The Woman in White*, there are no sympathetic detectives, only victims and conspirators. There is no reconstruction which proceeds through distinct

narrative frameworks as part of a process of detection, yet neither is there an overall omniscient narrative authority as there is in *No Name*.

Armadales works as a sensation novel by pushing the conventions of the mode to their limits, and Collins took as many explicit aesthetic and moral risks with the novel as he had done with *Basil*. But he wrote the novel when his economic security and position as a popular writer seemed most assured. Smith, Elder had lured him from *All the Year Round*, following the serialisation of *No Name* as the result of the phenomenal success of *The Woman in White*, serialising *Armadales* in the well-established middle-class, middle-brow *Cornhill Magazine*, paying Collins no less than £5,000 for the publishing rights.⁶ Again the Preface offers defence and justification: 'Readers in particular will, I have some reason to suppose, be here and there disturbed - perhaps even offended - by finding that *Armadales* oversteps, in more than one direction, the narrow limits within which they are disposed to limit the development of modern fiction - if they can.'⁷ *Armadales* certainly was condemned by critics as an exaggerated sensation novel; Miss Gwillt - 'a portrait drawn with masterly art, but one from which every rightly constituted mind turns with loathing' - being singled out for their special detestation.⁸ But although the novel was attacked for both aesthetic and moral distortion, on the one hand winding up the narrative to such a pitch as to render the characters 'puppets', on the other producing dangerously attractive and realistic criminals, it was also accorded a grudging admiration. 'Those who make plot their first consideration and humanity the second - those, again, who represent the decencies of life as so often too many hypocrisies - have placed themselves in a groove which goes, and must go, in a downward direction, whether as regards fiction or morals. We are in a period of diseased invention, and the coming phase of it may be palsy', *The Athenaeum* complained.⁹ But *The Saturday Review* was more ambivalent,

acknowledging Collins's 'strange capacity for weaving extraordinary plots; *Armada*, from first to last, is a lurid labyrinth of improbabilities. It produces upon the reader the effect of a literary nightmare ... If it were the object of art to make one's audience feel uncomfortable without letting them know why, Mr Wilkie Collins would be beyond doubt a consummate artist ... As a whole the effect is clever, powerful, and striking, though grotesque, monotonous, and to use a French word, bizarre.¹⁰

Though the review is finally dismissive it points to the real complexities of the way the novel works - that it produces the same effect that Marian had on Hartright, 'a sensation oddly akin to the helpless discomfort familiar to us all in sleep, when we recognise yet cannot recognise the anomalies and contradictions of a dream'.¹¹ And here the Dream itself and the way that it is offered up to distinct kinds of interpretation is both the fulcrum of the plot and a direct analogue of a more generalised process whereby meaning is rendered problematic in the novel. Collins wrote an Appendix to *Armada* where he made it clear that he left the meaning of the Dream deliberately opaque: 'My readers will perceive that I have purposely left them, with reference to the Dream in this story, in the position that they would occupy in the case of a dream in real life - they are free to interpret it by the natural or the supernatural theory as the bent of their own minds may incline them.'¹² This means that overlapping forms of 'double consciousness' are at work in the novel: firstly the 'double consciousness' of contemporary dream theory that is put to work in the text; secondly the ambiguous possible interpretations of the dream focused through the consciousness of individuals; and thirdly the way in which the text works as a dream through mingling its own past and present. *Armada* works in a way that is analogous to Elliotson's analysis of dreams in *Human Physiology* where he reiterates that dreams are marked by loss of control over the thoughts, but goes on to

argue that the mind cannot, in fact, 'perceive the grossest incongruities and impossibilities ... thoughts riot on in confusion ... more like the cross reading of a newspaper ... A dream sometimes continues rational or consistent till near the end, when suddenly it becomes absurd.'¹³ The novel 'jumps down its own throat' through its juxtaposition of these different modes, without signalling that anything peculiar is happening, and the effect is to collapse the natural into the supernatural, but in ways which never move beyond the devices of the manipulation of sensation and perception. It thus extends the dream theory of physiological psychology, even as it points to its limitation of explaining psychical reality as morbid phenomena by investigating the social construction of a morbid consciousness in the figure of the 'sensitive subject' of *Ozias Midwinter*. To analyse how this works it is necessary to look at the Dream, its own immediate relationship to contemporary dream theory, and the way both are manipulated by the workings of the narrative and the shaping of identities that this involves.

Armada's Dream, which takes the form of a series of static tableaux which then 'work their own fulfilment' in the later narrative through strategies that are open to contrasting interpretation, is itself subjected to two contrasting analyses immediately the dreamer wakes, which straightaway puts it on a different footing to the dreams that have emerged so far in Collins's novels.¹⁴ In *Basil* and *The Woman in White* (with the exception of Marian's trance) unexplainable forebodings were discussed by the partial view of sceptical but naive narrators who were sensitive to the 'influences' around them, but unable to perceive the hidden connections that the dream or 'other' state represented. They therefore interpreted monition as a monomania but in a way that could then be reworked (by Basil in delirium, by Hartright by gaining self and narrative control) as part of a process of transformation or re-assimilation. In *Armada* there is also a split between superstition and

rationality, but it is given a different emphasis and serves a different narrative function. The Dream is given a superstitious 'supernatural' reading by Midwinter, reworked in the framework of expectation that he is set within as 'sensitive subject', and a materialist one by the local doctor, Hawbury, who serves no other function than as the voice of medical authority. This sets up a direct correlation between the Dream's narrative function, enabling the bizarre juxtapositioning of anomalous elements and the use of dream theory to explain it, which means that Hawbury's theory should be credible in external terms in order for it to be effectively qualified and developed in the narrative itself.

Hawbury's explanation of Armadale's dream corresponds closely to the dream analysis of MacNish, Abercrombie, Symonds and other contemporaries, but it does so selectively. Like his non-fictional counterparts, Hawbury is more concerned to offer a causal explanation of the Dream's different elements than a reading of its meaning, and like them, too, he offers a purely physiological explanation with an account of how the dream selects and combines past traces, working 'as the shuffling of a deranged kaleidoscope'.¹⁵ 'We don't believe that a reasonable man is justified in attaching a supernatural explanation to any phenomenon which comes within the range of his senses, until he has certainly ascertained that there is no such thing as a natural explanation of it to be found in the first instance', opines Hawbury.¹⁶ 'There is nothing at all extraordinary in my theory of dreams: it is the theory accepted by the great mass of my profession. A Dream is the reproduction, in the sleeping state of the brain, of Images and Impressions produced on it in the waking state; and this reproduction is more or less involved, imperfect or contradictory, as the action of certain faculties of the dreamer is controlled more or less completely, by the influence of sleep.'¹⁷ The three then attempt to 'trace [their] way back to these Impressions', speculating on how they will

be transformed in the dream, which is 'like guessing a riddle'.¹⁸ This process directly corresponds with Abercrombie's outline of the different processes at work in dreaming, where he notes that 'one of the most curious objects of investigation is to trace the manner, in which the particular visions or series of images arise'.¹⁹ The process of tracing back in the dream analysis of *Armadale* correlates with Abercrombie's identification of 'Recent events and recent mental emotions, mingled up into one continuous series';²⁰ Allan combines the image of the landscape of a recent trip with a scene he has been reading about, and condenses this with other memories and suggestions - 'And behold the dream, Mr Midwinter, mixing up separate waking impressions just as usual!'²¹

But Hawbury's analysis only gives a partial account of the theory outlined by Abercrombie. It focuses on the recent past, while Abercrombie stressed 'Recent events ... mingled up ... with old events', and 'Dreams consisting in the revival of past associations, respecting things which had entirely passed out of mind, and which seem to have been forgotten', as well as those in which 'a strong mental emotion is embodied in a dream and is fulfilled'.²² The text suggests a more complex understanding of the dreaming process, corresponding to the concept of 'double consciousness' current in contemporary theory which was developed by associationist analysis and mesmerism, and was a starting-point for Dallas's *The Gay Science*. 'In dreams each man's character is disintegrated, so that he may see the elements of which it is composed.'²³ Frank Seafield's summary of methods of dream interpretation is taken literally in *Armadale*. On hearing that a bad dream has been had, the doctor immediately assumes that Midwinter has had it - 'with your constitution, you ought to be well used to dreaming by this time'.²⁴ And by giving Allan the dream which reproduces Midwinter's anxieties, the novel directly makes use of one the tenets of mesmerism - that

impressions can be directly transmitted - as well as the claim that clairvoyance offers a method of prediction which is not 'contrary to nature': 'Say, now, what can be concealed from us, present and future?' Elliotson asks, 'the soul of magnetiser and the magnetised can be mingled, and afterwards separated again.'²⁵ This further blurs the boundary between natural and supernatural explanation as well as Midwinter's and Armadale's identities. But the novel mixes this with less obviously transcendental processes in both the text of the dream itself and its narrative setting.

Allan's Dream is presented as an embedded narrative carefully itemised and noted by Midwinter:

"1. The first event of which I was conscious, was the appearance of my father. He took me silently by the hand, and we found ourselves in the cabin of a ship.

"2. Water slowly rose over us in the cabin; and I and my father sank through the water together.

"3. An interval of oblivion followed; and then the sense came to me of being left alone in the darkness.

"4. I waited.

"5. The darkness opened and showed me the vision - as in a picture - of a broad, lonely pool, surrounded by open ground ...

"6. On the near margin of the pool, there stood the Shadow of a Woman ..."²⁶

Like Basil's early dream it takes the form of a set of static tableaux, which have an allegorical, already interpreted quality about them, but which are themselves embedded in the narrative as the dreamer sinks into the other world of double consciousness in the dream and he and the father sink beneath the water in a state which is neither past nor future. This use of the language of sinking and drowning is closer to Basil's delirium and Hartright's fear: 'my mind sinks in darkness and confusion when I think of it', making literal use of the metaphors of unconscious activity to describe the process

within the dream itself.²⁷ The use of metaphors or currents or tides to conceptualise unconscious processes within the self, either as a force linking the individual to the surrounding world or as a set of currents forming channels within the mind that could be developed, blocked or controlled, was developed in different contexts within physiological psychology.²⁸ But Dallas in particular conceptualised the unconscious as a sea or expanse of water containing a range of different currents or tides that both frame the perimeters of the self and exist within, or beneath it. 'When one is most struck with the grandeur of the tides and currents of thought that belong to each of us, and yet all beyond our consciousness, one is apt to conceive of it as a vast outer sea or space that belts our conscious existence.'²⁹ 'In the dark recesses of memory, in unbidden suggestions, in trains of thought unwittingly pursued, in multiplied waves and currents all at once flashing and rushing, in dreams that cannot be laid ...', he writes, 'we have glimpses of a great tide of life ebbing and flowing, rippling and rolling and beating about where we cannot see it ... Our conscious existence is a little spot of light, rounded or begirt with a haze of slumber.'³⁰ Thus the device of sinking beneath the waters with the father to produce the 'visions' of the preternatural state of consciousness simultaneously moderates and disrupts the distinction between alternative states of consciousness within the dream. And this corresponds with Dallas's sense that 'this unconscious part of the mind is so dark and yet so full of activity; so like the conscious intelligence and yet so divided from it by a veil of mystery, that it is not much of a hyperbole to speak of the human soul as double, or at least leading a double life', but a double life in which there is a secret 'constant traffic' between conscious and unconscious existence, and each is necessary to the other.³¹

It also directly echoes the patterns at work in creating the immediate conditions of dreaming and disrupts the linear sequence of time. The 'sinking

beneath the waters with the father' sequence mixes Allan's 'unconscious past' (the drowning of the father in the ship) with the immediate one (the two Armadales finding themselves stranded on the wreck of the same ship) where coincidence perversely reproduces the patterns of the intractable past. But it also seeps into the language describing the waking present, and suffuses the terms of reference of the novel as a whole. Allan Armadale's lack of discipline in early life evaporates harmlessly but it means that he becomes a principle of free association in the novel, flitting from one idea to the other, but never being anchored to any meaning. His passion for sailing and the sea both underpins this and is made explicit when the narrator comments on his confusion about the dreams: 'In both senses of the word his mind was at sea already'; a disruption of the distinction between the metaphorical and the literal reinforced by the way that Midwinter, the more obvious outcast, is continually described as being 'cast adrift'.³² And this comes to permeate the language of the narrative itself. As the story moves into the sequence of the fulfilment of the dream with the trip to the Norfolk Broads and the first encounter with the fatal Lydia the landscape becomes increasingly dreamlike - not, as in Baal through the dramatic Fusell-like imagery of cliffs and chasms, but in the way that the flat monotony of the Norfolk Broads are built up by the juxtapositioning of unexpected elements, presented by a dissociated narrative consciousness that does not know how to make sense of it.

All the strange and startling anomalies presented by an inland agricultural district, isolated from other districts by its intricate surrounding network of pools and streams - holding its communication and carrying its produce by water instead of land - began to present themselves in closer and closer succession. Nets appeared on cottage palings; little flat-bottomed boats lay strangely at rest among the flowers in cottage gardens; farmer's men passed to and fro clad in the composite costume of the coast and the field, in sailor's hats and fisherman's boots and ploughman's smocks, - and even yet the low-lying labyrinth of waters, embosomed in its mystery and its solitude, was a hidden labyrinth still.³³

Armadale also turns into a bizarre or dreamlike text as processes of psychical transmission are explored through a narrative which continually displaces any stable authority. Yet this displacement is still aligned in a social framework where the meaning of identity is overdetermined by the expectations and perceptions of others, which can compound or undermine the legacy of the past. There is neither a clear shift between narrators nor an identifiable moralised narrative rhetoric in *Armadale*. It modulates between different kinds of narrative modes which can correspond to different modes of remembering the past. For example the most clearly identifiable benign authority is *Armadale's* substitute father, the rector Declimus Brock. The Epilogue of the novel closes with the posthumous re-reading of his letter, which states his belief in rational religion, autonomy and moral management, and which finally cancels out the opening of the scriptural denunciation of the absent father in the Prologue. The opening of the Story is focused through Brock's memory and presents his immediate response to Midwinter. It takes place after the two *Armadales* have met and after some of Midwinter's past is known, but before Brock has read the confessional letter of the Prologue.

The reader thus has a latent knowledge of the past which qualifies the way that the opening events of the story are transmitted through the retrospective analysis of the rector. Brock recalls *Armadale's* early life, his mother's self-imposed exile and the mysterious appearance of Midwinter as a vagabond through a process of 'natural or philosophical association', which, following Abercrombie, takes place 'when a fact or statement, on which the attention is fixed, is, by a mental process, associated with some subject which it is calculated to illustrate'.³⁶ 'One by one the events of those years - all connected with the same little group of characters, and all more or less answerable for the anxiety which was now intruding itself between the

clergyman and his night's rest rose, in progressive series, on Mr Brock's memory.³⁵ So narrative mood and the modes of focus and recall are bound up with the control of narrative time, which is itself built up as a palimpsest of distinct kinds of memory. As the novel progresses suspense is heightened as knowledge of the past turns into anticipation of the future via the Dream, and this involves a shift from 'natural' to 'fictional' forms of association in Abercrombie's terms. This process coincides with a shift in the use of narrative voice as well as focus. The main body of the story takes the form of continuous narration into which other texts - the Dream, letters - are embedded. But as the plot thickens the significance of the embedding shifts; as Lydia Gwilt gains power over Midwinter her diary substitutes itself for continuous narration. She becomes in both senses the author of the plot, while remaining a shadow within it - in both capacities the fatal force of the past.

The Dream disrupts the coherent order of the narrative and is the means by which the past, in another register, exerts a pressure on the future, and is also the means by which the 'double consciousness' of Armadale and Midwinter becomes a means of relating and replaying the drama of the past. The junior Armadales, I have suggested, overturn the expectations by their father's and their own opposition, and they add a twist to Collins's methods of doubling and replicating identity and exploring patterns of exclusion through the means by which the unitary self is disintegrated in the Dream. Midwinter at first seems to represent Allan's 'unconscious', as repository of the guilty knowledge of the past, describing himself as 'an ill-conditioned brat, with my mother's negro blood in my face and my murdering father's passions in my heart, inheritor of their secret, in spite of them', and is the source of the Dream.³⁶ But it is as Allan's conscience as much as his submerged consciousness that Midwinter compounds as well as resists his 'destiny' -

turning an over-anxious gaze back on himself. The figure of Midwinter is Collins's most sophisticated treatment of the ways in which 'sensitive' subjectivity is perceived as pathological and becomes morbid without being constructed by the narrative as pathological itself. He represents a complex overlapping of psychological codes, not only in the mingling of contrasting sets of expectations through which he makes sense, but in the way that these implied terms themselves are rendered problematic and provisional, and resist any coherent set of correspondences between identity and physical sign.

Midwinter is burdened by a social and a psychic inheritance, but he is developed in a way that goes against the grain of Spencer's development of the organic paradigm to discuss psychical inheritance: 'Hereditary transmission ... applies not only to physical but psychical peculiarities ... modified nervous tendencies ... are also bequeathed.'³⁷ He is built up as a palimpsest in a way that corresponds more closely with the way Lewes developed the metaphor to emphasise the 'double root, the double history' of development, which 'passes quite out of the range of animal life, and no explanation of mental phenomena can be valid which does not allow for this extension of range', an extension which here includes the traces of others' projections and the force of memory.³⁸ The narrative voice shifts between indirect narration focussed through others' views of Midwinter, his own consciousness, and his own embedded confessional accounts of his past. In the first place this takes the form of an interrogation of even the more liberal assumptions of moral management. Midwinter is introduced through Brock's perspective as an outcast and half-caste and the precise method of narrative focus used emphasises Brock's pathologising response as much as its object:

Ozias Midwinter, on recovering from brain-fever, was a startling object to contemplate on first view of him.

His shaven head, tied up in an old yellow silk handkerchief; his tawny, haggard cheeks; his bright brown eyes, preternaturally large and wild; his rough black beard, his long supple, sinewy fingers, wasted by suffering till they looked like claws - all tended to discompose the rector at the outset of the interview. When the first feeling of surprisæ had worn off, the impression that followed it was not an agreeable one. Mr Brock could not conceal from himself that the stranger's manner was against him. The general opinion has settled that if a man is honest, he is bound to assert it by looking straight at his fellow-creatures when he speaks to them. If this man was honest, his eyes showed a singular perversity in looking away and denying it. Possibly they were affected in some degree by a nervous restlessness in his organisation which appeared to pervade every fibre of his lean, lithe body. The rector's healthy Anglo-Saxon skin crept responsively at every casual movement of the usher's supple brown fingers, and every passing distortion of the usher's haggard yellow face. 'God forgive me!' thought Mr Brock, with his mind musing on Allan and Allan's mother, 'I wish I could see my way to turning Ozias Midwinter adrift in the world again.'³⁹

This manifestation of the figure through the shifting response to it moves through a succession of interpretative modes and calls each of them into question. The first two sentences, concentrating on him as 'startling object' surprising the rector's habitual perception, presents him simply as a collection of disembodied objects. Here there are no clear boundaries of the body - head, handkerchief, cheeks, eyes, beard, claw-like fingers, both discompose the rector and are presented as the product of a process of suffering which itself only makes sense within a particular analytical framework. This is taken further in the rector's response to Midwinter's 'shiftiness', which in turn distances Brock's unquestioning appropriation of 'the general opinion's' use of a set of vaguely defined physiognomic codes. Midwinter's shiftiness and twitchiness is both cultural - the particular interpretation of a set of physical responses - and physiological, but it is a physiology that has no meaning beyond its cultural reception. Thus the initial impression is gradually qualified as his history of social isolation and

rejection is revealed, by Brock's perception being replaced by a distanced and anonymous stranger: 'The fatal reserve which he had been in a fair way of conquering some minutes since possessed itself of him once more. Again his eyes wandered, again his voice sunk in tone. A stranger who had heard his story, and who saw him now, would have said: "his look is lurking, his manner is bad, he is, every inch of him, his father's son".'⁴⁰

'Nerves' are a key term in defining Midwinter. But the particular class and gender connotations that the rhetoric of 'nervous sensibility' had absorbed through Basil's hypochondriacal fancies or Laura's vulnerability, are here transformed by being applied to a physically resilient, racially ambiguous, male vagabond even as the rhetoric itself is developed to suggest Midwinter's sensitive subjectivity. It is a sensitivity however that is put forward in gender terms rather than class ones: his 'sensitive feminine organisation' co-exists with resilience while remaining the sign of vulnerability; anxiety continually hovers on the brink of hysteria as he struggles for control over his own nervous fancies and associative processes - not hypochondria. This not only gives his sensations feminine connotations, but also shifts the emphasis from the delusion itself to the subject's immediate response to it in a way that exposes the limitations of a moral management that simply takes the form of an exhortation to pull oneself together. For Midwinter's hysteria arises from his struggles to suppress his nervous fancies, not from giving in to them; from his attempts to enact an exaggerated cheerful sociability, not from his customary melancholy. Thus 'the hysterical passion rose, and conquered him' as he describes his history to Brock, but the passion is the strength of his gratitude to Armadale.⁴¹ The chapter in which he attempts to build an acceptable persona is headed 'Midwinter in Disguise' and here he presents a face which takes the form of throwing off reserve, which was 'no new side of Midwinter's character ... it was only a new aspect of the ever-

recurring struggle of Midwinter's life'. This leads to his most morbid and bizarre behaviour, loss of control and hysterical breakdown.

His artificial spirits, lasted continuously into higher and higher effervescence since the morning, were now mounting hysterically beyond his own control. He looked and spoke with that terrible freedom of licence which is the necessary consequence, when a diffident man has thrown off his reserve, of the very effort by which he has broken loose from his own restraints ... He looked backwards and forwards from Miss Milroy to Allan and declared jocosely that he understood now why his friend's morning walks were always taken in the same direction. He asked her questions about her mother, and cut short the answers she gave by remarks on the weather ...

There are limits even to the licence of laughter; and these limits were ere long so outrageously overstepped by one of the party as to have the effect of almost instantly silencing the other two. The fever of Midwinter's false spirits flamed out into sheer delirium as the performance of puppets came to an end. His paroxysms of laughter followed one another with such convulsive violence, that Miss Milroy started back in alarm.³²

The Dream is the most explicit example of how the narrative both analyses the basis of Midwinter's morbid delusions and makes his superstitious reading of it work while scrutinising the effects of his ability to resist its implications. Hawbury's explanation of the Dream, and his subsequent interpretation of its elements as having a limited significance provides a framework to read Midwinter's 'prophetic' response to it. This interpretation continues to operate even as Midwinter's interpretation itself qualifies it, which in turn reinforces the sense of fatality in the text itself, as he is caught in the spell of the Dream. And in sinking under it, he hastens the very end that he is seeking to evade while struggling to control the delusion and reassert the claims of moral management. In attempting to control his associations Midwinter enacts the prescriptions set up by Abercrombie and Conolly in outlining 'the qualities and acquirements which constitute a well-regulated mind', by reworking the associations and impressions of the Dream

into different contexts, and this becomes a process of self-analysis.⁶³ For example, he is able to dispel the superstitious connotations of Armadale's mother's old room, not by shutting it away and turning it into a site of repressed associations but by opening it up and transforming those past accretions: 'Here, more strangely still, he looked on a change in the household arrangements, due in the first instance entirely to himself. His own lips had revealed the discovery that he had made on the first morning in the new home; his own voluntary act had induced the son to establish himself in his mother's room.' This turns into a more sustained analysis:

It was only after he had unreservedly acknowledged the impulse under which he had left Allan at the Mere, that he had taken credit to himself for the new point of view from which he would now look at the Dream. Then, and not till then, he had spoken of the fulfilment of the first Vision, as the doctor on the Isle of Man might have spoken of it - he had asked, as the doctor might have asked, where was the wonder of their seeing a pool at sunset, when they had a whole network of pools within a few hours' drive of them? And what was there extraordinary in discovering of woman at the Mere, when there were roads that led to it, and villages in its neighbourhood, and boats employed on it, and pleasure parties visiting it? So again, he had waited to vindicate the firmer resolution with which he looked to the future, until he had first revealed all that he now saw himself of the errors of the past ... The glaring self-contradictions betrayed in accepting the Dream as the revelation of a fatality, and in attempting to escape that fatality by an exertion of free will - in toiling to store up knowledge of the Steward's duties for the future, and in shirking from letting the future find him in Allan's home - were in their turn, unsparingly exposed ...⁶⁴

Yet here, too, the very effort that Midwinter makes to shake off the past reinforces the sense of the strength of its hold; the weighty, convoluted sentences themselves, all build up the sense of its intractability while working through the processes by which it has gained its power.

But the legacy of the past is most decisively enacted in the future by the plots of the femme fatale Lydia Gwilt. She is the figure of all-

embracing, disarming and suffocating female power - in whom fear of the father and his legacy of male violence becomes transformed into the threat of the castrating woman. She is everything that men desire in the feminine and everything they fear, a villainess who comes to control the narrative and who is never overpowered by successful detection, though her past is revealed by it; she only finally overpowers herself through the retribution of suicide. As most critics realised, Miss Gwilt's villainy made her the most forceful character in *Armadale*, and one aspect of her dangerous attraction is the initial absence of shame with which, like Fosco, she perpetuates her conspiracies. But this takes on a completely different set of meanings: firstly, her villainy is mediated through her femininity and secondly, her diary plays an important role in compounding and undermining this villainy as she experiences contrition and attempts to reform herself.

'Gwilt' is emblematically set up as a study of 'guilt' in the dual sense of both wickedness and conscience; but she also operates as a study of the limitations of conventions of feminine transgression and remorse - the repentant fallen woman - and she enacts the narrator's remark that 'a man entering on a course of reformation ought, if virtue is its own reward, to be a man engaged in an essentially inspiring pursuit. But virtue is not always its own reward, and the way to reformation is remarkably ill-lighted for so respectable a thoroughfare.'⁴⁵ She is first seen as the embodiment of the shadow in the dream, as a shadow, and is built up through the juxtapositioning of her appearance manifested as shadow, with the self that manipulates that appearance as a means of gaining power. But while with Midwinter the delusions are dispelled through gaining self-control, Lydia's lack of shame and ability to control her appearance can only be interpreted as moral insanity. Pedgift, the lawyer, compares her to other female criminals: 'All had a secret self-possession which nothing could shake.'⁴⁶

This means that Lydia gains power when she is not what she appears to be, loses it when she becomes subjected to her own desire for Midwinter, when she wants to fill the role that she had been able to manipulate as a masquerade. She first puts herself in the position of being able to seduce both Armadale and Midwinter by becoming the neighbour's governess and acts the role of governess the more successfully by seeming to be too attractive and too self-possessed to be one: 'The sudden revelation of her beauty, as she smiled and looked at him inquiringly, suspended the movements of his limbs and the words on his lips. A vague doubt beset him whether it was the governess after all.'⁴⁷ She seduces through simulating the apparent passivity of the *femme fatale*, while in reality actively conspiring: 'Perfectly modest in her manner, possessed to perfection of the graceful refinements of a lady, she had all the allurements that feast the eye, all the Siren-invitations that seduce the sense - a subtle suggestiveness in her silence and a sexual sorcery in her smile.'⁴⁸ She plays the role of repentant fallen woman as a means of concealing her real history (which remains concealed from the reader for most of the story) and uses the conventions of melodrama to persuade Midwinter of the 'truth' of her past: 'There was nothing new in what I told him: it was the commonplace rubbish of the circulating libraries. A dead father, a lost fortune, vagabond brothers whom I dread ever seeing again.'⁴⁹ And the 'repentant fallen woman' story is further dismantled when Armadale thinks he has discovered Lydia's past. Here an intrusive narrator switches from sensation novel conventions to a pastiche of melodrama:

One conclusion, and one only ... forced itself into his mind. A miserable, fallen woman, who had abandoned herself in her extremity to the help of wretches skilled in criminal concealment - who had stolen her way back into decent society and a reputable employment, by means of a false character - and whose position now imposed on her the dreadful necessity of perpetual secrecy and perpetual deceit in relation to her past life - such was the aspect in which the beautiful governess at Thorpe-Ambrose now stood revealed to Allan's eyes!

Falsely revealed or truly revealed? Had she stolen her way back into decent society and a reputable employment by means of a false character? She had. Did her position impose upon her the dreadful necessity of perpetual deceit in relation to her past life? It did. Was she some such pitiable victim to the treachery of a man unknown as Allan had supposed? She was no such pitiable victim...The true story of the house in Pimlico - a house rightly described as filled with wicked secrets, and people rightly represented as perpetually in danger of feeling the grasp of the law - was a story which coming events were yet to disclose: a story infinitely less revolting, yet infinitely more terrible, than Allan or Allan's companion had either of them supposed.⁵⁰

Lydia Gwilt's attempted reform, as she falls for Midwinter and attempts to subjectively fill the role that was previously an imposture, is negotiated and shown to be impossible in the terms of her own self-defining identity, in the shifting confessional function of her diary. The diary is the means by which Miss Gwilt both mediates the tensions of the plot; where she meditates on the significance of coincidence and is 'haunted' by the resemblance of names and by herself: 'My nerves must be a little shaken, I think. I was startled just now by a shadow on the wall. It was only after a moment or two that I mustered sense enough to notice where the candle was, and to see that the shadow was my own ... Here is my own handwriting startling me now! ... The similarity of names never struck me in this light before.'⁵¹ It is also the place where her 'wicked' self speaks and where she incubates the plot against the Armadale property, and a means of self-control, as it was for Marian. 'Would it help me to shake off these impressions, I wonder, if I made the effort of writing them down? There would be no danger, in that case, of my forgetting anything important, and perhaps, after all, it may be the fear of something I ought to remember, this story of Midwinter weighing as it does on my mind.'⁵² But while with Marian the gradual loss of this self-control is the sign of defeat by forces beyond it, with Lydia a split gradually arises in the function of the diary between the

conspiring and controlling self, and the 'guilty' self as she becomes 'reformed'. Thus the movement of penitence is marked by the merging of narrative time and story time as Lydia renounces her diary and herself, and loses self-possession: 'Six o'clock ... How is it that he alters me so that I hardly know myself again? ... I felt a dreadful hysterical choking in the throat when he entreated me not to reveal my troubles ...'⁵³ 'Sunday August 10th The eve of my wedding-day! I close and lock this book, never to write in it, never to open it again. I have won the great victory; I have trampled my own wickedness underfoot. I am innocent.'⁵⁴ But as she finds the sheer boredom of domesticity and wifely dependence to be the falsest role of all, she comes to depend on her diary as much as her 'Drops' of laudanum: 'My misery is a woman's misery and it will speak here rather than nowhere; to my second self, in this book, if I have no-one else to hear me.'⁵⁵ The diary is the only place where she achieves a sympathetic subjectivity, but self-imposed moral management and reform involves that loss of self-possession, a contradiction which in the end can only be expressed by suicide.

The climax of *Armada* and of the Gwilt conspiracy is when Lydia, with the accomplice Dr Downward, now transformed into the sinister Dr le Doux, lures Armadale and Midwinter into le Doux's newly built model 'Sanatorium' for nervous patients, and where Gwilt uses one of the asylum's boasted non-restraint methods as a means to attempt to poison Armadale by 'drowning' or suffocating him in poisoned air - a method she finally applies to herself. While the non-restraint asylum was the means of Laura's transformation in its very acceptability in *The Woman in White*, here the image of the Sanatorium winds up the elements that are disturbing for their realism in the earlier novel, and draws on the 'older' image of the asylum as a melodramatic force of evil, a means-of sensational conspiracy and horror. But it does this, as Reade does in *Hard Cash*, by blowing up moral

management itself as a sinister force and transforming seclusion and repose into literal sources of suffocation - firstly of the hero, finally of the repentant villainess - and thus creates a sensational framework to achieve the 'fatal' end that is a pastiche of the very means by which it is resisted.

The Sanatorium is an explicit parody of a private asylum for nervous patients directly based on those aspects of Conolly's *The Treatment of the Insane Without Mechanical Restraints* that stress suppression and seclusion rather than self-control, and it turns the image of the theatre round to parody those presuppositions. It is a theatre of its own techniques, open to public inspection and offering a welcome relief to the visitors from the propriety of their private lives while replicating its essential forms: 'In the miserable monotony of the lives led by a large section of the middle classes of England, anything is welcome to the women which offers them any sort of harmless refuge from the established tyranny of the principle that all human happiness begins and ends at home.'³⁶ Doctor le Doux has graduated to the proprietorship of the Sanatorium from an earlier position as 'ladies' medical man': 'One of those carefully constructed physicians ... he had the necessary bald head, the necessary double eyeglass, the necessary black clothes and the necessary blandness of manner, all complete.'³⁷ His description of the asylum is a direct echo of Conolly's argument. Conolly wrote in *The Treatment of the Insane*:

Many English superintendents speak of seclusion as something worse than mechanical restraint; seeming to forget that it is as much adapted to secure an irritable brain from causes of increased irritability as a quiet chamber and the exclusion of glare ... is adapted to the same state of brain in a fever. The patient needs repose, and every object, or every person seen, irritates him ... It is often seen that the mere moving of the cover of the inspection-plate in the door of a patient's room if not cautiously done, rouses the patient from tranquillity and causes him to start up and rush violently to the door ... Seclusion gives him the benefit of continued tranquillity, by removing at once every cause of excitement.³⁸

Le Doux extends this to cover all forms of nervous disorders of modern life:

Literally a word, on nervous derangement first ... I throw up impregnable moral entrenchments between Worry and You ... I assert the medical treatment of nervous suffering to be entirely subsidiary to the moral treatment of it. That moral treatment of it, you find here ... [The patient's mind] is one mass of nervous fancies and caprices, which his friends (with the best possible intentions) have been ignorantly irritating at home ... I pull a handle when he is snug in his bed, and the window noiselessly closes in a moment. Nothing to irritate him, ladies and gentlemen, nothing to irritate him!⁵⁹

The two doctors, Hawbury and le Doux, thus form two poles in the use of psychological discourse - dream theory and moral management - around which the plot revolves; but they do so by having contradictory fictional functions; the function of le Doux (to transform perception through transforming moral management into a bizarre and uncanny device) undermines Hawbury's role as realigning the trains of association.

Armada has two endings as well as two beginnings: the end of the Story with Lydia's suicide and the Conclusion - 'Midwinter' - where Midwinter himself finally reaches a satisfactory interpretation of the Dream, and a means of explaining coincidence, and reversing the terms of his father's letter: 'I have learnt to view the purpose of the Dream with a new mind ... In that faith I can look back without murmuring at the years that are past, and can look on without doubting to the years that are to come.'⁶⁰ Brock's rational Christianity is the final means of closing the novel. But it is in seeking out the resolution and generating the mystery that creates the cognitive complexity of *Armada*, which is never finally able to emerge from its involuted heuristic structure and either reach a final interpretation of the dream, or offer a stable interpretation of itself to the reader. *Armada* seems to be set up as a struggle between fate and chance, destiny and autonomy, but it quickly turns into a novel about the different ways the

present and present identity are over-determined by the forces of the past, emerging in coincidence as much as conspiracy. Finally the Great Doubt - 'the doubt whether we are, or are not, masters of our own destiny' - of the father remains unresolved, but in the process the meaning of destiny has splintered through the process of working out what that working out might mean. And as a palimpsest of traces of the past, *Armadale* - both the name and the title - anticipates Collins's most ambitious attempt to investigate that process of investigation, set within a psychological context that incorporates an analysis of the unconscious - *The Moonstone*.

CHAPTER SIX

TRUTH WEARING THE MASK OF DELUSION:
DETECTING THE UNCONSCIOUS IN THE MOONSTONE

Is there a form of hysteria that bursts into words instead of tears?

The Moonstone¹

What have I lost? Nothing but Nervous Force - which the law doesn't recognise as property.

The Moonstone²

'Here was our quiet English house suddenly invaded by a devilish Indian Diamond - bringing after it a conspiracy of living rogues, set loose on us by the vengeance of a dead man ... Who ever heard the like of it - in the nineteenth century, mind; in an age of progress, and in a country which rejoices in the blessings of the British constitution?'³ Thus Gabriel Betteredge, who has the edge on all the narrators in *The Moonstone*, describes his reaction to the news of the advent of the oriental jewel, seized by imperialist plunder, into the apparently calm, stable world of the English upper-middle-class country house. The Moonstone has become dangerous because it has been stolen, displaced; it is stolen and misplaced again, causing widespread anxiety and a disruption of social and sexual relationships within the family, manifested finally in the apparently hysterical behaviour of the heroine: 'the cursed Moonstone had turned us all upside down'.⁴ The drive of the narrative, then, is to track down the lost object not simply for itself, but to restore what its lack signifies, socially and sexually, within the family. Suspicion falls predictably on the alien, marginal figures: on the Indians, hovering about the grounds, relying on clairvoyance to ascertain the

diamond's whereabouts; on the deformed penitent thief turned housemaid, Rosanna Spearman; even on Rachel. But it is the hero, Franklin Blake, possessed of what Ezra Jennings describes as 'youth, health, riches, a place in the world, a prospect before you', who is revealed, three-quarters of the way through the story, to have stolen the diamond, unconsciously, himself.⁵ The quest now becomes to find the lost object through the reinterpretation of the meaning of the past. And this means not only learning to see differently, but to define knowledge and what constitutes experience in a way that leads to a historical and psychological reconstruction. But the traces of the past are ambiguous and shifting and there is no focal point from which they can be surveyed, and the physiological experiment that is interpreted as proof is essentially a piece of theatre projected out of a fictional hypothesis which claims the authority of science - an opium-induced re-enactment of an opium-induced action, set up by an opium-addicted doctor.⁶ They never get the diamond back either. It is stolen from Blake by the hypocritical philanthropist and rival suitor Godfrey Ablewhite, taken from him by the Indians and finally restored to its proper place in the Hindu temple.

The Moonstone is Collins's most compulsively readable and pleasurable novel. It is also in many ways his most conceptually complex; the one in which he most clearly appropriates theories through telling stories in a way that suggests that theories are interpretative narratives themselves. It is a novel that repays psychoanalytic interpretation, and offers means of exploring those forms of symbolic transformation that Freud identified as being central to the process of repression; and as such it is impossible not to read the text as a palimpsest of overt and covert meanings.⁷ *The Moonstone*, however, has had much of its cognitive complexity defused by its retrospective placing in the 'Whodunnit' school of detective fiction. This

suggests that the novel should be read in the light of the interpretative framework shaped by the later development of the genre, as a cosy 'three pipe problem' which deals with the disruption of order in an isolated community, but from the safe standpoint of retrospection, and a belief in scientific investigation as narrowing down, fixing, proving meaning through uncontroversial evidence, revealing a static truth.⁸

Like *The Woman in White*, *The Moonstone* was written within specific constraints, partly shaped by the explicit risks that Collins had taken with his previous novel; again it was phenomenally popular, doing more to boost the circulation of *All the Year Round* than *Great Expectations*.⁹ The novel also seems to defuse the intensity of *Armadale*; there is none of the explicit struggle for female autonomy of *No Name*, or the overt manipulation of appearance as a form of power of that novel and *The Woman in White*. 'It is a very curious story, wild yet domestic ... nothing belonging to disguised women or the like', Dickens wrote to Wills.¹⁰ The concerns and questions of the earlier novels are pushed beyond their own limits here, but, paradoxically, in the process, reassimilated. They are taken up both in a more 'homely' and on a more abstract, conceptual register, and it is this that simultaneously gives a cosy reassuring feel to *The Moonstone*, and overturns the discursive boundaries and the cognitive assumptions on which that security rests.

As in *The Woman in White*, *The Moonstone* uses a dominant psychological model ambivalently, as a means of both creating mystery and resolving it. In *The Woman in White* the benign asylum was the crucible for both destruction and reconstruction of Laura's identity, displaying the contradictions even as it reasserted the overall framework of moral management. *The Moonstone* uses the physiological experiment and contemporary theories of the unconscious as a means of disclosing the past

and controlling the present. But closer investigation reveals that that conception of the unconscious combines distinct yet overlapping hypotheses, reinforcing and undercutting a moral management that itself has no coherent focus. And this ambiguity determines both 'the discovery of truth' and the 'loss of the diamond', which is in turn generated by a narrative structure that continually resists any stable authority.

This means, too, that metaphors of levels, of depth and surface, are inadequate to discuss what happens in the novel - and here it takes the implied scrutiny of interpretative assumptions that I discussed in *Armada* a stage further. *The Moonstone* is not an innocent text that can be interpreted as if it was a dream, where manifest meanings conceal and reveal latent ones, or a 'serious' intention can be detected beneath a superficial 'popular' one. The novel is ambiguous by being about ambiguity and thus in a range of ways is the analogue of its own meanings. The complexity of the story lies in the way that ambivalence works as a continuous, contradictory process; in the way that the narrative affirms, while relativising, cognitive assumptions; and in the way that interpretative frameworks become part of the mystery. *The Moonstone* can be discovered - but only as an absence.

I have suggested that all the novels of the 1860s unpick their own discursive assumptions as they go along. *The Moonstone* culminates this process - and not only in the sense that the pleasure of the search is a direct analogue of the mental processes that are investigated as part of it. As a 'wild yet domestic' story, it takes the overturning of the boundaries between the homely and the uncanny, inside and outside, deviant and normal, occult and rational, which I have argued operates in different ways in all the novels further than any of them. Franklin Blake tells Rachel, after he has pressed her into confessing to her knowledge of his apparent crime: 'You are the

victim, and I am the victim, of some monstrous delusion which has worn the mask of truth. If we look at what happened on the night of your birthday together, we may end in understanding each other yet.¹¹ It is obvious that *The Moonstone* explores the ways things are not what they seem - like *The Woman in White*, it suggests how easy it is, in the right context, to conjure with appearance, to become the victim of delusions that wear the mask of truth, when, as Fosco put it: 'All the world is in a conspiracy to accept the mask for the true face.'¹² But it also explores the converse of this, that some methods of detection might first appear to be conjuring tricks. The narrative bifurcates into two forms of search which are continually merging into and clashing with each other: the police search -which tears off the mask to reveal the truth and the true villain Godfrey Ablewhite, whose imposture is his philanthropic persona, concealing the conventional secret life of the English middle class male - and the psychological search, which leads to the experimental investigation into Franklin Blake's unconscious in a way that suggests that truth itself can be known only as the manipulation of a delusion.

And this in turn discloses and conceals a further unresolved question - what is the 'self' of Blake's unconscious? A glimpse back to an earlier, amoral state, the truth of an underlying transgressive trait, or an over-zealous desire to protect the property of his future wife intensified by the influence of opium? How does Blake's 'Innocent' theft prefigure and contrast with Ablewhite's guilty one? The interwoven relationship between social and self-control that is traced through the earlier novels surfaces again here, with the exploration of the ground on which the distinction between the healthy and the pathological is founded. But here it is framed within the specific context of competing hypotheses, which draw on and transform contemporary

theories about what constitutes the unconscious, the extent to which it controls or is controlled by the sensitive subject, and the conditions under which it might be reclaimed. The fact that Blake was under the influence when he took the diamond obviously enables him to become temporarily deranged while remaining both healthy and innocent, just as he is seen as guiltless of Rosanna Spearman's death. But the process of the search itself disturbs this security by the very means that it uses to establish it, for the narrative relationships and processes through which the past is reclaimed are more convoluted here than in *The Woman in White*.

The Moonstone is a novel about remembering, about how, and under what conditions, the unconscious past can be reclaimed, about how its traces might be interpreted and understood, about how this might be transmitted to posterity. It shows the inadequacy of Bruff's common-sense suggestion: 'I tell you, we shall be wasting our time ... If we attempt to try back, and unravel this frightful complication from the beginning. Let us close our mind resolutely to all that happened last year at Lady Verrinder's country house; and let us look to what we can discover in the future, instead of what we can not discover in the past' in the light of Blake's stricture: 'Surely you forget ... that the whole thing is essentially a matter of the past.'¹³ But in order to do this, it needs to be equally a novel about forgetting, about what is intractable, about silence, suppression and concealment. On a straightforward level, of course, this is a basic precondition of the narrative; there would be no mystery and therefore no story if Rachel had not suppressed her knowledge of the theft - this also makes it impossible for her to be a narrator - or if Rosanna's confession had not been sunk in the quicksand, to be dragged back, much later, on a chain. The pleasure of the 'discovery of the truth' depends on the conscious and unconscious forms of

resistance involved in the 'loss of the diamond' in the first place; an equivocal pleasure, enhanced by disclosing marginal and half-hidden texts that exist on the perimeters of the central narrative, written by those who labour under the yoke of a psychic and social inheritance, and who finally sink without trace. The narrative thus needs to overturn its own apparent order in order for meaning to emerge, but that order itself never takes the form of a fixed set of relations. It works as a set of interlocking frameworks: the overall structure of the story and the perspectives of special narrators within it on the one hand, and the ordering of narrative time through which the past is repossessed within the overall construction on the other. But these exist in no stable relation to each other, just as testimonies written within clearly identified cognitive frameworks undermine the authority of a stable, objective truth.

At first, structurally, *The Moonstone* seems to develop and combine many of the narrative features of *The Woman in White* and *Armadales*: it is narrated by different characters, through different interpretative and psychological perspectives; it is divided into Prologue, Story and Epilogue. The Prologue is 'extracted from a family paper' of 1799 and supplies both the long-term history of the Moonstone as religious object and source of passion and violence, and the more recent story of the Verrinder family's guilty past of colonial expropriation - a past shared by Rachel, Blake and Ablewhite in that they are all cousins, but not directly known by them. As in *Armadales*, the Prologue thus sets the scene for the legacy of the Verrinder family while remaining outside its perimeters by describing English unrestrained passion and violence in an 'exotic' colonial setting. But it is more thoroughly separated from the Story here: the autonomous family document makes no direct appearance in the Story; the history of the diamond, as against the

diamond itself, remains 'unconscious', so that it takes on the more occult connotations of a curse or an invasion, and this means that the Prologue and the Story hold a different relation to each other here than their equivalents in *Armada*.

The Story is subdivided into the 'Loss of the Diamond' and the 'Discovery of the Truth', the first, narrated by the Steward, Gabriel Betteredge, deals with the appearance of the diamond, the budding courtship between Rachel and Franklin Blake, its loss on the night of the birthday, the inadequacy of the police search and the suicide of Rosanna Spearman. The second is related by several narrators: Miss Clack the evangelical fanatic, Bruff the Solicitor, Franklin Blake, Ezra Jennings the doctor's assistant, Cuff the police detective, Dr Candy and Betteredge. It covers Rachel's relations with Godfrey Ablewhite, Blake's action, the discovery of Rosanna's confession and Blake's stained nightshirt, the experimental reconstruction of the theft and the reconciliation of Rachel and Blake, the re-emergence of the police search and the tracking down of Ablewhite. The Epilogue, narrated principally by Murthwaite, the anthropologist, describes the 'Finding of the Diamond' in the Hindu temple. The resolution of the double mystery is thus separated from the restoration of the original crime of colonial expropriation which takes place outside the perimeters of the Story itself.

So *The Moonstone* seems to take the form of an 'English' chain embedded within an 'Indian' frame. But just as the frame is marginal in both senses of the word, since it both defines and places the story and remains at its edges, so other kinds of marginal texts - the Indians' clairvoyant visions, Rosanna's letter, Jennings's unfinished book on the brain and the nervous system - can only become central, paradoxically, by remaining peripheral. The more embedded and qualified a narrative the stronger its significance,

and this explicitly overturns the pattern of a narrative authority which was more implicitly subverted in *The Woman in White*. The obviously subjective perceptions of the different narrators work primarily as devices to frustrate the reader's knowledge of the truth; to offer evidence unconsciously through lapses of symptomatic mannerisms, rather than to operate as a chain of linked associations. Moreover, there is no Walter Hartright figure who doubles as general editor and specific narrator in *The Moonstone*. Structurally, Franklin Blake fulfils this role; Betteredge reveals at the beginning that he is writing at the behest of Blake, who is himself following Bruff, the lawyer's, suggestion: 'Mr Bruff thinks, as I think, that the whole story ought, in the interests of truth, to be placed on the record in writing and the sooner the better,'¹⁴ and it then emerges that it was Blake who had extracted the 'family paper' of the Prologue. But whereas in *The Woman in White* the 'breakdown' of Laura is narrated through a multiple viewpoint and the reconstruction through Hartright's individual reappropriation of the past, in *The Moonstone* this is reversed. Here it is the loss that is described by one narrator while the restoration, or discovery of the truth is told through interlocking narrative voices, and although the discovery depends on appropriating and realigning information hidden in the 'loss' section of the narrative, this process is more unstable and equivocal than it is in *The Woman in White*. Blake is collecting evidence after the resolution of the mystery (which implies a different conception of evidence and a different use of it from the processes of rediscovery), whereas in *The Woman in White* the two processes are merged. Although he makes editorial interventions in the form of notes, or (in the case of Miss Clack) disputes with the participating narrator, the narrative as a whole is constructed retrospectively. Indeed it is the voice of Betteredge which closes the story: 'I am the person (as you remember, no doubt), who led the way in these pages and opened the story. I

am also the person who is left

behind, as if were, to close the story up', and thus frames the frame that he is set within.¹⁵

Blake's character is given no illusionary unity, and although Collins claimed in the Preface that his aim was to 'trace the influence of character on circumstance', the discovery of the truth invokes the disintegration of Blake as a single, let alone a resolute, self in control of his associations and his memory.¹⁶ Moreover, while Hartright's vacillations and anxieties, his lost recollections, had to be passed over in order to achieve final narrative coherence, Blake's must be investigated. This again puts the text itself in a different kind of relation to its own past and its own hidden traces, which, like the Moonstone, remain continually absent and present. *The Moonstone* is not only a reconstruction: it is the reconstruction of a reconstruction of a reconstruction, which means that suspense and indeterminacy need to arise from within the processes of memory itself and the way that it in turn is remembered. Thus although story time and narrative time remain structurally separate in the novel - with the important exception of Jennings's journal - both enact the circuitous process of detection by drawing on, while covering over, their own marginal traces.

There is thus a tacit correspondence between the way the detective process draws on marginal forms of knowledge, seen through the interpretative framework of the various narrators in the later reconstruction; the process through which the text explores the way that states of 'otherness' or transgression are created, and the implicit concepts of how the past determines the present as well as the processes by which it might be reclaimed. It is necessary to draw out the implications of the explicit use of contemporary theories of the unconscious which are transformed and manipulated in the text to investigate how this works. Ezra Jennings

repeatedly claims the authority of scientific credibility in explaining the physiological experiment with the opium to Blake:

I think myself bound to prove, in justice to both of us, that I am not asking you to try this experiment in deference to any theory of my own devising. Admitted principles, and recognised authorities, justify me in the view that I take ... Science sanctions my proposal, fanciful as it may seem. Here, in the first place, is the physiological principle on which I am acting, stated by no less a person than Dr Carpenter ... Observe, Mr Blake, that I am now referring to one of the greatest of British physiologists. The book in your hand is Doctor Elliotson's *Human Physiology*; and the case which the doctor cites rests on the well-known authority of Mr Combe ... Are you satisfied that I have not spoken without good authority to support me?¹⁷

Jennings thus repeatedly claims the credibility of externally verifiable scientific texts in the novel, and Collins, too, emphasises the external validity of the physiological experiment in the Preface: 'Having first ascertained, not only from books, but from living authorities as well, what the result of that experiment would really have been, I have declined to avail myself of the novelist's privilege of supposing something which might have happened, and have so shaped the story as to make it grow out of what actually would have happened - which, I beg to inform my readers, is also what actually does happen, in these pages.'¹⁸ But the credibility here depends on hypothetical speculation as much as on empirical evidence and it is this that gives scientific credibility its particular role of producing a fictional frisson in the novel; the reader, like the initially sceptical observers, Bruff and Betteredge, is drawn in, as voyeurs and involved spectator into the 'secret theatre' of the action - the pleasure increased by the belief that this is a re-enactment of both 'what happened' and 'what would have happened'. The experiment and what it reveals is thus the pivot of the story and it is set up within its own framework of internal coherence by the citing of the

Carpenter and Elliotson texts. But Collins uses Carpenter and Elliotson in this particular context in a very precise way as a means of highlighting the dramatic elements of the story and of combining the homely and exotic, the scientific and the occult; both the specific use of opium and the particular conception of the unconscious that is evocated are crucial here. When placed in the interlocking context of the broader narrative relations at work in the novel, the experiment, and the conception of the unconscious that it reveals, takes on connotations which are a further elaboration of their immediate psychological context.

In what ways does Jennings's experiment draw on and transform specific aspects of contemporary theories of the unconscious? His hypothesis, it has been seen, rests on combining authoritative statements from Carpenter and Elliotson, the latter resting his claims on the phrenological authority of Combe (who in turn cites Abel) though what this also means is that the authority also takes the form of a triply embedded anecdote. In running Elliotson and Carpenter together in this way, Collins is condensing two figures whose names would have had very different connotations by the late 1860s: Carpenter, the respected voice of mainstream physiological psychology; Elliotson, the marginalised advocate of mesmerism. But although these names suggest different conceptions of the way that the unconscious can be discovered, directed and controlled, the way that they are run together explicitly here focusses on those notions of the unconscious that they share.

This is, of course, the basic assertion that there is an unconscious - and that nothing that has been assimilated by the mind is ever entirely lost. The passage from Carpenter's *Principles of Human Physiology* that Jennings cites: 'There seems much ground for the belief, that every sensory impression which

has once been recognised by the perceptive consciousness, is registered (so to speak) in the brain, and may be reproduced at some subsequent time, although there may be no consciousness of its existence in the mind during that period', evokes an image of the unconscious as the mind's 'lumber room' filled with misplaced articles.¹⁹ It is an image which is reinforced by the use of Elliotson's anecdote of the Irish porter, 'who forgot, when sober, what he had done when drunk; but being drunk, again recollected the transactions of his former state of intoxication'.²⁰ This anecdote, moreover, is the same example that Dallas focussed on to criticise the most simplistic aspects of physiological theories of the unconscious: 'We laugh to hear of the drunken Irish porter who forgot when sober what he'd done when drunk ... so that having once in a state of intoxication lost a valuable parcel, he could give no account for it, but readily found it again in his next drinking bout ... The physiologists attempt to account for this by regarding the brain as a double organ',²¹ and to argue that 'these physical explanations are not satisfactory ... If memory has its hiding place in the mind, and if there too is to be found a hidden reason; so also, nearly all that we understand by passion, feeling sympathy ... is an energy of the hidden soul' - an energy derived from the secret interaction of the two aspects of the mind.²²

Here however Collins's selective and specific conflation of Carpenter and Elliotson provides a means of re-enacting the night of the theft 'as it happened', in a way that enables Blake's identity to remain both innocent of conscious complicity, and as obscure as the content of the lost parcel itself. But a more complex correspondence between the novel and Carpenter and Elliotson's ideas is also at work. As I outlined in the first chapter Carpenter recognised that memory operated selectively, but that 'consciousness of agreement' or recognition of the traces of the past 'constitutes the basis of

our feeling of personal identity', in a way that stressed the importance of continuous lines of transmission between past and present.²³ He argued that 'the unconscious prejudices that we thus form are often stronger than the conscious, and they are more dangerous because we cannot thoroughly guard against them ... the conceptions of childhood will appear latent in the mind, to reappear in every hour of the weakness ... when the tension of the reason is relaxed, and the power of old associations is supreme.'²⁴ But his precise interpretation of the implications of this underwent important modifications during the late 1840s which resulted in a renewed assertion of the claims of moral management, by realigning the significance of the distinction between reflex and volitional action.

Carpenter had claimed, following Pritchard and anticipating Maudsley, that individuals could not be held directly responsible for actions they had performed reflexively, or automatically: 'nor can he say a human action is morally wrong ... when it directly results from a powerful impulse which he has no power to restrain ... According to this view, what is termed conscience is nothing less than the idea of right or wrong character which becomes attached to an action, when we place in comparison the motives that prompted it.'²⁵ The implications of this argument, however, underwent important modifications during the 1840s, and moved towards arguing for the possibility of a greater degree of self-control. An important element of his analysis here was his study of the workings of the mind in various states of induced derangement in which volitional activity was suspended, but not entirely abolished. His study of Jacques Moreau's *Psychological Studies on Hachisch* and on *Mental Derangement of 1847* argued that even under the influence of cannabis the mind was partially capable of self-direction:

One of the first appreciable effects of the hachisch ... is the gradual weakening of that power of voluntarily

controlling and directing the thoughts, which is so characteristic of the vigorous mind. The individual feels himself incapable of fixing his attention on any subject; his thoughts being continually drawn off by a succession of the ideas that force themselves, (as it were), into his mind without his being able in the least to trace their origin ... By a strong effort of will, however, the original thread of the ideas may still be recovered, and the interlopers may be driven away, their remembrance, however, being preserved, like that of a dream recalling events long since past.²⁶

This analysis moreover gradually led him to modify the idea that reflex actions were completely beyond volitional direction. With the right training, he came to argue, the mind would not simply suppress desires which the unconscious might express, but would participate in their formation and direction. It is 'not only concerned with carrying into effect the suggestions of the desires. In the well-regulated mind it ought to have a controlling influence over the desires themselves, so as to present them from exercising themselves with undue force.'²⁷

Collins puts Carpenter's theories to a specific use in *The Moonstone* and allows Blake to have it both ways, even as they are framed in a context that transforms their implications. Collins's own account of his having written sections of the novel under the influence of opium are probably exaggerated; as both medicine and hallucinatory drug, opium provides the explicit means of inducing a trance-like state where 'volitional activity is suspended' in Blake, but this is implicitly qualified, not simply through Jennings's reference to Carpenter, but to his other source of authority - De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*²⁸. The use of De Quincey simultaneously gives 'opium' exotic and romantic connotations and defuses them along Carpenter-like lines. Jennings cites De Quincey as a self-conscious analyser of the effects of opium to suggest that one can still function relatively normally under the influence of opium, and the section on 'The Pleasures of Opium' in

the Confessions themselves, following the incidents that Jennings cites, reinforces this: 'Whereas wine disorders the mental faculties, opium on the contrary (if taken in a proper manner), introduces amongst them the most exquisite order, legislation and harmony.'²⁹

Here, therefore, it is used to produce a kind of unconscious that tacitly is still regulated, a state of passive derangement in Blake that does not explicitly imply or involve the disintegration of his social identity; which offers him a past to be visited not a history to be narrated. Blake's physiological morbid condition, induced by giving up smoking, is ostensibly produced by a banal transgression; similarly the hallucinatory aspects of the opium are here played down, and the anxieties that ostensibly rise to his consciousness in his deranged state in both its original and replayed versions, are the immediate ones about the safety of the diamond that suggests that he both desires and wishes to protect it. He is thus acting in accordance with a set of indirectly willed reflexive gestures which are beyond his immediate volitional control, and for which he is not, as it were, responsible, but which take the form of a relatively conscientious impulse in response to immediate impressions. Thus Jennings describes Blake's behaviour as both automatic and unconsciously controlled:

Under the stimulating influence, the latest and most vivid impressions left on your mind - namely, the impressions relating to the Diamond - would be likely, in your morbidly sensitive nervous condition, to become intensified in your brain, and would subordinate to themselves your judgment and your will - exactly as an ordinary dream subordinates to itself your judgment and your will. Little by little, under this action, any apprehensions about the safety of the Diamond which you might have felt during the day would be liable to develop themselves from the state of doubt to the state of certainty - would impel you into practical action to preserve the jewel - would direct your steps, with that motive in view, into the room which you entered - and would guide your hand to the drawers of the cabinet until you had found the

drawer which held the stone. In the spiritualised intoxication of opium, you would do all that.³⁰

Thus the opium discloses an already moralised unconscious.

So Collins combines aspects of Carpenter with the less contentious side of Elliotson and this is reinforced by the management of the experiment itself. Jennings's aim is to reproduce the conditions of the night of the crime, in the belief that Blake will automatically replay his earlier actions: 'We shall have to put you back again into something assimilating to your nervous condition on the birthday night. If we can next revive, or nearly revive, the domestic circumstances which surrounded you; and if we can occupy your mind again with the various questions concerning the Diamond which formerly agitated it, we shall have replaced you, as nearly as possible, in the same position physically and morally, in which the opium found you last year.'³¹ However the device through which this is enacted and achieved, Blake's trance watched by hidden observers, actually corresponds to the 'Magnetic Evenings at Home' - the controlled experiment of the mesmeric exhibition. Blake's re-enactment of the night is ambiguous. It can be seen either as a reflex response or as a somnambulist's trance - artificially induced - and it is this voyeuristic process of observation of the disclosure of the past that is turned into the source of fascination as much as what is actually revealed.

And this means that the 'Elliotson' of the fifth edition of *Human Physiology*, the outcast of the scientific establishment as the advocate of mesmerism as means of healing and of self-direction, who writes, citing Gall: 'How often in intoxication ... under violent emotions ... through the effect of such poisons as opium ... are we not in some measure transformed into totally different beings', becomes the more ambiguous subtext of the 'official'

physiological experiment.³² Bruff's initial distrust of the scheme: 'It was quite unintelligible to his mind, except that it looked like a piece of trickery, akin to the trickery of mesmerism, clairvoyance and the like', is overruled as he is drawn into the excitement of the drama.³³ Yet mesmerism, as an implied mode of influence and power that has both occult and scientific connotations, is continually invoked to produce a contradictory source of tension in the novel. The explicit discussion of mesmerism is linked to the more exotic process of clairvoyance and the tactics of the Indians are accounted for by Murthwaite in a way that replicates the contemporary rational explanation of the phenomenon:

The clairvoyance in this case is simply a development of the romantic side of the Indian character. It would have been a refreshment and encouragement to these men - quite inconceivable, I grant you, to the English mind - to surround their wearisome and perilous journey in this country with a certain halo of the marvellous and the supernatural. Their boy is unquestionably a sensitive subject to the mesmeric influence - and under that influence, he has no doubt reflected what was in the mind of the person mesmerising him. I have tested the theory of clairvoyance - and I have never found that the manifestations get beyond that point ... We have nothing whatever to do with clairvoyance; or with mesmerism, or with anything that is hard of belief to a practical man, in the inquiry that we are now pursuing. My object of following the Indian plot, step by step, is to trace results back, by rational means, to natural causes.³⁴

But although Murthwaite emerges as one of the authoritative voices in the novel, mesmerism actually merges with materialist physiology while suggesting a countervailing notion of the unconscious. It thus forms a key piece in the pattern of competing and interwoven hypotheses in the text as a whole, by remaining within, and subverting, Murthwaite's explanatory framework.

The lynchpin of this process is Jennings himself, who is a figure of ambiguity, uses psychological discourse ambiguously, and plays a dual role as agent and subject, doctor and patient in the progress of the story itself. As narrator, Jennings obviously provides the fulcrum of the story; his journal recounting the course of the experiment is one of the most exciting points of the detective process by being the one point where narrative time and story time merge and retrospective testimony turns into current journal. It is also the most reliable account as the place where 'objective' and 'subjective' impressions merge. Jennings thus collapses different kinds of knowledge and authority into each other. He is Collins's most explicit cross category figure, composed out of a bizarre juxtaposition of opposites in a way which extends the patterns of projection, expectation and perception involved in the first impressions of Marian Halcombe and Ozias Midwinter. These oppositions become a force of unconscious attraction for Blake, who is in turn responding to Betteredge's use of popular physiognomy:

It was impossible to dispute Betteredge's assertion that the appearance of Ezra Jennings, speaking from a popular point of view, was against him. His gypsy-complexion, his fleshless cheeks, his gaunt facial bones, his dreamy eyes, his extraordinary parti-coloured hair, the puzzling contradiction between his face and his figure which made him look both old and young together - were all more or less calculated to produce an unfavourable impression of him on a stranger's mind. And yet, feeling this as I certainly did - it is not to be denied that Ezra Jennings made some inscrutable appeal to my sympathies, which I found it impossible to resist.³⁵

Jennings, too, asks himself, of Blake, 'What is the secret of the attraction that there is for me in this man? ... Is there something in him that answers the yearning I have for a little human sympathy?'³⁶ As in the Armadale/Midwinter opposition, Jennings operates as Blake's 'unconscious', the site of the painful memories of which Blake is blissfully unaware, as well

as the container of the knowledge of how the unconscious works, and this is expressed in terms which hover on the edge of the language of mesmerism. The reconstruction of the night not only looks like a display of artificial somnambulism, even as it is explained according to Carpenter's model of the unconscious; Jennings notes immediately before it takes place: 'Without professing to believe in omens, it was at least encouraging to find no direct nervous influence - no stormy or electric perturbations - in the atmosphere.'³⁷ And the use of the diary to record immediate impressions means that there is a continual correspondence between Blake's artificially induced nervous irritation and his own.

All of Jennings's methods involve the experimental testing of speculative hypotheses and this means that he operates as extension and inversion of the conceptual authority that he draws on in explaining the experiment to Blake, while remaining the unwritten object of psychological enquiry himself. It also means that he functions as the inversion of the flamboyant manipulation of 'medical and magnetic science' as manifested by Fosco, and uses pharmacological transformation in the opposite way. The techniques that Jennings uses as a doctor are all designed to stimulate rather than soothe, suppress or sedate. He rallies the strength of the fever-struck Candy with the use of 'champagne, or brandy, ammonia and quinine', rather than following received wisdom and administering 'gruel, lemonade, barley water and so forth'.³⁸ He uses opium to stir up Blake's past, in contrast with Candy, who originally used it as a sedative. But this is based on the testing of an even more speculative hypothesis that he is elaborating in the unfinished book on 'the intricate and delicate subject of the brain and nervous system', a hypothesis that develops the assumptions of associationist psychology that corresponds with those elements of both Carpenter and

Elliotson that come closest to Dallas. Carpenter, like Abercrombie discussed how chains of association at work in memory include suppressed links 'which might be reproduced, as by the touching of a spring, through a nexus of suggestions'; Jennings concentrates more closely on the logic underlying the associative process at work on delirium.³⁹

He doubts 'whether we can justifiably infer - in cases of delirium - that the loss of the faculty of speaking connectedly, implies of necessity the loss of the faculty of thinking connectedly as well', a theory that he tests by rewording Candy's delirious rumbblings by filling in the gaps between them.⁴⁰ And although this process of 'thinking connectedly' means ironing out the inconsistencies in Candy's speech, creating 'a smooth and finished texture out of the unravelled skein', it still works through a symptomatic decoding of fragmented testimony that is in one sense an analogue of the pleasure of reading the novel itself.⁴¹ But this can only happen on the condition that Jennings's text be allowed to remain disconnected, and his own past to take the form of an unconfessed and unvindicated taint of guilt. His own medicinal use of opium as a sedative and pain-killer has none of the assuring reflexes of Blake's trance - the past here becomes a 'hideous phantasmagoria' rising up, like an exhalation and a curse which recalls Basil's delirium, and De Quincey's account of opium's pains: 'June 16th.- Rose late, after a dreadful night, the vengeance of yesterday's opium pursuing me through a series of frightful dreams. At one time I was whirling through empty space with the phantoms of the dead, friends and enemies together. At another, the one beloved face which I shall never see again, rose at my bedside, hideously phosphorescent in the black darkness, and grinned at me.'⁴² For Jennings, too, as for Mannion and Midwinter, memory takes the form of the continual pursuit of unsolicited testimonials from the past that turn him into an outcast

in the eyes of others and whose psychic burdens seem unable to remain concealed; but while for Mannion and Midwinter the confessional disclosing of the past is either used to reinforce pathological identity or to realign the perception through which this is made aberrant, with Jennings it finally remains unconfessed, concealed as the undisclosed secret in the text itself. For Jennings 'obscurity is the only hope'; the one trace that remains is the diary extract selected by himself: 'He opened the volume for this year, and tore out, one by one, the pages relating to the time when you and he were together', before consigning them, his book on the brain and himself, to a nameless grave. 'His story is a blank.'⁴³

So the figure of Jennings embodies the process by which contemporary theories of the unconscious both reinforce and disturb the process of detection that is also both reassuring and disturbing. He acknowledges the importance of searching 'the dark recesses of memory, unbidden suggestions, trains of thought unwittingly pursued', yet creates a smooth texture of the tangled skein through total recall or obliteration. This method of deciphering finally merges into the process of Cuff's detection and the disclosure of Ablewhite, while remaining a more complex process of which the police search only echoes one aspect. Jennings operates as the point at which the different kinds of oppositions that are at work in the novel break down, as signalled by his cross-grained identity: dark/light, young/old, attractive/repellant, masculine/feminine. 'Physiology says, and says truly, that some men are born with female constitutions - and I am one of them!'⁴⁴ He provides the means of disclosing the secret while remaining secret himself; he decodes delirium and has his own hallucinations. But this still does not represent a reconciliation of opposites. His own secret past does not signify as far as the central drive of the narrative is concerned. But the very

dissonant status of Jennings's evidence implies that there is another concept of the unconscious that remains tacit in the text, one that emerges through a process of displacement and transference, yet which still draws on the imagery and language of mesmerism, thus turning it into a referent which takes on different connotations in combination or contention with distinct perceptual codes. Thus Collins, in one respect, is using mesmerism as a means of invoking the mysterious, the occult, the hidden sources of energy and power. But the narrative relations of the novel also involve a more convoluted pattern of the social and psychic mechanisms by which that power is produced.

The most obvious way that 'occult' processes are invoked in the novel as the strange and indecipherable product of dominant fears and anxieties, is in the figures of the three Brahmins, upon whom the most extreme form of mesmerism - clairvoyance - is projected as a form of romantic fascination, which is then explained by Murthwaite as the product of their romantic fascination. The Indians, like the Moonstone itself, link the framing Prologue with the Story as well as moving across the margins of the narrative itself through a set of shifting perspectives which imperceptibly shift the centre of gravity so that they finally become seen as the rightful owners of the diamond. Clairvoyance works as a kind of familiar exoticism for English readers here, compounding the occult implications of orientalism, but deflecting its violent connotations from the oriental other to the English excesses of which it is the transformed expression. This is a precise elaboration of the ways in which Collins uses 'colonies' as fantastic other places in his work, as places of magical transformation or sources of violence or sexual excess whose position is structured by their simultaneous marginality and annexation to England, inheritors of a morbid inheritance

that remains an English malady. In *The Woman in White*, for example, South America is essentially a magical device, a place to which Hartright can disappear out of the story and where he can learn some of the skills and resolution that he will need in the London jungle. In *No Name*, by contrast, Canada is the site of Andrew Vanstone's youthful excesses, and Frank Clare's constitutional weakness fails the test of colonial survival, a survival which enhances Robert Kirke's masculinity. In *Armada*, the West Indies reinforce the absence of parental control on the Armadale fathers - facilitating their implied moral insanity but in a way that emphasises that this is a result of their own unlicensed power.

In developing this particularly double-edged colonial exoticism in *The Moonstone*, Collins is of course still reinforcing a perception of an inscrutable oriental other, and seeing the colonies as incubators of violence, though it might be 'English' violence.⁴⁵ But as John Reed has suggested, in *The Moonstone* he does so in a way that goes decisively against the grain of dominant representations of India as the extreme signifier of unlicensed passion and violence, that had been fuelled by the reaction to the Indian mutiny of 1857.⁴⁶ Collins reinforces the image of the oriental despotism of the Muslims in the history of the diamond in the Prologue, and India again is a place where violent passions are let loose by an act of invasion, but the Siege of Seringapatam explicitly overturns the patterns of invasion and violence generated by accounts of the contemporary event. Again it is Hercastle, the transgressive cousin, who is 'exasperated to a kind of frenzy by the slaughter through which we had passed'.⁴⁷ It is he who transforms the diamond into a dangerous and morbid inheritance by compounding its secrecy, and who returns to England to dwell in a social and psychic underworld of moral insanity that nonetheless anticipates the fascination with experimental

chemistry and artificially induced mental states that is to be unfolded later: 'Sometimes they said he was given up to opium smoking and collecting old books; sometimes he was reported to be trying strange things in chemistry; sometimes he was seen carousing and amusing himself among the lowest slums of London.'⁴⁸

The Indians' clairvoyance gains romantic and transcendent connotations in opposition to this, just as there is a close correspondence between decoding the significance of the Indians' structure of knowledge and attitudes towards the physiological experiment, first seen as a kind of mesmerism, and towards the figure of Jennings. Both Jennings and Indians are seen by Bruff and Betteredge as disturbingly alien and indecipherable and as conjuring tricksters; both Indians and mesmerism are decoded by Murthwaite, of whom Bruff notes 'Lawyer as I was, I began to trust Mr Murthwaite to lead me blindfold through the last windings of the labyrinth, along which he had guided me thus far.'⁴⁹ Like Jennings, too, Murthwaite is a figure who continually crosses the boundary between familiarity and difference, though not so bizarrely as Jennings, and who is the witness, in the Epilogue, of the Hindu ceremony in which the diamond is finally restored to its right place, marking its final passage from devilish occultism to spirituality, and at the same time cancelling out Herculio's earlier English transgression.

Mesmerism, therefore, does not provide a coherent alternative model of the unconscious so much as a set of implied psychological references that enables different processes of transference to take place, and forms of sexual and psychic power to be connoted, which can be 'traced back by rational means, to natural causes', but which also undercut any consistent cognitive framework. The Moonstone itself, of course, is the apotheosis of this process by which meaning and value are created out of projection, displacement and

transference. It represents a 'wild', nervous energy that works through both metaphoric and metonymic kinds of comparison. It signifies desire and also is an object of desire; it disrupts, too, any stable distinction between literal and figural, depth and surface, latent and manifest content. 'What have I lost? Nothing but Nervous Force -which the law doesn't recognise as property', jokes Ablewhite after being attacked by the Indians, but steals the Diamond as a piece of property.⁵⁰ The Moonstone absorbs the language of magnetism to convey its influence and attraction, to turn it into a conductor of the disruptive forces of the past, and to suggest sexual energy and psychic power. Its meaning is continually merging with objects and people around it, yet it also emanates from its own self-reflected light. 'When you looked down into the stone you looked into a yellow deep that drew your eyes into it so that they saw nothing else', Betteredge notes. 'No wonder Miss Rachel was fascinated; no wonder her cousins succeeded. The Diamond laid such a hold on one that I burst out with as large an 'O' as the Bouncers themselves.' Like the mesmeric fluid, or ether, it is simultaneously transcendental and material. Betteredge goes on, 'It seemed unfathomable ... we set it in the sun, then shut the light out of the room, and it shone awfully out of the depths of its own brightness.'⁵¹ This reinforces L.W. King's point in *The Natural History of Precious Stones and Gems*, one of Collins's sources, that 'the diamond is highly electric, attracting light objects when heated by friction, and alone among many gems has the peculiarity of becoming phosphorescent in the dark, after prolonged exposure to the sun's rays.'⁵²

As signifier of nervous force the Moonstone is set against the other image of 'magnetic' yellow deeps - the Shivering Sands. It becomes linked to Rachel as she is drawn to it, just as the Sands magnetise her obscure counterpart - reformed thief, deformed housemaid and subject of illicit

desire, Rosanna Spearman. The Moonstone is a source of unconscious energy which when lost produces hysteria. It is inherited by Rachel, yet seems to arrive without a history, or at least, its history is mysterious, outside the perimeters of the Story. The Shivering Sands, too, are an apparently meaningless natural phenomenon with no social and human use - its force itself is hidden, its unseen currents and tides suggesting the Horrid, as the diamond does the Sublime. Betteredge notes: 'At the turn of the tide, something goes on in the unknown deeps below, which sets the whole face of the quicksand shivering and trembling in a manner most remarkable to see ... Winter and summer, when the tide flows over the quicksand, the sea seems to leave the waves behind it on the bank, and rolls its waters in smoothly with a heave, and covers the sand in silence. A lonesome and horrid retreat, I can tell you!'⁵³ This implies that the Sand both has a magnetic force and signifies the 'magnetised' patient as it contains Rosanna's confession of an unspoken sexual desire. Unlike the sand in *No Name* which 'turns traitor and betrays the footsteps which have passed over it', the Sands conceal their secrets, their own past and the pasts of others which have to be dragged, painfully, back on a chain of submerged associations. Neither liquid or solid, it represents a double consciousness that exerts continual pressure on the waking subject, literally sucking it down. Rosanna foresees her own fate in the Sands, telling Betteredge, 'Something draws me to it ... I try to keep away from it, but I can't. Sometimes ... I think my grave is waiting for me here.'⁵⁴ But she does this by reading the place as the expression of the intractability of the past, linking social and sexual repression: 'Do you know what it looks like to me? ... It looks as if it had hundreds of suffocating people under it - all struggling to get to the surface, and all sinking lower and lower in the dreadful deeps!'⁵⁵

It is as nervous force and sexual energy, emerging through Moonstone and Sands, Rachel and Rosanna that mesmerism provides a language of secrecy, mystery and power, and suggests a process of unconscious repression that clashes with the 'Carpenter' dominated unconscious of moral management. There is an obvious attack on evangelical piety and hypocritical philanthropy in the figure of Godfrey Ablewhite, which is then transmuted into a grotesque parody of the evangelical end of the spectrum of self-control and moral management in the narrative of Miss Clack. Miss Clack, the fanatical spinster whose sexual obsession for Ablewhite is overtly presented as being displaced into religion, presents herself as an example of early moral training and of the virtues of 'energetically exercising the will', in a way that parodies the advocates of early self-culture: 'I am indebted to my parents (both now in heaven) for having had habits of order and regularity instilled into me at a very early age.'⁵⁶ But the figure is so grotesque, the satire against Clack as a spinster as well as a religious fanatic is laid on with so heavy a hand, that it defuses its effectiveness, and simply turns it against a familiar stereotype. With Rachel and Rosanna a more subtle process is at work. They are linked and set in opposition to each other by their magnetic attraction to Franklin Blake, for whom they both suppress knowledge and remain silent in order to protect, becoming secret bearers of his unconscious knowledge and of their own desire. As a linked opposition, moreover, they also qualify the double model of the simultaneous shaping of a feminine and a class identity through moral management posed by Laura Fairlie and Anne Catherick.

The figure of Rachel Verrinder sidesteps the problems posed by the overtly transgressive identities of Magdalen Vanstone or Lydia Gwilt - she remains an heiress though she loses the diamond, and she does not step

beyond the limits of propriety to regain a name or to gain a property. But the codes and the methods by which she keeps to her place suggest both the stress of the imposition of a self-imposed silence and the impossibility of breaking through the restraint other than as a form of hysteria. She becomes transformed, as Blake notes in his 'Objective-Subjective explanation', into 'Somebody Else' by suppressing his secret.⁵⁷ Rachel thus tacitly upsets the conventions of femininity as Magdalen or Lydia do explicitly - while both inverting and breaking down the Laura/Marian contrast; she is dark, positive, purposeful, independent - yet silent. Like Magdalen, she displays the characteristics that F.C. Skey identified as incipient hysteria in young middle class women: 'She judged for herself, as few women twice her age judge in general', Betteredge notes, ambivalently, in presenting Rachel; 'never asked your advice; never told you beforehand what she was going to do; never came with secrets and confidences to anybody, from her mother downward.'⁵⁸ Rachel's silence is structurally essential; there would be no story if the heroine had loquaciously blurted out what happened on the night of the theft. But increasingly this silence turns the conventions of moral management into hysterical repression on the one hand and suggests that the ascription of hysteria is the uncomprehending response to self-willed and indecipherable behaviour in a young woman on the other. 'I have never seen her so strange and reserved as she is now. The loss of her jewel seems almost to have turned her brain', remarks Lady Verrinder - while Rachel demands, on discovering Ablewhite's meretricious motivations for marriage, 'Is there a form of hysterics that bursts into words instead of tears?' - a form of hysterics that ultimately bursts out in words with her confession of her knowledge of Blake's apparent guilt - and which leaves her powerless.⁵⁹ She can only be a spectator of the replay of the drama.

'Suppose you put Miss Rachel in a servant's dress and took her ornaments off? ... It does stir one up to hear Miss Rachel called pretty, when you know all the time that it's her dress that does it and her confidence in herself.'⁶⁰ Rosanna Spearman, the underside of Rachel, as Jennings is of Blake, is never compared to Rachel as Anne is to Laura; the elimination of the difference between them is eroded by the elimination of Rosanna, not of the difference. And like Jennings, Rosanna finally sinks without trace in order that the official story might be told, though her testimony is the precondition for its resolution. But Rosanna also *does* an implied critique of the belief in self-determination in the face of a psychic inheritance that refuses to be laid to rest, with the negotiation of illicit desire itself. For what is primarily transgressive about Rosanna is not only a guilty past but also that she has a subjectivity and a sexuality that she dares to acknowledge: 'It's quite monstrous that she should forget herself and her station in that way. But she seems to have lost pride, and proper feeling, and everything', notes the good servant, Penelope, who keeps to her place.⁶¹ It is a desire that it is impossible either to confess or to suppress, and which reveals both the shaky foundations on which her reformed subjectivity - her 'proper feeling' - is built, and the self-restraint and submission which is its precondition. She points out the banality of Betteredge's paternalistically benevolent comment that 'your past life is all sponged out. Why can't you forget it?' by developing the metaphor in a way that exposes its copy-book complacency: 'The stain is taken off ... but the place shows, Mr Betteredge - the place shows!'⁶² Her confessional letter is buried with the nightshirt that bears Blake's stain; like Rachel she is the bearer of Blake's unconscious guilt. Her confession, however, reveals her own hopeless desire and class and sexual powerlessness, and makes it clear that moral management has compounded a

self-consciousness that breeds self-hatred rather than esteem by building up the hope that she can possess a subjectivity that is denied by her structural position:

My life was not a very hard life to bear when I was a thief. It was only when they taught me at the reformatory to feel my own degradation and try for better things, that the days grew long and weary ... I don't regret, far from it, having been roused to make the effort to be a reformed woman - but indeed, it was a weary life. You had come across it like a beam of sunshine at first - and then you too had failed me. I was mad enough to love you - but I could not even attract your notice.⁶³

So, in *The Moonstone* occult, deviant and marginal traces become significant in the process of becoming obliterated and I have argued that this implicitly overturns the patterns of narrative authority that are set up by the overall narrative structure of the novel. But the implications of this in turn depend on where one is starting; and in concluding I want to suggest that the novel in a curious way becomes the victim of its own relativism. At an early stage, Betteredge and Blake speculate on how to interpret the significance of the Colonel's legacy: 'Oh, that's your interpretation of his motive, is it? The Subjective interpretation again!' remarks Blake. 'There is a totally different explanation from yours, Betteredge, taking its use in a Subjective-Objective point of view. From all I can see, one interpretation is just as likely to be right as the other.' Of which Betteredge remarks: 'Having brought matters to this pleasant and comforting issue, Mr Franklin appeared to think that he had completed all that was required of him ... He lay down flat on his back in the sand.'⁶⁴ The novel suggests and undermines competing psychological and interpretative hypotheses, which are framed by different narrative voices, and placed in a narrative hierarchy the order of which is never made clear.

But they all revolve around Franklin Blake - the slippery implied general editor and specific narrator.

There are at least six different kinds of cognitive frameworks operating in the novel, although they are not on a par with each other, either in terms of credibility or in terms of space. There is Betteredge, voice of English common sense, who tells Blake 'you'll get over the weakness of believing in facts'; and Bruff 'immersed in Law, impenetrable to Medicine', who gives a more official and authoritative version of the same; Cuff, working by logical inference, based on the speculative interpretation of empirical evidence; Blake, a palimpsest of clashing methodologies; Murthwaite, Jennings and finally the Indians.⁶⁵ These overlap with the more specific function of the actual narrators in the novel, who like the narrators of *The Woman in White*, are told to keep within the perimeters of their own experience but who highlight the shifting and provisional nature of evidence, becoming more self-conscious as they take up each other's narratives, dispute with others' views, and so on. These in turn overlap with the method of structuring time, which to some extent seems to echo the implied inversion of narrative authority in that, inevitably, the narratives which have the greatest immediate impact on the story, and which are in some sense the closest to it, can only do so by disrupting the pattern of progressive retrospection - the linked testimonies. Jennings's journal is one example of this, the others are also submerged, partial texts - Candy's lost recollections and Rosanna's letter, are both on a time-fuse, since their function in creating suspense depends on their action being delayed. Thus the very means that Collins uses to produce indeterminacy in a retrospective narrative reinforces the sense of the relative inaccessibility of the past.

But these countervailing tendencies, crucial to the generation of tension and the involvement of the reader in the narrative itself, can also be read another way, as mutually collusive. In collapsing wildness and domesticity into each other, the disruption itself finally becomes domesticated. Betteredge is a crucial figure here. Old retainer and bearer of the family's unofficial memory, he is the safely cross-category figure who moves between the upper and nether worlds of the family, and who achieves a reconciliation between the contradictions of his role as unreliable witness. Betteredge stands as the model introducing the reader to the provisional way that proof will operate in the novel, providing the necessary digressions and delays that impede the sense of the continuous line of the story, yet also is the story, suggesting that all memory and all associations are significant. Betteredge engages in continual discussions of how to get started, how to tell the story, what constitutes relevance, what constitutes progress: 'Still, this doesn't look much like starting the story of the Diamond - does it? I seem to be wandering off in search of the Lord knows what, the Lord knows where.' 'I am asked to tell the story of the Diamond, and instead of that, I have been telling the story of my own self.'⁶⁶ He continually reveals his own prejudices and assumptions, and uses that parable of self-help and colonial survival, *Robinson Crusoe*, as a Bible on which he imposes his own exegesis, and which at one point becomes a text that explains the uncanny itself in Betteredge's interpretation: 'Fear of Danger is ten thousand times more terrifying than Danger Itself when apparent to the Eyes.'⁶⁷ Betteredge thus works as a kind of friendly unconscious in *The Moonstone*, an unconscious constructed after the event, which takes the form of a ravelled skein of homely associations and sympathies, and which simultaneously conveys and defuses the anxiety surrounding the Moonstone.

Betteredge is turned inside out by the story, but Franklin Blake's role in the narrative as the unconscious bearer of the mystery also means that he becomes the absentee landlord of a property and an identity, and the central yet absent figure around whom the narrative inversions of the novel turn. His apparently effortless power and magnetic attraction is reasserted, and his marriage to Rachel finally assured, as he moves along 'the slow and toilsome journey from the darkness to the light' by searching the recesses of others' memories which replace his own.⁶⁸ He even has to ask Betteredge about his own possible childhood somnambulism: 'I knew I could trust his memory, in a matter of this kind.'⁶⁹ But this blankness also suggests that Blake can remain healthy and the centre of privilege because he is dissociated from any past, or fixed identity. He is caught up in the family's morbid legacy, but he is no 'hypochondriacal bachelor', subjectively embroiled in the mesh of a family history. He appropriates others' memory, but this does not invoke any fundamental social and psychological transformation - the most intense moment of 'superstitious terror' that he mediates directly as a narrator is when he feels Rosanna's submerged chain beneath the Shivering Sands. Yet while this blankness means that it is the marginal Jennings who mediates the psychological contradictions of the novel, Blake nonetheless becomes Jennings's healthy counterpart through being the point where the cognitive boundaries of the novel break down, as he evades any fixed national identity or discursive framework. He is, really, as Betteredge humourously describes, a palimpsest - but a palimpsest built up not of layers of past memories and impressions, but of national identities, all, and none of which, stick:

At the age when we are all of us most apt to take our colouring, in the form of a reflection from the colouring of other people, he had been sent abroad, and had been passed on from one nation to another, before there was time for any one colouring more than another to settle on him firmly. As a consequence of

this he had come back with so many different ideas to his character, all more or less jarring with each other, that he seemed to pass his life in a state of continual contradiction with himself ... He had his French side, and his German side, and his Italian side - the original English foundation showing through, every now and then, as much to say, 'Here I am, sorely transmogrified as you can see, but there's something of me at the bottom of him still.'⁷⁰

He thus becomes the analogue of *The Moonstone* as well as the Moonstone. He is the figure whose juxtaposed, fragmented elements become entangled methodologies, and who, in becoming embroiled in tracking the clues of the story becomes satirically enmeshed in a labyrinth of speculation rather than a maze of disturbing hallucinations, a labyrinth that still leads back to his absent self:

To speak seriously, it is perhaps possible that my German training was in some degree responsible for the labyrinth of useless speculations in which I now involved myself. For the greater part of the night, I sat smoking, and building up theories, one more profoundly improbable than the other. When I did get to sleep, my waking fancies pursued me in dreams. I rose the next morning, with Objective-Subjective and Subjective-Objective inextricably entangled together in my mind; and I began the day which was to witness my real effort at practical action of some kind, by doubting whether I had any sort of right (on purely philosophical grounds) to consider any sort of thing (the Diamond included) as existing at all.⁷¹

The Moonstone is a novel which simultaneously conceals and reveals its own traces. Like Rosanna Spearman, it leaves half obliterated footprints, exposed by its own attempts at self-erasure, and like all playful, self-referential narratives, its significance can be bent to the preferences of its readers. But this ambiguity is not free floating, and here I have traced the way it is created by juxtapositioning contemporary theories of the unconscious in ways that suggest contrasting models of memory, identity and self-control and where the wild and the domestic finally turn out to be mutually collusive. The novel thus cannot be completely assimilated to any

one theory of the unconscious, and can simultaneously suggest both Carpenter and Elliotson's models. But if there is one conception of 'unconscious cerebration' that corresponds most closely to the workings of the text itself, it is E.S. Dallas's notion of 'the play of thought' that he puts forward in *The Gay Science*.

I have suggested that Dallas argued that the workings of the 'hidden soul' in unconscious, 'automatic' thought was inherently paradoxical; that the power of the unconscious lay in the very secrecy which characterised its operations rather than in the content of the 'lost parcels' that it might contain. He argued, too, that this process of transformation, generated by 'trains of thought' that are 'continually passing to and fro, from the light into the dark, and back from the dark into the light', is most evident to the conscious mind 'when memory halts a little. Then we are aware that we are seeking for something which we know not, and there arises a strange contradiction of a faculty knowing what it searches for, and yet making the search because it does not know'.⁷² The elusiveness of the *Moonstone* works as a direct analogue to the workings of the 'hidden soul' in this respect. Its power, which can be mystical or 'devilish', is derived from absorbing the meanings of those who are seeking it - meanings which are reflected back, changed and grown, as if it were a new thought, and we know not whence it comes'.⁷³ And the narrative structure of *The Moonstone* itself also draws on the kinds of pleasure involved in the 'play of thought' that Dallas argued linked unconscious thought and the 'secrecy' of art. It is a pleasure derived from tracing clues and deciphering meanings, yet it is finally ambivalent as well as elusive; and it corresponds to the workings of the unconscious by seeming not cosy and reassuring, since, 'these art-effects which we feel to be

sense weird and poetical', Dallas argued, 'are connected most intimately with the hidden working of the mind'.⁷⁴

CHAPTER SEVEN

RESISTLESS INFLUENCES:

DEGENERATION AND ITS NEGATION IN THE LATER FICTION

The resistless influences which are one day to reign supreme over our hearts and to shape the sad short course of our lives, are sometimes of mysteriously remote origin, and find their devious ways to us through the hearts and lives of strangers.

The Fallen Leaves¹

So do we shape our own destinies, blindfold. So do we hold our poor little tenure of happiness at the capricious mercy of Chance. It is surely a blessed delusion which persuades us that we are the highest products of the great scheme of creation, and sets us doubting whether other planets are inhabited, because other planets are not surrounded by an atmosphere which we can breathe!

Man and Wife²

A central figure in *Jezebel's Daughter* is a lunatic, Jack Straw. Like the 'meagre man' in *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices* he is undersized, and at once childlike and prematurely aged. Like the 'meagre man' he is obsessed by matting and plaiting, and spends a large proportion of his time weaving straw hats and baskets. But the emphasis has shifted, and with it the fictional and discursive role of madness. *Jezebel's Daughter*, a reconstruction of events in 1828 narrated in 1878, is Collins's most explicit discussion of moral management: the widow of a lunacy reformer discovers a copy of Tuke's A Description of the Retreat amongst her husband's books, rescues Jack Straw from an old-fashioned 'whips and chains' asylum, and reforms him in complete accordance with non-restraint ideals. Yet while this directly echoes Dickens's earlier philanthropic humanitarianism, the more radical connotations of the 'meagre man' passage have drained away. The plaited straw no longer offers a conceptual metaphor that merges with the

interwoven clues of the narrative of how he came to be there, or of how we might interpret it; it has become externalised into a handicraft, a suitably feminine piece of occupational therapy.

'Once', Jack Straw remarks, 'there was a time when my hands were the maddest things about me. They used to turn against me and tear my hair and flesh. An angel in a dream told me how to keep them quiet. An angel said, "Let them work at your straw." All day long I plaited my straw. I would have gone on all night, too, if they would only have given me a light ...'³ Even Jack's dreams provide their own paternalistic keeper; but the image has already become a historical curiosity. The non-restraint system is explicitly and favourably contrasted with the 'old' corrupt asylum in *Jezebel's Daughter*, but the function of Jack Straw himself is to be a kind of domesticated court jester, to provide the light relief that offsets the horror of the central villainy of the story - the plots of Madame Fontaine, the 'Jezebel' of the title, who is a case of qualified moral insanity. In using the contrasting images of madness so explicitly in this way, Collins seems to be resorting to desperate, worn out, remedies. Yet they are images which, in harking back to earlier models, both depend on and resist the shift in discourses on insanity itself in 1880. The suspense of *Jezebel's Daughter* hinges on the uncertainty over how Jack's well-intentioned actions will turn out - whether he will cure the heroine of an earlier attempt to poison her, or inadvertently administer the fatal dose himself.

Collins's later fiction poses its own particular interpretative problems. To treat a selection of his novels written during the 1870s and 1880s in a single chapter and inevitably schematically, tracing developments between novels rather than exploring the complexity of individual narratives, seems to make assumptions about the second half of his career that concurs with the overwhelming consensus on his later work - that it represents a process of

steady and irreversible decline. Many discussions of Collins's work present this in an extremely simplistic and often a somewhat prurient way, collapsing biographical circumstances, literary influences, explicit ideological shifts, cultural context and the use of particular fictional conventions into one another. Both author and works tend to be discussed in a degenerative framework themselves: Collins's poor health, his accelerating gout and increasing dependence on laudanum, the withdrawal of the benign influence of Dickens with his death in 1870, and the ascendancy of the supposed detrimental effects of his growing friendship with Reade, can be pressed into service to make Collins seem like a figure in one of his own narratives, gradually growing weaker, his writing becoming more and more 'feeble, faint and defaced by blots'.⁶ Collins fiction does decline - the late work does not have either the narrative complexity or the cognitive sophistication of the 1860s. But the process is much less relentless than is often assumed, and many of the novels deserve a fuller investigation than I have space to develop here. Moreover the factors that contribute to the shifts in the later writing need to be disentangled themselves.

To analyse Collins's 'decline' it is necessary to ask a slightly different question - why was he able to sustain his writing for so long? The novels of the 1860s were written when a particularly productive range of constraints and possibilities converged. They included the beginning of the enormous expansion of middle-range publishing that was signalled by the sensation novel, a factor which combined with the limitations and opportunities offered by the Dickens-dominated *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. This, together with the competing claims of Collins's publishers, George Bentley, and George Smith, who offered him £5,000 for *Armada*, meant that by the late 1860s Collins was in a strong position to set his terms as an independent writer wishing to expand his audience, while avoiding the more extreme

pressures of serial production. In 1873 he signed a contract with Andrew Chatto transferring the copyright of all his published and future works to Chatto and Windus, to be published originally in three-volume form, but to be made quickly available in two shilling and ultimately sixpenny editions. This was an experiment in cheap popular publishing that Richard Bentley had attempted unsuccessfully to initiate with Baill in 1852, but which was only now economically and culturally feasible.⁵ By the mid-1870s, therefore, Collins was in a relatively secure position, though he still needed to maintain a steady output of fiction: potentially he was able to reach a more broadly based lower-middle-class mass audience than ever before, yet remained structurally constrained by the three-volume form, which dragged out its weary life until the early 1890s.

Thus while Collins, like Hardy, Moore and Gissing, was affected by the economic and ideological crisis of novel production at the end of the nineteenth century, he was also in a position to take advantage of the revolution in middle range publishing that was one off-shoot of it: the bringing out of cheap editions which undermined, while remaining under the shadow of, the three-decker form.⁶ However this also meant that his conception of both his actual and potential audience became oddly skewed. Collins always felt constricted by a narrowly moralistic element in the critical establishment and by Mudie's evangelicalism: 'This ignorant fanatic holds my circulation in his pious hands. What remedy have we? What remedy have his subscribers?' he stressed angrily to Bentley in 1873 when Mudie refused to accept *The New Magdalen* unless the title were modified.⁷ Yet his continuing popularity, as witnessed by the Chatto sales, gave him the sense of a radical, popular public just beyond his grasp, that was, in a real sense, not simply an unknown, but a mythical one.

Late nineteenth-century literary culture was marked not so much by the disintegration of a previously coherent readership (the fears of that sort of disintegration had surrounded the rise of the sensation novel itself as a mass middle-class form in the 1860s and before that the Minerva press had appealed to a predominantly female audience in the late eighteenth century) as by the development of specific forms of publishing aimed at increasingly specific readerships.⁸ While the sensation novel had emphasised that culture was a commodity, it helped to create the conditions that enabled publishing to expand as a commodity and in a way that further consolidated the already established split between 'serious' and 'popular' literature. Collins became more explicitly radical, more openly socially committed in the second half of his career, and also, like E.S. Dallas, came increasingly to pin his cultural hopes on a mass popular audience rather than a bohemian avant-garde or liberal coterie, as his critique of social institutions became more open and outspoken.⁹ But it was a public that remained elusive. For example, he had originally intended that his most explicitly political novel, *The Fallen Leaves*, should be in two series, the second series following the hero and heroine's adventures in America. The second series was indefinitely postponed, ostensibly because of the negative critical reaction to the first, and Collins justified this in the Letter of Dedication to the following novel, *Jezebel's Daughter*: 'The first part of that story has, through circumstances connected with the various forms of publication adopted thus far, addressed itself to a comparatively limited class of readers in England. When the book is finally reprinted in its cheapest form - then, and then only, it will appeal to the great audience of the English people. I am waiting for that time, to complete my design by writing the second part of *The Fallen Leaves*.'¹⁰ But the time never arrived.

So there are connections between the permutations of Collins's cultural and economic circumstances, his political position, his discursive context and his adaptation of particular fictional conventions, but they are indirect and entangled ones. The later work, for example, continually shifts between genres though on the whole the novels are clearly recognisable within definite categories, as purpose novels, high melodrama, domestic realism. They adapt a shared stock of conventions from the earlier sensation fiction, yet it is impossible to draw precise generic boundaries around them. In much of the later work too Collins clearly encounters a problem that had not emerged as a problem before - of how to revitalise the pleasurable potential of 'sensation' conventions by making them 'work harder' and at the same time to intensify the fictional and psychological codes they draw on, by giving them a more clearly tendentious purpose. Collins's late novels have a strangely disturbing, dissonant, bizarre quality. Yet though they often employ similar devices of the earlier stories, the effect, on the whole (*The Law and the Lady* is an important exception here), is not so much to blur cognitive boundaries as to return to them in an unexpected way, developing an alternative method of producing a critical distance by turning particular assumptions against themselves. Many of the later novels seem to be concerned not with creating a range of possible meanings, but with narrowing meanings down, although this still often involves parody and play. In the 1870s and 1880s Collins develops particular conventions to overturn the assumptions of what had become a dominant discursive model - the narrative of degeneration. In the 1860s he could draw on a range of psychological and experimental scientific methods, speculatively and hypothetically. Now science itself comes increasingly to be used as a monolithic form of power and manipulation - an externalised source of melodrama and horror.

Here Collins's dissension from dominant contemporary psychological, biological and social theory becomes in a curious way an appropriation of, and adaptation to, it. In the first chapter I argued that conceptions of degeneration were not a new feature of social and psychological theory of the 1870s. The general notion of the inheritance and transmission of morbid symptoms and propensities within families was a well-established one throughout nineteenth-century psychological theory, and the more concrete notion of madness accumulating within families through the inexorable stages of eccentricity, insanity, idiocy and extinction, which was to be developed in the late 1870s and 1880s by Maudsley, was a direct appropriation of Morel's writings from the 1850s. But by the mid-1870s, the emphasis had changed: 'degeneration' was no longer one explanatory model interwoven with others, it became the dominant paradigm, in a way that also involved a shift in the cognitive status of the paradigm itself, and in the nature of the relationship between biological, psychological and social theory that it posed. Thus degenerative explanations of insanity and pathology directly contributed to post-Darwinian biological theory, and were themselves reinforced by it. This took place in an ideological context that increasingly drew on biological and organicist ideas less as conceptual metaphor or analogue, more as a direct model wherein the social became collapsed into the biological. The 'tyranny of organisation' implied not only that the physiological explained and defined individual psychology, but also that this could only make sense in a framework which placed the individual, on the one hand, in a long-term history of degenerative genealogy, on the other, in a context of a theory that conceptualised all social, racial and sexual division as manifestations of the biological determinism that it relied on to legitimise them.

The concept of degeneration as an implied concomitant of the process of inheritance and transmission is a strand that runs throughout Collins's

fiction, and is set against moral management in a variety of ways, which take on different connotations as their narrative context and their social focus shift. The novels of the 1850s and 1860s that I have analysed all depended for their sensations on tensions generated within the family - echoed or articulated by the excluded or marginal figures outside it. The upper middle class family, left to itself, needed to be roused from atrophy in order to renew itself, but moral management was also a source of manipulation, its presuppositions overturned by the tenacity of a psychic legacy. Collins uses similar narrative motifs in the 1870s and 1880s but the elements within the stories as well as their context has changed. The later novels often attempt to locate the tensions in a wider structural network than the immediate one of the family, to trace the determinants, the 'resistless influences', that shape identity. They seek remote origins in a social fabric constructed by economic divisions as well as a meretricious morality. The moralist beliefs of moral management are set within this wider implied analytical framework, and emerge most explicitly in *The New Magdalen* and *The Fallen Leaves* through the rhetoric of Christian Socialism. It is a rhetoric that clashes and combines with organic metaphors in exploring structural processes, expressed through physiological signs, and stresses that destinies are shaped, 'blindfold' by chance as much as a predetermined origin. But now, the devices through which the novels explore the position of powerless groups within this structure transform the way that physiological and psychological codes can be transformed themselves by being put to work as fictional conventions. It also transforms the meanings of the sensation conventions themselves.

Man and Wife and The New Magdalen

Man and Wife (1870) and *The New Magdalen* (1873), for example, take up certain of the central concerns and conventions of *The Woman in White* and *No Name* to focus on the way that feminine identity is constituted

through marriage as a property relationship, and Collins pushes the conventions of *No Name* further to explore the structural position of more obvious outcasts: the fallen woman, the servant and the penitent prostitute - the latter the subject of such ambivalent fascination. But because Collins deals with these questions of class and sexuality so openly here, he is forced into covering his tracks as he goes along. He implies that the anomalousness of the powerless is completely the product of the codes of a dominant social structure whose morbidity lies in its very power, but he ends up by reinforcing the split between purity and danger that earlier is made so ambiguous. *Man and Wife* in particular is an extraordinary exploration of male violence and the position of women in marriage. It uses the familiar ingredients of forced marriage, masculine villainy and feminine vulnerability, but, in contrast with *The Woman in White*, turns the resource of these conventions to focus not on the vulnerability of the heiress, but the plight of the propertyless middle-class woman, the self-reliant and productive working-class woman able to earn her own property. In a modified return to the older melodramatic conventions of the seduction of the working-class girl by upper-class villain, the victims are vulnerable either because of their lack of property or their ability to earn money, not because of their inheritance - though that vulnerability is itself passed on from mother to daughter. The narrative revolves around three problematic, interrelated marriages, and it draws explicit connections, at the beginning, between the two Anne Silvesters - middle-class, propertyless mother and daughter, both seduced and betrayed - and towards the end, between the positions of Anne Silvester the younger and of the mysteriously dumb cook Hester Dethridge. The latter's written confession, describing her oppression by, and final murder of, her drunken and brutal husband, is revealed as part of the process by which Anne's wicked husband Geoffrey Delamayne attempts literally to smother Anne herself.¹¹

Hester Dethridge's ambiguously pathological identity absorbs and expresses the unspoken connotations of the middle-class marriage; but it is the figure of Geoffrey Delamayne who both echoes and is contrasted with her feckless, drunken and dead working class husband, in a way that suggests that it is the latter's gender which is morbid rather than his class, and this turns *Man and Wife* into a polemical attack on the 'inbred' violence that lies at the heart of the dominant culture. Published in 1870, two years after the appearance of Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*, it takes up the increasing middle-class fear of the violence of a degraded urban working class and turns this round into an *attack* on the 'savagery' of English upper-middle-class customs and ideals of masculinity in a way that extends Arnold's discussion of 'Barbarians' while pushing it to a pathological conclusion. In doing this Collins detaches the physiognomic sign from its superficial moral referent in a way that makes 'fitness' itself the corollary of cultural atrophy and decay; yet this also finally leads to a transformed but reasserted realignment of the moral and the physiological. The Preface claims medical authority in exposing the rigours of the 'national eccentricity', the 'mania for muscular cultivation', and goes on:

As to the moral results, I may be right or I may be wrong in seeing as I do a connection between the recent unbridled development of physical cultivation in England, and the recent spread of grossness and brutality among certain classes of the English population. But, is it to be denied that the grossness and brutality exist? and, more, that they have assumed formidable proportions among us of late years? We have become so shamelessly familiar with violence and outrage that we recognise them as a necessary ingredient in our social system, and class our savages as a representative part of our population, under the name of 'Roughs'. Public attention has been directed by hundreds of other writers to the dirty Rough in fustian. If the present writer had confined himself within these limits, he would have carried all his readers with him. But he is bold enough to direct attention to the washed Rough in broadcloth - and he

must stand on his defence with readers who have not noticed this variety, or who, having noticed it, prefer to ignore it.¹²

Thus the very terms that he uses to question the framework through which 'Roughs' are seen as expressions of working class degeneration can only do so by reinforcing the assumptions that contribute to its formation.

Geoffrey Delamayne is the figure who marks and reinforces the point of shift in the interpretations and modifications of the notion of 'fitness' itself - the point where evolution slides into degeneration. His excessive physical strength is both cause and symptom of moral atrophy which in turn is finally explained physiologically. It is stressed that he is representative of modernity, but as a result of upper-class 'barbarism' rather than over-refinement. And in modifying the degenerative model that produced the attenuated 'inbred' nervous disorder of Noel Vanstone and Frederick Fairlie, Delamayne can only be presented as a 'savage' throwback to a primitive state that is fostered and required by modern social conditions rather than a product of a worn out but tenacious heritage: 'The savage element in humanity ... began to show itself furtively in his eyes, to utter itself furtively in his voice. Was he to blame for the manner in which he spoke to her? Not he! What had there been in the training of his life (at school or at college) to soften and subdue the savage element in him? About as much as there had been in the training of his ancestors (without the school or the college) five hundred years since.'¹³ Moral insanity is now incubated at the heart of English progress, but Geoffrey nonetheless needs to be presented as a primitive throwback for this to stick.

In *Man and Wife*, moreover, power and strength become degenerate through turning out not really to be power and strength after all - Vanbrough, Anne Silvester Senior's husband, turns to suicide when his own relentless ambition and success turn to dust in his hands; Delamayne's muscularity is

finally revealed to be a deceptive mask concealing a vital weakness. But the manipulation of these conventions themselves is made dependent here on a narrative rhetoric that actively projects interpretations into physiological signs, and this paradoxically reinforces the patterns of control that fix Delamayne as pathological, and, by contrast, Anne as unconsciously attractive through physiognomic irregularity. Here nervous symptoms, as with Laura Fairlie, become the sign of desirability itself; but this now extends to actual physical defect - in Maudsley's terms 'a want of regularity and harmony in the features ... there are tics, grimaces, other spasmodic movements ... of eyelids, or lips ...'¹⁴

Worse even than this, there were positive defects in her face, which it was impossible to deny. A nervous contraction at one corner of her mouth, drew up the lips out of the symmetrically right line, when they moved. A nervous uncertainty in the eye on the same side narrowly escaped presenting the deformity of a 'cast'. And yet, with these indisputable drawbacks, here was one of those women - the formidable few - who have the hearts of men and the peace of families at their mercy.¹⁵

Anne's innocent vulnerability is the outcome of her attractiveness being at once perverse and beyond her control. And her counterpart, Hester Dethridge becomes an uncanny figure by both functioning as the extended analogue of Anne's position, and as the literal manifestation of a psychic response to violence and repression.

Hester, like Anne Catherick, is a spectral manifestation of a psychic response who is herself 'psychic'; she sees visions but refuses to speak. While her written confession disrupts both narrative voice and narrative time in the story - it emerges from underneath the dominant narrative as a trace of the past - it also enacts a parodied return to the model of moral management now transformed into opposing but related forms of spectral delusion. For the confession is not only addressed to a vengeful God, replaying the history

behind her murder of her husband, but also recounts the punishment itself: 'I was commanded in a vision to open the Bible, and vow on it to set my guilty self apart from my innocent fellow-creatures from that day forwards: to live among them a separate and silent life ...', so that her hysterical dumbness turns out to be restraint imposed by the controlling gaze of a punitive Deity.¹⁶ And this vision of a controlling God turns into another kind of revelation; this time a vision of her guilty self, unambiguously presented as her pathological other:

The Thing stole out, dark and shadowy in the pleasant sunlight. At first I saw only the dim figure of a woman. After a little, it began to get plainer, brightening from within outwards - brightening, brightening, brightening, till it set before me the vision of MY OWN SELF - repeated as if I was standing before a glass: the double of myself looking at me with my own eyes ... It pointed to the boy, with my own hand. And it said to me, in my own voice: kill him.¹⁷

Thus Hester Dettridge functions as an uncanny, ghostly figure within the overall naturalistic narrative by remaining embedded within its implied terms of reference as pathological - though it is a pathology that has become more self-conscious. And while Anne Catherick and Laura directly echoed each other through their shared ghostly whiteness, Hester's absence, her silence and 'deathliness', finally breaks out into mania as she attacks Delamayne - but it is a violence that has to take the form of doubling within the self, if Anne Silvester is to remain sympathetically vulnerable.

In *The New Magdalen* these patterns of guilty and innocent identities are more complex, but they still finally reinforce the fixed purity of the victim. While *Man and Wife* took up the unspoken questions of *The Woman in White* in the interrelated figures of propertyless women, *The New Magdalen* reruns its familiar sensation conventions - the substitution of identity to gain a new one - to elaborate what by the 1870s was also a familiar convention -

the figure of the chaste 'Magdalen'. This explicitness imposes another layer of necessity for subterfuge, which is enacted as much by the novel's narrator as its heroine. *The New Magdalen* is about the need to evade the stigma of an intractable past and an intolerant morality, but the deception and disguise that this involves both produces the remorse that can only be experienced by the penitent and reveals the true self that is expressed by the role. The novel contrasts respectable pathology and penitent transgression. Two women meet by chance in the neutral ground of a war zone. The orphaned middle class Grace Roseberry is returning from Canada to a well-established position as paid companion to an aristocratic dowager; the Red Cross nurse, Mercy Merrick, reveals herself both as an angel of mercy, and as at the mercy of her past. Her account of her past and present position is not so much a reformed confession as a philanthropist's case history. It is a study of ostracism told by an assimilated voice that conjures up a familiar image of the penitent fallen woman: 'I am accustomed to stand in the pillory of my past life. I sometimes ask myself if it was all my fault. I sometimes wonder if society had no duties towards me when I was a child selling matches in the street - when I was a hard working girl fainting at my needle for want of food ... What I am can never alter what I was ... Everybody is sorry for me ... Everybody is kind to me. The lost place is not to be regained.'¹⁸ A literal bolt from the blue - a bomb - leaves Grace for dead; Mercy takes her place as the companion - but is then persecuted by her own remorse and by Grace herself, who returns to claim her place and name - claims initially dismissed as insane delusion.

A process of double displacement is thus developed throughout the novel. It is only through imposture that Mercy can find her right place, while the respectability that has been stolen from Grace turns out to be an empty shell; it is only through another emigration with the radical preacher Julian

Gray that the heroine can finally be assimilated. Echoing *The Woman in White and No Name*, the social self is seen to be the product of others' interpretations and projections - the disintegration of this becomes madness. At first Grace's response to the stealing of her identity seems to enact Laura's plight - she is shown Mercy's clothes to prove that that is who she is; she is stripped of all the reference-points that link her to the past. With Mercy, as with Magdalen Vanstone, the greatest form of imposture is duping respectability, and both heroines break down under the strain of dissembling, even as Mercy comments, 'Remorse is the luxury of an honest woman'.¹⁹ But it is a remorse that has been internalised, nonetheless. Collins often protested in his Prefaces that he drew a distinction between 'true' and 'false' morality, and exposed the latter as a way of reassessing the former, but this was qualified by narrative complexity in the 1860s. In *The New Magdalen* it is more clearly affirmed, but this in turn depends on images of unequivocal guilt and innocence as well as remorse and reform that are reinforced by the contrasting psychological reference points that make sense of Mercy and Grace.

I have suggested that Collins needed to resort to an unambiguous notion of purity in order to represent an actual prostitute - here a rhetoric of radical philanthropy is pushed through moral management into a state of 'grace' - as Mercy finally acknowledges she is not really Grace. The moral centre of the story is the Christian Socialist priest, Julian Gray, a figure who clearly states his own position as he is introduced: 'Pitiless Political Economy shall spend a few extra shillings on the poor as certainly as I am that Radical, Communist and Incendiary - Julian Gray.'²⁰ He reinforces Mercy's self-analysis by presenting the plight of the ex-prostitute to the middle class household: 'She may long to make atonement, and may not know how to begin. All her energies may be crushed under the despair and horror

of herself, out of which the truest repentance grows. Is such a woman as this all wicked, all vile? I deny it! She may have a noble nature, she may show it nobly yet.²¹ And he later refers to this symbolic figure as Mercy struggles under the strain of dissembling: 'Be the woman whom I once spoke of - the woman I still have in my mind - who can nobly reveal the noble nature that is in her.'²² Thus he transforms Mercy into absolute virtue by holding up an idealised image of herself for her to emulate. The disguise literally is a mask rather than a metaphor for identity shaped by perception; her final confession reveals that even her apparent former life as a prostitute was forcibly imposed.

While Mercy Merrick represents a modification of the self-regulating perspective of moral management projected onto an idealised image that functions almost as an allegorical figure, her counterpart, Grace Roseberry, depends on the expectations generated by the conventions of moral insanity - wherein self-possession becomes the sign of perversion, which is in turn manifested through the unambiguous display of physiognomic signs: 'The forehead was unusually low and broad; the eyes unusually far apart; the mouth and chin remarkably small.'²³ Just as Mercy's purity defies as it manifests 'Society's' exclusion of its outcasts, so Grace's 'perversion' is the extension of the very propriety that consolidated that exclusion. Collins often suggested that the very attempt to enact the social codes that are the sign of self-possession through propriety can easily slip over the edge into weird behaviour - Midwinter's collapse into hysteria in *Armada* as he attempts to enact a parody of good-humoured politeness is one clear example. But this depends on a pattern of self-sustaining contradictions within the self that are reversed in the figure of Grace Roseberry in *The New Magdalen*. Again her moral insanity resides in the strength of her self-control, though not in the skill with which she can sexually manipulate others,

but this must again depend on the simple realignment of the physiological and the moral: the connotations of Grace's low forehead and receding chin - her arrested moral development - are borne out by her subsequent behaviour.

But although the transformation and disguise of identity in *The New Magdalen* paradoxically ends up by reinforcing the very physiological assumptions that the earlier novels questioned, Mercy and Grace are nonetheless placed in the context of a set of marginal or contingent figures who represent different graduations of the interpretative realignment as they shift down the social scale. Horace Holmcroft, the false hero from an ancient upper-middle-class family, combines the decadence of Fairlie with the degeneration of Delamayne, but again it is healthy conformity that breeds a morally deficient type signalled by the stock conventions of physiognomy: 'Men - especially men skilled in observing physiognomy - might have noticed in the shape of his forehead and in the line of his upper lip the signs indicative of a moral nature deficient in largeness and breadth - of a mind easily accessible to strong prejudices, and obstinate in maintaining those prejudices in the face of conviction itself.'²⁴ The plain-clothes policeman - a hybrid voyeur who crosses the boundaries between classes, between public and private zones, between crime and respectability - is presented more comically, as a sinister creature whose degradation is the product of adaptation: 'He had odiously watchful eyes - eyes that looked skilled at peeping through keyholes. His large ears, set forward like the ears of a monkey, pleaded guilty to meanly listening behind other people's doors ...'²⁵ But the East End pauper child, whom Mercy wants to save herself by saving, has become a polluted and polluting victim, adapted to the conditions which have formed her in a way that suggests that Mercy's own story is formed by the very 'halo of romance' that her 'sister' negates:

There was no beauty in this child; no halo of romance brightened the commonplace horror of her story. She

came cringing into the room, staring stupidly at the magnificence all around her - the daughter of the London streets! the pet creation of the laws of political economy! the scourge and terrible product of a worn out system of government and of a civilization rotten to its core! Cleaned for the first time in her life, dressed in clothes instead of rags for the first time in her life, Mercy's sister in adversity crept fearfully over the beautiful carpet and stopped wonder-struck before the marble of an inlaid table - a blot of mud on the splendour of the room.

Mercy turned from Julian to meet the child. The woman's heart, longing in its horrible isolation for something it might harmlessly love, welcomed the rescued wail as a consolation sent from God. She caught the stupefied little creature up in her arms. 'Kiss me', she whispered in the reckless agony of the moment. 'Call me sister!' The child stared vacantly. Sister meant nothing to her mind but an older girl who was strong enough to beat her.²⁶

The narrative rhetoric here is forced to overturn the very structure of liberal philanthropic sympathy that is activated by and manifested in the figure of Mercy in order to emphasise the social and political laws that form the pauper child. And it can only do this, setting her as a figure in a political rhetoric, by reinforcing her alien identity through the physiological signs of urban degeneration.

The Law and the Lady, Jezebel's Daughter, Heart and Science

Man and Wife and *The New Magdalen* each take the questions that sensation conventions raise about the perception of social identity beyond their earlier limits, yet need to strip away much of their psychological and cognitive equivocation in order to elicit their readers' sympathy, but in *The Law and the Lady* (1875) Collins approaches the cognitive complexity of *The Moonstone*, and develops his most bizarre and contradictory image of insanity in the figure of Misserimus Dexter. Here, and in *Jezebel's Daughter* (1880), and *Heart and Science* (1883), there is a return to distinct methods of psychological investigation, which are self-consciously used as sources of

narrative tension in ways that turn the stories themselves into more detailed inquiries into the methods that are exploited. Collins's brief note to the reader in *The Law and the Lady* 'Be pleased then to remember (first) that the actions of human beings are not invariably governed by the laws of pure reason', is enacted by the narrative itself, in which the process of disclosing the past involves the exploration of psychic mechanisms which have to be hidden again if the social and sexual balance that their disclosure achieved is to be maintained.²⁷

The Law and the Lady is neither as structurally or conceptually complex as *The Moonstone*, nor does it draw explicitly on contemporary theories of the unconscious, but this means that it merges legal and psychological definitions and psychic and social identities the more effectively, and gives Dexter as madman a range of competing roles to play as agent in the narrative. The heroine, Valeria Macallen's story opens with her marriage, but then goes on to reveal her husband's hidden secret as she discovers that he had been tried for the murder of his former wife, the verdict pronounced 'Not Proven'. Her own resolution to re-open the case and vindicate her husband's innocence in order to gain full possession of him and consolidate her own subjective identity as his wife, makes her in some respects a female equivalent of Walter Hartright. But the truth that is disclosed, the ghostly trace of the first marriage, and the final discovery of the first wife's confession, embedded in Valeria's narrative, and in fragments, in a dust-heap, leaves the husband's guilt ambiguous: the wife's confession describes how she was gradually driven to suicide, not by her husband's violence, but by his contemptuous indifference and sexual aversion - evidence that Valeria suppresses herself.

Thus 'the discovery of the truth' confirms the husband's legal innocence though in a manner that allows it to remain morally opaque. And although

the reconstruction of the dead wife's diary is finally confirmed to be the real evacuation of the past's traces, uncovered through archaeological and forensic science, and photography, the disclosure of the existence of the trial and the courtroom drama itself, merges cognitive opacity with the unreliability of legal perceptions. Valeria first discovers that all is not well with her husband when she accidentally meets his mother (whom she recognises from a photograph) who in turn fails to show any sign of recognition when she tells her her name, and who then fails to acknowledge her son. Her husband's friend, an ageing roue, refuses to reveal his secret, but leaves her in a room which contains the clue to it; this means that every object becomes overburdened with significance, as she notes and analyses in detail her own sensations and associations: 'the longer I searched the farther I seemed to remove myself from the one object I had it in my heart to attain'.²⁸

The secret, when she does discover it, is presented as a piece of sensation drama in a volume of 'Celebrated Trials', which is then replayed at length as an embedded narrative in the story itself. And the transcript of the trial reinforces the device that produces the unresolved tension in the story; the verdict does seem 'not proven' as the evidence itself is open to contradictory interpretations. The post mortem proves 'beyond the possibility of doubt' that the wife died poisoned. But it is more difficult to interpret the significance of the husband's diary in which he acknowledges his distaste for his wife; Dexter denies that it should be read as a 'true confession' despite the way it is paraded as such: 'A Diary (when it extends beyond a true record of facts and dates) is, in general, nothing but an expression of the weakest side in the character of the person who keeps it. It is, in nine cases out of ten, the more or less contemptible outpouring of vanity and conceit which the writer dares not exhibit to any mortal but himself.'²⁹ And

equivocation in turn hinges firstly, on the controversial identity of the wife - presented alternatively as ugly, aggressive, pathologically jealous and demanding - and as intelligent, charming, compassionate and witty; and secondly, on the status of the evidence of Dexter himself.

Dexter has a range of contrasting functions in the narrative. He plays a crucial role in achieving its final resolution by possessing a knowledge of the truth that he refuses to reveal, so that it has to emerge through the disintegration of his consciousness, and the piecing together of the fragments of his memory (as Jennings does with Candy). Here the business of disentangling and realigning the elements of his unconscious associations directly prefigures the means by which the wife's confessional letter is recovered from the forgotten detritus of the household's past. And his 'craziness' is a crucial means for compounding the mystification of the trial itself. But the excesses of Dexter go far beyond this. They take the form of a fantastic magnification of competing psychological codes; above all, of competing definitions of the perception and significance of the borderlands of insanity.

In the first place Dexter is presented not simply as a fantastic image, but as a figure who works, on different registers, in a way that is directly analogous to the dreaming process himself. He is initially introduced in the transcript of the trial, ^{by being} wheeled on the courtroom stage as exhibit as well as witness. He literally appears as the unexpected juxtapositioning of fragments that can be recognised but not reconciled: 'a strange and startling creature - literally the half of a man' but 'to make the deformity all the more terrible, the victim of it was - as to his face and his body - an unusually handsome and well-made man'. And further, although 'Never had Nature committed a more careless or a more cruel mistake than in the making of this man' he is presented as both natural and mechanical - half man, half chair - 'My Chair is

Me'.³⁰ As in a dream, Dexter's physical manifestations are metaphoric expressions of mental processes which are in turn dream-like. Mrs Macallen describes how he 'mixed up sense and nonsense in the strangest confusion' after a lucid opening in the trial. 'In short, he was just like himself - a mixture of the strangest and opposite qualities; at one time perfectly clear and reasonable, as you said just now; at another breaking out into rhapsodies of the most outrageous kind, like a man in a state of delirium.'³¹ This openly acknowledges that physical identity has become a deconstructed analogue of a mental process.

Moreover just as Dexter is presented in the language of dreams, and inhabits the uncanny borderlands at the edge of logical associations, so the overlapping narrative views of him progressively both deconstruct and reinforce competing perceptions and definitions of insanity. 'Misericimus Dexter - First View' presents him in a state of high mania, complete with the classic symptoms of delusions of grandeur, in his sombre house in the indeterminate suburbs, found by driving 'through a dingy brick labyrinth' of streets. Here the frisson of what he signifies depends on magnifying his grotesqueness:

A high chair on wheels moved by, through the field of red light, carrying a shadowy figure with floating hair and arms furiously raised and lowered, working the machinery that raised the chair at its utmost rate of speed. 'I am Napoleon, at the sunrise of Austerlitz!' shouted the man in the chair as he swept past me, on his rumbling and whistling wheels, in the red glow of the firelight. 'I give the word; and thrones rock, and kings fall, and nations tremble, and men by tens of thousands fight and bleed and die!' The chair rushed out of sight and the man in it became another hero - 'I am Nelson!' the ringing voice cried now. 'I am leading the fleet at Trafalgar ...!' The frightful and fantastic apparition, man and machinery blended in one - the new Centaur, half man, half chair - flew at me again by the dying light. 'I am Shakspeare!' cried the frantic creature now. 'I am writing "Lear", the tragedy of tragedies. Ancient and modern, I am the poet who towers over them all.'³²

This passage, however, qualifies, as it sets up, the terms of its own interpretation. Dexter is seen fleetingly, in a lurid half-light in a way that 'works the machinery' of his dramatic performance as he works the machinery of his chair. He is thus giving a performance of a performance, a display of contrasting personas, presented as a 'fantastic and frightful apparition' and concluding with the performance of a playwright.

This 'apparition' is extended and modified in the 'Second View' where again 'the whole man appeared to have undergone a complete transformation', but this time a transformation across an earlier boundary between madness and eccentricity: 'I saw plainly now the bright intelligent face, and the large clear blue eyes ... the deformity which degraded and destroyed the manly beauty of his head and breast was hidden by an Oriental robe of many colours ... He wore lace ruffles at the ends of his sleeves, in the fashion of the last century.'³³ Here he analyses his own behaviour, in a way that turns it into the excess of hypochondriacal nervous sensibility: 'I have an immense imagination; it runs riot at times. It makes an actor of me. I play the parts of all the heroes that ever lived ... I merge myself in their individualities ...'³⁴ Thus romanticism is pushed beyond its own limits - beyond any conception either of originality of self or truth to nature. 'Persons who look for mere Nature in works of Art are persons to whom Mr Dexter does not address himself with the brush', he writes of his grotesque paintings; 'Nature puts him out.'³⁵ And while Dexter is unmistakably morbid, Valeria's response to him is inconclusive. She acknowledges in the 'Second View' 'It may well have been due to want of perception on my part - but I could see nothing mad in him, nothing in any way repelling, as he now looked at him.'³⁶ And this leads into a more detailed analysis of the way he expresses latent or suppressed impulses. She tells Mrs Macallen:

I never felt more surprised, more confounded in my life. But now that I have recovered from my

amazement, and can think it over quietly, I must continue to doubt whether this strange man is really mad, in the true meaning of the word. It seems to me that he openly expresses - I admit in a very reckless and boisterous way - thoughts and feelings which most of us are ashamed of as weaknesses, and keep to ourselves accordingly. I confess I have often fancied myself transformed into another person, and have felt a certain pleasure in seeing myself in my new character. One of our first achievements as children ... is to get out of our own characters, and to try the characters of other personages for a change - to be fairies, to be queens, to be anything, in short, but what we really are. Mr Dexter lets out the secret, just as the children do - and if that is madness he really is mad ... I am not learned enough to trace the influence of that life in making him what he is. But I think I can see the result in an over-excited imagination.³⁷

As with the figure of Hester Dethridge, Collins here self-consciously includes the psychological explanation of uncanny figures as part of the process of representing them.

Miserrimus Dexter's ability to play with identity and undermine the concept of stable character thus mirrors and extends the ambiguous nature of reality, the danger in trusting the evidence of the senses, and the instability of self explored in the first part of the novel. Valeria herself needs to be disguised as a 'pretty girl' in order to be able to search for the clue leading to the disclosure of her husband's past: 'From the moment when I had resigned myself to the hands of the chambermaid, I seemed in some strange way to have lost my ordinary identity - to have stepped out of my own character'.³⁸ But the resolution of the mystery depends not only on evacuating Dexter's unconscious but reducing him to one meaning as a specimen framed within contemporary medical discourse; here the language of moral management merges into that of degeneration, in a way that involves the interpretation of the borderlands of eccentricity, insanity and idiosyncrasy. Valeria's modified view of Dexter claims a kind of kinship and common sympathy with him which, in stressing his childlikeness, is compatible with the perspective of moral

management, even as it goes beyond it. This is realigned by the initial report by the doctor on his mental condition, which presents his very self-control as another mode of performance. 'He may say and do all sorts of odd things; but he has his mind under the control of his will, and you can trust his self-esteem to exhibit him in the character of a substantially intelligent witness', an analysis which is immediately modified in a way that links the breakdown of the conditions of self-control with disintegration into total insanity:

That he will end in madness (if he lives), I entertain little or no doubt. The question of when the madness will show itself, depends entirely on the state of his health. His nervous system is highly sensitive; and there are signs that his way of life has already damaged it. If he conquers the bad habits to which I have alluded in an earlier part of my report, and if he passes many hours of every day quietly and in the open air, he may last as a sane man for years to come. If he persists in his present way of life - or, in other words, if further mischief occurs to that sensitive nervous system - his lapse into insanity must inevitably take place when the mischief has reached its culminating point. Without warning to himself or to others, the whole mental structure will give way; and at a moment's notice, while he is acting as quietly, or speaking intelligently as at his best time, the man may drop (if I may use the expression) into madness of idiocy ... The balance once lost, will be lost for life.³⁹

The doctor's report hovers, as the figure of Dexter does, on the boundary between self-control and degeneration, finally collapsing into the latter, which is seen as a latent feature of the former, intertwining physical organisation and mental responsibility. As with both Henry Maudsley and Andrew Wynter's analyses of mental degeneration, Dexter's latent insanity is an inevitable destiny, a Nemesis which he might struggle against by virtuous living, but not one that he can evade. Moreover, Dexter simultaneously corresponds with and parodies Maudsley's description of eccentric individuals who 'exhibit peculiarities of thought, feeling and character which render them unlike ordinary beings', and in whom 'a vein of madness in the

constitution sometimes displays itself ... in a morbid vein of poetical delusion ...'.⁴⁰ His lifestyle takes Wynter's argument that 'it is the sustained departure from the normal condition of life which should suggest a grave suspicion of impending insanity', to an absurd extreme.⁴¹ But this becomes another view, another assumed persona, for Dexter's disintegration telescopes the degenerative process that both Maudsley and Wynter, for example, considered to stretch over generations. His figure, moreover, collapses the shift from late eighteenth-century nervous sensibility into late nineteenth-century degenerate eccentricity, but in an overtly improbable way. He finally comes to resemble his idiot cousin Ariel, who is presented as an evolutionary freak, a throwback - 'I could now see the girl's round, fleshy, inexpressive face, her rayless and colourless eyes, her coarse nose and heavy chin. A creature half alive; an imperfectly-developed animal in shapeless form', Valeria notes.⁴² '[Dexter] showed an animal interest in his meals, and a greedy animal enjoyment in eating and drinking as much as he could get - and that was all.'⁴³ So in resolving the narrative and ideological contradictions that Dexter poses in this way, the figure can be read as playing with and qualifying degenerative discourse as much as finally laying stress on it.

Collins's use of specific notions of degeneration in these novels highlights some of the interpretative problems posed by analysing how psychological codes take on different meanings in shifting contexts. The different combinations of emphasis in the interrelated social, physiological and psychological influences suggested in the figures of Delamayne in *Man and Wife*, the East End child in *The New Magdalen* and in Dexter himself, for example, suggests that 'degeneration' itself can take on different connotations; it can be used to satirise the conception of 'fitness' to qualify the complacencies of philanthropy - no matter how radical, and to parody its own presuppositions. It is twisted further with Jack Straw in *Jezebel's*

Daughter, a figure who seems to be compounded out of the opposite elements from those that made up Miserrimus Dexter, and who serves a completely different narrative function in a novel that represents a modified reconsideration of the moral polarities of high melodrama, rather than the interpretative subtleties of the detective story. 'You will ... find two interesting studies of humanity in these pages', Collins claimed in the Letter of Dedication.

In the character called 'Jack Straw' you have the exhibition of an enfeebled intellect, tenderly shown under its lightest and happiest aspects, and used as a means of relief in some of the darkest scenes of terror and suspense in the story. Again, in 'Madame Fountaine', I have endeavoured to work out the interesting moral problem, which takes for its ground work the strongest of all instincts in a woman, the instinct of maternal love, and traces to its solution the restraining and purifying influence of this one virtue over an otherwise cruel, false, and degraded nature.⁴⁶

In hingeing the 'terror and suspense' around an act of conscious villainy, Collins again consolidates the split between moral insanity and responsibility, medical and moral definitions while pressing them into service in a narrative process that draws on and reinterprets early nineteenth-century perceptions.

Jezebel's Daughter is a reconstruction, by a detached narrator, of events in 1828 written in 1878; it is further distanced by being set in Germany, although the madhouse, Bethlehem, has very specifically 'English' connotations. The story contrasts the effects of the intellectual legacies of two men on their widows. Wagner was a successful merchant involved as a philanthropist in the lunacy reform movement - his widow carries on his work by rescuing Jack Straw from the madhouse. Fountaine was an experimental chemist who had been working on an antidote to poisons - his work is twisted by the villainess, who uses all the machinery of experimental medicine as a means of consolidating her power. Jack is a crucial figure in the narrative because he turns out to have been an earlier accidental victim of Fountaine's

experiments, and this gives him the knowledge necessary to reverse the effects of Madame Fountaine's attempts to poison Mrs Wagner. He is thus primarily an agent of narrative resolution, although the crucial focus of suspense hinges on whether he has correctly understood the medical instructions.

It also means that he has to be absolutely and unequivocally innocent (just as Mercy Merrick has to be), and this partially explains why he is, like Anne Catherick, so firmly and explicitly set within the discursive framework of moral management. It is, moreover, the moral management of Tuke, rather than Conolly's moral treatment here again involves removal to a home, a curative asylum where Jack takes up permanent residence as a cross between a household pet and an adoring servant. But the novel sidesteps the interacting resonances of 'home' and 'asylum' that provide so much of the tension of *The Woman in White*, by splitting the home into two polarised places of safety and danger - the site of moral treatment on the one hand, of medical manipulation on the other. The thrill of horror conveyed by the image of the 'old' corrupt asylum is created from the same standpoint of half-purulent self-congratulation that produced the early descriptions of moral treatment and the articles in *Household Words*: "The man put his hand into the big pocket of his coat, and produced a horrible whip, of many lashes. He exhibited this instrument of torture with every appearance of pride and pleasure. "This is what keeps him in order, my lady", said the brute cheerfully. "Just take it in your hand."⁴⁵

Jack Straw, himself, moreover, is written out of *A Description of the Retreat* but never in a way that confirms the reciprocity of its moral treatment. He is first presented as being prone to fits of mania, but already has his own internal keeper - the 'angel' of his dreams who instructs him in basket-work. Just as the maniac in Tuke's account 'promised to restrain

himself' so Jack struggles with his 'morbid propensities'.⁴⁶ Like Tuke's patients, he is exaggeratedly grateful for his kind treatment: 'On the one occasion when he did lose self-control, you saw how he recovered himself when he was calmly and kindly reasoned with', Mrs Wagner argues.⁴⁷ Jack is caught in a perpetual childhood and thus becomes a magical agent; a figure who can be assimilated into the Wagner family as quasi-servant and child, but who has no family, no history, of his own: 'the memoirs of Jack remain unwritten'.⁴⁸ The focus on inbred or inherited traits is all on the 'moral insanity' side of the narrative, and the figure of Madame Fontaine. Like Lydia Gwilt in *Armada*, Collins attempts to set up a self-divided character here, but is unable to do so by exposing the limitations of the resources of moral management as Gwilt does. As a result, ^{Lydia} ^{Fontaine} becomes completely the product of a 'perverted' nature: even her 'better nature', her desire to protect her daughter, becomes the expression of an amoral instinctive expression of biological destiny. The cynical Frau Meyer's comment: 'It's as much part of a woman's nature to take to her child when she has got one, as it is to take to her dinner when she is hungry. A fond mother? What stuff! A cat is a fond mother', is never completely overturned.⁴⁹

Jack Straw and Madame Fontaine become self-sustaining oppositions, and this is bound up with the equally decisive polarisation of medical and moral means of transformation. In *Armada* the parodied curative asylum merged into medical control and became the means for melodramatic manipulation; in *Jezebel's Daughter*, the terror of the well-established convention of malignancy manifested through poisoning becomes more potent as a fantastic form of alchemy through being a perversion of 'legitimate' science. In the 'Story of the Present Time', *Heart and Science*, the split between morality and medicine is amplified and finally modified as physiological investigation into the brain and nervous system becomes a

source both of horror and of reconciliation. Again, as in *The Moonstone*, Collins invokes the authority of physiological psychology, but this time it is the externalised phrenological authority of David Ferrier. 'A supposed discovery in connection with brain disease, which occupies a place of importance, is not (as you may suspect) the fantastic product of the author's imagination', he stresses in the Preface. 'Finding his materials everywhere he has even continued to make use of Professor Ferrier - writing on "The Localisation of Brain Disease".'⁵⁰ Indeed Ferrier's *The Localisation of Brain Disease* (1878) was one of the most important developments of experimental physiology that was based on the earlier tenets of phrenology in the late nineteenth century. His findings established that the brain's different hemispheres produced distinct sensory-motor functions. A report to the British Association for the Advancement of Science stated of Ferrier's observations: 'A new, but this time a true, system of phrenology will probably be founded upon them: by this, however, I do not mean that it will be possible to tell a man's faculties from the configuration of his skull; but merely this, that the various mental faculties will be assigned to definite territories of the brain.'⁵¹ But although Collins concludes 'plenty of elbow-room here for the spirit of discovery', it is not the curiosity that motivates the narrative and cognitive complexity of *The Moonstone* and the shift in emphasis is important.

The critical reception of *Jezabel's Daughter* had highlighted how much Collins's well-established reputation as 'master of plots' had undermined his claim to seriousness. 'Is Mr Collins in fact, as he declares himself to be in purpose, a moral reformer, or is he merely an ingenious story-teller?' reiterated *The Spectator*. 'Are his ends greater than his means, or are his means so cunningly devised as to make his ends comparatively insignificant or invisible? Do his puppets exist purely for the sake of the dance, or is the

dance contrived to elucidate the mechanism of the puppets? Is a noble warmth at the heart, or a creepy sensation down the spine, the commoner consequence of reading one of Mr Collins's novels?⁵² In the Preface to *Heart and Science* Collins takes up a position where he simultaneously claims that he is 'still refusing to get up in a pulpit and preach, or to invade the platform and lecture' to his 'Readers in General', yet makes his didactic intention clear to his 'Readers in Particular'. Here, too, in contrast with his earlier balancing of plot and character in the Preface to *The Woman in White*, he concedes that he has 'never succeeded in keeping an equal balance' between the two elements: 'In the present story you will find the scales inclining, on the whole in favour of character and humour ... It has been my chief effort to draw the characters with a vigour and breadth of treatment derived from the nearest and truest view that I could get of one model, Nature.'⁵³ This claim to naturalism takes on a new meaning here, for in a curious way the fictional techniques of the novel are caught up in the contradictions of the very belief in naturalistic empirical observation that it simultaneously exploits and criticises. Conversely, Collins concedes an incompatibility between emotional and sensational response by stressing that he deliberately plays down the macabre potential of the vivisection laboratory, as this would outrage the very sympathies to which he was appealing. 'From first to last you are purposely left in ignorance of the hideous secrets of vivisection. The outside of the laboratory is a necessary object in my landscape - but I never once open the door and invite you to look in.'⁵⁴

Heart and Science depends on the dichotomy implied by its title even as it attempts to redraw its boundaries within science by invoking a moralised physiology. Again the plot hinges on a vulnerable heroine who breaks down under the strain of malicious family intrigue, but now it is experimental

physiology rather than moral management that becomes the crucible of breakdown and restoration. Moreover, this is a science which is wheeled on as a magical solution rather than producing a sense of cognitive opacity, for the story also revolves around the opposition between the good and bad physiologist. The hero discovers the significance of Ferrier's theory of brain disease in order to rescue the heroine from a vaguely-defined nervous prostration, while the villain resorts to the necessarily obscure horrors of vivisection to advance his researches on the nervous system. Thus there are two kinds of experimental subjects, and while vivisection itself is polemicalised against by stressing the 'common sympathies' between humans and animals (the most sympathetic figure is 'Zo', a wayward child), this serves to reinforce a paternalism based on experimental observation that finally becomes its humane equivalent. There are, moreover, distinct modes of naturalistic scrutiny in the narrative method itself. The novel set the hero up as sympathetic agent by tracing his associative processes as he wanders round London; the villain is 'vivisected' by a narrative gaze that also penetrates his mental processes.

Conclusions: *The Fallen Leaves* and *The Legacy of Cain*

Collins aimed to transform the well-worn conventions of mistaken or substituted identity in *Man and Wife* and *The New Magdalen*, and self-consciously turned the manipulation of the physiological experiment back into a qualified critique of science itself in *Heart and Science*. *The Fallen Leaves* (1879) and *The Legacy of Cain* (1889) are sharply contrasting adaptations of the conventions of mysterious coincidences, misplaced children, the discovery of origins and contrasting projections of inheritance and destiny, which now link the connections within the family into wider social and organic networks whose strands and origins are shaped by a structure in which chance is a crucial determining element. *The Fallen Leaves* is Collins's most politically

explicit novel. Commercial capitalism, social contradictions, and the ideology that both exploits and attempts to explain them are critically scrutinised through the framework of Christian Socialism, and this in turn is qualified and shown to be inadequate by being placed in different contexts by a narrative rhetoric which alternatively identifies with and distances itself from it. The novel attempts to resist the influence of two organic models of social structure - Spencer's notion of competitive individualism, with its naturalisation and validation of 'fitness', and clearly degenerative explanations of growing class divisions produced by adaptation to the environment. Yet this resistance also modifies radical liberalism itself and focuses on the determining influence of social structure as well as the effects of economic contradictions. The outcasts and cast-offs, the 'fallen leaves' of the title - 'the people who have drawn blanks in the lottery of life' are the victims of an arbitrary process and the product of specific circumstances.⁵⁵ So the novel grapples with the problem of how to develop a narrative perspective which resists the naturalising connotations of the metaphor, that the 'fallen leaves' are the necessary detritus of an organic process of change, while constantly attempting to relate this to the establishment and analysis of dominant forms of power.

Collins often attempted to develop a method that allowed various means of tension, contradiction and coincidence to work quasi-legitimately in the story, while scrutinising the various causes that lay behind and affected their outcome, but they are linked most clearly to the rhetorical purpose of the novel in *The Fallen Leaves*. Moreover the novel does more than question a new kind of natural order by incorporating the logical improbability of sensational conventions. It attempts to combine this with more openly allegorical, utopian and social investigative methods and the development of a narrative voice that oscillates between exploratory, explanatory and

distancing modes. The central narrative and ideological focus is the figure of Amellus Goldenheart - like Hartright, obviously the perspective of 'good feeling'. He is an innocent who arrives from the 'other world' of an American utopian Christian Socialist community, and is a figure whose optimism is modified but whose identity is never fundamentally contaminated by his encounter with the divided London of the drawing room and the East End. His focussing perception is set within the narrative of the social evolution of the Farnaby family. The Prologue, set fifteen years before the beginning of the story, describes how Farnaby, epitome of self-made, competitive individualism, builds his own success on jettisoning his future wife's illegitimate child to a shady fate in an unknown London; fifteen years later the wife is still obsessed by the loss. Here the fairy tale device of the 'stolen child' is used to mock its own complacent expectations even as it fulfils them. Similarly, Mrs Farnaby both depends on the sustaining illusions of her dreams of reunion even as she derides them as delusions: 'O, you needn't remind me that there is a rational explanation to my dream. I have read it all up, in the Encyclopaedia in the Library. One of the ideas of wise men is that we think of something, consciously or unconsciously, in the daytime, and then reproduce it in a dream.'⁵⁶ Amellus is both the innocent agent who is able to discover the child - now a prostitute - by traversing the zones of London, and the means of her reformation, but never becomes the eye through which contradictions can be resolved, or a figure that can be assimilated - he remains almost a dream figure himself.

This means that the dominant narrative voice is distanced from the hero even as it identifies with him, and this in turn shapes the way that his Christian Socialism (outlined early on through the familiar device of 'explanation to a stranger') functions as the qualified ideological centre of the book. This is a curious blend of earlier nineteenth-century co-operative

socialism, and contemporary models. Collins himself clearly knew something about American Utopian socialist communities, but in *The Fallen Leaves* the Tadmor community is always presented as a memory or a future possibility.⁵⁷ It becomes a pastoral myth that combines co-operation and the abolition of private property with an idealised belief in education and self-management that echoes Owenism. But the political ideas that the hero puts forward in London - most obviously in the 'Fatal Lecture' - correspond with many of the tensions that marked late nineteenth-century English Christian Socialism.

Christian Socialism was always fundamentally a middle-class attempt to defuse the threat of violent social revolution, rather than aiming to radically transform the social structure, but there was an important shift in emphasis between its founding movement in the 1840s and its revival initiated by Stuart Headlam in the late 1870s. Maurice had made it clear that the movement was a response to the twin threats of Chartism and the revolutionary upheavals in France, writing to Ludlow, in 1848: 'The sovereignty of the people, in any sense or form, I not only repudiate as one of the silliest and most blasphemous of all contradictions, but I look on it as the same contradiction, in its fullest expansion, of which kings have been guilty.'⁵⁸ Headlam, in reviving the movement, redirected its concerns away from the fears of class conflict and focused instead more on the structural divisions that might bring the threat of social disintegration. The 'Socialism' of the equation here was clearly of the Fabian kind; Headlam considered the Guild of St George to be the religious wing of the Fabian Society, and published a pamphlet with them on Christian Socialism. The fear of organised revolution was now replaced by equally profound anxieties about the demoralisation leading to contagion and degeneration of the casual poor.⁵⁹

The figure of Amelius Goldenheart enables these contrasting political resonances - the utopian ideals of the willed transformation of self and society through education and progressive social reorganisation, as against the need for planned intervention to defuse the disintegrating forces of a degeneration escalating under capitalism - to be telescoped together. In the 'fatal lecture' he uses the Bible as a moral reference point and as a means of distancing his audience from their habitual assumptions, revealing the 'bare bones' under the 'plump pasteboard' of international capitalism:

Look at our commerce. What is its social aspect, judged by the morality which is in this book in my hand? Let those organised systems of imposture masquerading under the disguise of banks and companies, answer the question ... You know how our poor Indian customer finds his cotton-print dress a sham that falls to pieces ... how the half-starved needlewoman who buys her reel of thread finds printed on the label a false statement of the numbers of yards she buys ... Do you believe in the honourable accumulation of wealth by men who hold such opinions and perpetuate such impostures as these?⁶⁰

The rhetoric of contagion and corruption - 'demoralisation and disgrace' is deflected here from its morbid symptoms and linked to its structural causes. But in the next stage of the analysis, Amelius claims Scriptural authority as a means of resolving the conflict as well as providing the perspective from which to view it:

Do I unjustly ignore the capacity for peaceable reformation which has preserved modern England from revolutions, thus far? ... And I do personally fear (and older and wiser men than I agree with me), that the corruptions at which I have only been able to hint are fast extending themselves - in England as well as in Europe generally - beyond the reach of that lawful and bloodless reform which has served us so well in past years ... The one sure foundation on which a permanent, complete and worthy reformation can be built - whether it prevents a convulsion or whether it follows a convulsion - is only to be found within the covers of this book.⁶¹

Amelius's speech is embedded in the narrative as his solution is embedded in the 'book', while always remaining alien and distanced. But the lecture also serves a more immediate narrative purpose. It loosens the fixed separateness of the different classes of London, leading to the recognition of Farnaby from the nether world to which he had jettisoned his daughter, Sally, and it projects Amelius into his random wanderings round London, and to his chance encounter with the 'lost child'. But it is also an extreme expression of the problem of social perception that is played out tacitly in the text as a whole; the problem of how to transform dominant perceptions rather than simply inverting them. *The Fallen Leaves* in this respect takes the specific ideological tensions of *Man and Wife* and *The New Magdalen* into another dimension, and grapples with the problem of how to resist the 'resistless influences' of the degenerative connotations of evolutionary language, but in a framework which depends on interlocking social, psychological and organic, as well as more narrowly physiological, metaphors. In *The New Magdalen* Collins encountered the problem of how to elicit sympathy for the 'contagious' figure of the prostitute in a way that presented her as shaped by social influences while remaining morally uncontaminated. Here this process has become more complex; the prostitutes are the ultimate 'fallen leaves' of society, and this both changes the meaning of the metaphor itself and the transgressive connotations of 'fallen'. But again this also implies that the contrasted 'pet creations of the laws of political economy' are also the creations of organic laws.

The boundaries between the different zones of London are both reinforced and blurred by describing the city itself as an ubiquitous virus: 'with its monstrous extremes of wealth and poverty, and its all-permeating malady of life at a fever heat'.⁶² This means that the corruption of commercial capitalism exposed in the lecture is reproduced in and

contaminates the nether world; the costermongers have become a parody of the 'organised system of imposture' of legitimate commerce, but poverty itself is alternately a state of grace and contamination. Amelius's response to 'the sight of utter misery around him, and the sense of his utter inability to remedy it', makes him doubt whether 'his happy brethren of the community and these miserable people [were] creatures of the same all-merciful God ...'.⁶³ But the prostitutes themselves are again idealised as asexual madonnas: 'All that is most unselfish, all that is most divinely compassionate and self-sacrificing in a woman's nature, was as beautiful and undefiled as ever in these women - the outcasts of the hard highway!'⁶⁴ And this contradiction is even more exaggerated in the childlike figure of Sally: 'She was little and thin; her worn and scanty clothing showed her frail youthful figure was still waiting for its full perfection and growth ... But for the words in which she had accosted him, it would have been impossible to associate her with the lamentable life that she led. The appearance of the girl was artlessly virginal and innocent; she looked as though she had passed through the contamination of the streets without being touched by it, without fearing it or feeling it or understanding it.'⁶⁵ Her apparent 'simple mindedness' is both sign of her innocence and proof against environmental contamination; her rescue involves re-education but not a fundamental transformation.

The hereditary link between mother and daughter, which becomes the clue that Amelius attempts to trace as he threads his way through the streets of London, is their webbed toes - an unmistakable stigma in degenerative terms.⁶⁶ Here the ideological connotations of those terms are overturned but not the language of degeneration itself; it becomes a sign of those 'mysteriously remote origins' whose negative significance is displaced as Sally is able to adapt into a middle-class girl, by being presented, like Amelius, as a 'child of Nature'. But when the poor actually adapt to their surroundings

they absorb all the degenerate connotations that the figure of Sally resists. Sally's step-father extends the fears of the demoralised vagabond that hovered on the periphery of *No Name*: 'a half-drunken ruffian; one of the swarming beasts of low London, dirtied from head to foot the colour of street mud - the living danger and disgrace of English civilization'.⁶⁷ *The Fallen Leaves* slides between different rhetorics and employs different models of social and individual identities and forms of change, but it clearly works within and against a culture steeped in degenerative assumptions. There can be no final assimilation within the terms of the known world here; the vigorous colonial can no longer vitalise the culture, but must return to colonial exile in order to survive.

These degenerative assumptions have become paramount in *The Legacy of Cain*, a story of inheritance and psychic transmission which overturns the methods of *Armada* and *No Name* even as it seems to be developing them. *The Legacy of Cain* is set up as a parable that both debates and extrapolates from contemporary theories of inheritance; exploring hypotheses tested through the parallel development of questionable identities, but the framework of the story now determines both the progress of the narrative and the terms within which it is read. This framework is set up in the Prologue, set in a prison, where three representative types - the Doctor, the Minister and the Prison Governor - debate criminal responsibility, moral insanity and the inheritance of morbid propensities, focussing their remarks on the case of a condemned murderess. The Doctor's position clearly corresponds to contemporary degenerative theory concerning the accumulation of morbid traits through transmission; he echoes Maudsley in stressing 'I have found vices and diseases descending more frequently to children than virtue and health'.⁶⁸ His fatalism is countered by the moral management of the Minister, who agrees to adopt the murderess's child and

to bring her up with his own daughter, keeping her identity concealed. The Story traces the girls' parallel development, adding the complication that the Minister's own daughter, too, might have inherited morbid propensities from her dead mother.

So the terms of the narrative are set up speculatively, yet they constitute a framework of which the terms can never be fundamentally reformulated by the Story. The narrative as a whole is a reconstruction by the Prison Governor, who mediates the opposing positions and who tells the Story from a position of knowledge which is its outcome. Thus the Story itself teases the reader's expectations by keeping him or her in ignorance of the girl's true identity, but the reader still knows more than the girls do about themselves. Their development is charted by the parallel presentation of their diaries, and their propensities emerge through these narratives, which gradually disclose that the Minister's daughter, Helena, has incubated and compounded the latent pathological propensities of her mother. The murderess's daughter, Eunice, on the other hand, has a fundamentally good nature, but contains the trace of her mother's 'evil genius', which is excited by extreme provocation, yet which she is finally able to control. Thus the Prison Governor's conclusion takes the form of an equivocal reconciliation of the claims of determinism and self-control. He doubts, in relation to Eunice, 'the conclusion which sees, in the inheritance of moral qualities, a positive influence over moral destiny', but follows this by asserting that 'there are inherent emotional forces in humanity to which the inherited influences must submit; they are inherently influences under control'.⁶⁹ But this once more means that the contrasting figure, Helena, must embody a melodramatic wickedness and become absolutely guilty: 'It was weak, indeed, to compare the mean vices of Mrs Grace Dieu with the fundamental depravity of the

daughter ... There are virtues which exalt us and vices which degrade us which are not in our parents but in ourselves.⁷⁰

The story thus closes with a moral management that now leaves no space for ambiguity of identity, and in this respect the novel is, as J.A. Noble pointed out, a 'protest against the fatalism that is more or less bound up with any full acceptance of the modern doctrine of heredity'. But Noble is also right to point out that 'our interpretation may be mistaken, and ... the doctrine in question is not really discredited by the story'.⁷¹ The doctrine of inheritance needs to be set up as a foil for the Story, providing a set of terms that produce the necessary tension over whether they will be resisted or fulfilled in order for it to work as a story at all. It also forms a new kind of unconscious in the text that invokes a completely different kind of tension between determinism and indeterminacy from that which generates the narrative of *Armada*le.

For in *The Legacy of Cain* psychic legacies have narrowed down to a single strand of biological inheritance rather than operating as a metaphor which gains its meanings from breaking down the boundaries between social and psychological transmission. So while the Prison Governor asserts that we are 'masters of our own destinies' the actual interest of the narrative focusses on unconscious influences, conveyed through the device of the girls' contrasting diaries, which present their impressions and secret thoughts, but which reveal propensities of which they are unconscious. Thus Eunice, in an artificially induced state of somnambulism brought about by a 'composing draught', hears the 'voice' of her mother urging her to violence, and asks 'where does this horrid transformation of me out of myself come from?'⁷² But the reader knows where it comes from, and the unconscious force of the trace does not permeate the narrative itself, as it does in *Armada*le. The dream does not work its own fulfillment through the sensitive subject's self-

conscious morbid fancies; Eunice is no palimpsest but a moralised self whose morbid unconscious must be suppressed even as it forms a central source of interest for the story. Here hereditary theory becomes a doctoral narrative, exerting a fatal pressure that the story now affirms by resisting, and it provides the basis for fictional conventions that once again resort to the revelation of a true self in order to work against the grain of dominant assumptions.

This study has explored the different kinds of correspondence between Collins's stories and contemporary psychological theories. I have argued that his narratives often work at the limits of a range of these discourses, paradoxically overturning, while remaining within, their boundaries; it is thus that they offer intricate explorations both of the self and of the social and psychic reality within which that self is formed. There are a repeated and developing set of motifs and concerns in Collins's fiction, but there is no fixed connection between fictional and psychological narratives - together they make up a kaleidoscopic set of elements that shape the frameworks of the stories and the threads of the narratives, replaying plots in different keys. Collins's novels work as naturalised fantastic texts which, with their stress on play and ambiguity, on unstable and double identities and on the provisional nature of truth, are recognisably 'modern' ones too. But they work in this way through their active correspondence with their contemporary intellectual culture, which they both appropriate and comment on, and their psychological context provides a set of presuppositions which the narratives themselves can both subvert and reaffirm. They form part of that culture as popular narratives, and it is as pleasurable stories that they extrapolate from psychological theories in most interesting ways, ways that emphasise those theories' contradictions, that juggle with dominant and

marginal forms of knowledge, that explore the social shaping of subjective perception as well as the subjective construction of reality. And in working at the limits of their psychological context, they work at the limits of that liberal ideology that is encapsulated most forcefully in the concept of moral management itself.

In *Beall* the central consciousness disintegrates under the strain of being unable to recognise the clues of modern life, and being unable to reconcile his development with his family history; here moral management compounds the self-doubt that precipitates collapse, while Mannion's aspirations of self-help are dashed by the tenacity of the past. In the novels of the 1860s moral management becomes both a means of villainous plotting and the model for the emergence of a new heroic identity that can resolve its own incoherence and gain control of narrative and passive heroines. For Collins's active heroines though, moral management creates a different kind of contradiction exerting a pressure to be patient, so that in being resolute they become anomalous. They thus take on an identity that is both healthy and morbid in gaining their goals, and in achieving them, lose self-possession, break down. In the novels of the 1860s the legacies of the past and the traces of the unconscious mind continually emerge and exert a pressure on the present, pressures which are, in *The Moonstone*, appropriated and concealed through the interplay of different implied notions of 'unconscious cerebration'. The novels of the 1870s and 1880s require a full-length study of their own; here I have briefly traced the way that shifts in psychological theory take on new meanings and exert a new kind of pressure on Collins's fiction, a pressure that can lead to the affirmation of a fixed identity, but also gives rise to distinctive and bizarre productions. Collins's novels have their starting point in physiological sensation; but that sensation is developed and maintained by the methods through which he makes the familiar world strange, by taking

the psychological codes and the cultural categories through which that world makes sense to pieces. His novels 'appal the Imagination yet satisfy the Intellect'; but it is the source of the sensation - the mystery, the trace and the process of detection - that always offers more than the final resolution.⁷³

Notes

The place of publication is London, unless otherwise stated.

Introduction

Collins as a Sensation Novelist

1. 'Miss Braddon', *The Nation*, 9 November 1865, p.594.
2. 'Recent Novels', *The Spectator*, 26 January 1889, p.120.
3. This tends to be the tone of two important early assessments, Walter C. Phillips's *Dickens, Reade and Collins, Sensation Novelists: A Study on the Conditions and Theories of Novel Writing in Victorian England* (New York, 1919), and T.S. Eliot's 'Wilkie Collins and Dickens', *Selected Essays 1917-1932* (1932), pp.460-470. Phillips's analysis is an impressive discussion of the writers' adaptation of earlier terror romance conventions in the context of mid-nineteenth century cultural conditions and aesthetic principles, though it tends to over-emphasise the homogeneity of the 'Dickens School'; while Eliot's essay, although acknowledging Collins's importance as a melodramatist, argues that he was 'a Dickens without genius' (p.405). Other full-length studies of Collins are the two biographies, Kenneth Robinson's *Wilkie Collins, A Biography* (1931), still a useful source, and Noel Pharr Davis, *The Life of Wilkie Collins* (Urbana, Illinois, 1956), a highly speculative and unreliable one; also Robert P. Ashley, *Wilkie Collins (1832)*, R.V. Andrew, *Wilkie Collins: A Critical Survey of His Prose Fiction* (New York, 1959), and Dorothy Sayers, *Wilkie Collins, A Biographical and Critical Study* (uncompleted) (Toledo, 1977).
4. Kathleen Tillotson, 'The Lighter Reading of the 1860s', Introduction to Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White* (Boston, 1969), and Winifred Hughes, *The Maniac in the Cellar: The Sensation Novel of the 1860s* (Princeton, 1980). Sue Lonoff, *Wilkie Collins and His Victorian Readers: A Study in the Rhetoric of Authorship* (New York, 1982). Lonoff's study draws on a range of unpublished material and offers the most thorough study of Collins to date. As she notes, an edition of Collins's letters, scattered and hitherto unpublished, is being prepared for publication by Kirk H. Beetz.
5. For example, David Blair, 'Wilkie Collins and the Crisis in Suspense', in *Reading the Victorian Novel: Detail into Form*, edited by Ian Gregor (New York, 1979); Mark Henelly, 'Reading Detection in *The Woman in White*', *Texts Studies in Literature and Language*, 22 (Winter 1980), 449-467; Walter M. Kendrick, 'The Sensationalism of *The Woman in White*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 32 (June 1977), 18-35; D.A. Miller, 'From roman-police to roman-police: Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*', *Novel*, 13 (Winter 1980), 153-170. One important essay that does relate *The Woman in White* to contemporary debates on insanity is Barbara Fass Leavy 'Wilkie Collins's Cinderella: The History of Psychology and *The Woman in White*', *Dickens Studies Annual*, 10 (1982), 90-141. Our material overlaps in places but our approaches are very different.

6. Wilkie Collins, *Memoirs of the Life of William Collins, R.A., with Selections from His Journals and Correspondence*, 2 volumes (1848).
7. Nigel Cross, for example, argues that this loosely defined radical and republican group of writers and journalists surrounding Dickens and including George Augustus Sala, Blanchard Jerrold, Edmund Yates had one of its foci in amateur dramatics. Nigel Cross, *The Common Writer* (Cambridge, 1985), pp.95-103. See also John Cross, *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters: Aspects of Literary Life Since 1800*, second edition (Harmondsworth, 1973) for a contrast between this cultural group and the new 'higher journalism' surrounding the establishment of *The Westminster Review*. Collins's contempt for the hypocrisies of Victorian middle-class morality expressed particularly in *Hide and Seek* (1834) as well as his own unconventional private life fit within this broad cultural framework, and this was often recognised. Collins's friend Edmund Yates described Collins as fourth among English novelists, after Dickens, Thackeray and Charlotte Bronte in an issue of *The Train* devoted to Collins in June 1857. *Wilkie Collins: The Critical Heritage*, edited by Norman Page (1974), pp.67-8. Emile Fergues, too, in an analysis of Collins's early work in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 November 1835, pp.815-88, noted 'His opinions, manifested in places without being ostentatiously displayed, are truly liberal, the sworn enemy of hypocrisy and prejudice ... It is evident that he detests the whining cant and petty restrictions of a false puritanism.' (Page, pp.64-5.)
8. Robinson, *Wilkie Collins*, pp.25-60. Collins was also asked to write a popular article designed to supplement *The Germ* and to explain the Brotherhood's aims and methods to a wider audience (Robinson, p.60).
9. See Kirke H. Beetz, *Wilkie Collins and The Leader: Victorian Periodicals Review*, 15 (1981), 20-29. As Beetz points out, articles signed W.W.C. can only be speculatively assigned to Collins, who prefixed 'William' to Wilkie in the early 1850s, but on this basis, his main contributions were reviews of books, plays and art exhibitions, together with the short series on mesmerism, 'Magnetic Evenings at Home', which I shall discuss in the following chapter, and a piece arguing for the lifting of restrictions on Sunday leisure activity, 'A Plea for Sunday Reform', written from a perspective of liberal cultural paternalism. 'I want ... a system of Sunday observance that is at once religious and rational ... You establish a code of religious exercises and restraints which suits your condition of life; and no matter what the difference in your station, that code must be his code too.' 'A Plea for Sunday Reform', *The Leader*, 27 September 1851, p.925.
10. For a full analysis of the development of this mode, and an argument that it should be clearly distinguished from Gothic romance, using different techniques and having different epistemological origins, see Peter Denman, 'The Supernatural Referent: The Presence and Effect of Supernatural Terror in English Fiction in the Mid Nineteenth Century' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Keele, 1981). I draw on his analysis here, though I do not share his sense of the complete separation of 'sensation' and 'Gothic' modes.
11. Denman describes the emergence of these stories in detail and their use of early nineteenth-century physiological psychology, in the section 'From Blackwoods to Le Fanu: The Physiology of Suffering', 'The Supernatural Referent', pp.142-160.

12. 'Arts and Belles Lettres', *Westminster Review*, 9 (April 1856), 629-650 (p.640).
13. Dickens invited Collins to become a member of the staff of *Household Words* towards the end of 1856, writing to Wills, the journal's sub-editor, on 16 September, that 'it strikes me that the best thing we can do for H.W. is to add [Collins] onto Morley, and offer him five guineas a week ... Being industrious and reliable besides, I don't think we shall be at an additional expense of £20 a year by the transaction', Letter to Wills, 16 September 1856, *Charles Dickens as Editor*, edited by R.C. Lehmann (1912), p.221. Collins engaged in a short dispute with Dickens over the question of signed authorship, and it was agreed that *The Dead Secret* should be serialised under his name. Dickens, letter to Wills, 18 September 1856; Lehmann, p.222.
14. 'A Preliminary Word', *Household Words*, 30 March 1850, p.1.
15. The main accounts of the development of patterns of literary and reading habits that contributed to the establishment of these journals are, Richard Altick, *The English Common Reader, A Social History of the Mass Reading Public* (Chicago 1957); R.K. Webb, *The British Working Class Reader, 1789-1948* (1955); Margaret Dalziel, *Popular Fiction 100 Years Ago: An Unexplored Track of Literary History* (1957); Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (1960); Louis James, *Fiction for the Working Man 1830-1850* (Oxford, 1962) and Sally Mitchell, *The Fallen Angels: Chastity, Class and Women's Reading 1835-1880* (Bowling Green, Ohio, 1981).
16. 'A Preliminary Word', p.1.
17. J.A. Sutherland, *Victorian Novelists and Publishers* (1976), pp.163-70. For a discussion of Dickens's position as a publisher in relation to changing patterns of novel production, and his relationship to Collins, particularly over the writing of *The Woman in White*, see the chapter 'Dickens as Publisher', *Victorian Novelists and Publishers*, and J.A. Sutherland, 'Two Emergencies in the Writing of *The Woman in White*', *Yearbook of English Studies*, 7 (1977), 148-156. Collins's collaborations with Dickens during the 1850s and early 1860s included fiction and plays, and as Kirke Beetz points out in his *Annotated Bibliography*, 'questions of authorship surrounding their joint ventures have not been satisfactorily answered. Add to this the tendency of private publishers and ill-informed scholars to assign works not written by either to each of these two men, and to publish works by one under the other's name and the confusion can be great.' Beetz lists as collaborative ventures 'The Seven Poor Travellers', published in the 1854 Christmas edition of *Household Words*; *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices* and 'The Perils of Certain English Prisoners' in 1857, and the story 'No Thoroughfare' which appeared in the 1939 Christmas edition of *All the Year Round*. Kirke H. Beetz, *Wilkie Collins, An Annotated Bibliography* (New Jersey, 1978), pp.4-13 (p.4). For further accounts of Dickens-Collins collaborations, see R.L. Brannan, *Under the Management of Mr Charles Dickens: His Production of 'The Frozen Deep'*, (New York, 1966); *Household Words*, edited by Anne Lohrli (Toronto, 1973), pp.233-235.
18. 'Sensation Novels', *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine*, 91 (May 1862), 564-584 (pp.564-63).

19. 'Sensation Novels', p.565.
20. 'Not a New Sensation', *All the Year Round*, 22 July 1863, p.517. The point that 'sensationalism' is mainly symptomatic of critics' anxieties is developed in 'The Sensational Williams': 'Life itself is similarly sensational in many of its aspects, and nature is similarly sensational in many of her forms, and art is always sensational when it is tragic.' The piece considers Shakespeare's likely reception as a 'sensation' dramatist. *All the Year Round*, 13 February 1864, pp.14-15.
21. Patrick Brantlinger's 'What is "Sensational" About the Sensation Novel?', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 37 (June 1982), 1-28, gives a detailed overview of the formal characteristics of sensation fiction. See also Tillotson, 'The Lighter Reading of the 1860s' and Hughes, *The Maniac in the Cellar*, pp.2-37.
22. 'The Enigma Novel', *The Spectator*, 28 December 1861, p.1428.
23. Oliphant, 'Sensation Novels', p.568.
24. 'Sensation Novels', p.566. For a discussion of the sensibility at work in late eighteenth century Gothic romance, see J.M.S. Tompkins, *The Popular Novel in England 1770-1800* (1832), pp.243-295.
25. 'The Progress of Fiction as an Art', *Westminster Review*, 60 (October 1853), 342-374 (p.338). Basil is placed in this indeterminate category which is neither realism nor romance, 'in which the authors, though professedly taking their incidents from life, seem to revel in scenes of fury and passion, such as, happily, real life seems to seldom afford'. (p.372).
26. 'Novels of the Day: Their Writers and Readers', *Fraser's Magazine*, 62 (August 1860), 205-217 (p.210).
27. 'Sensation Novels', *The Quarterly Review*, 113 (April 1863), 482-514 (pp.482-83).
28. Hughes discusses the role that sensation fiction played in aesthetic debates on the novel in more detail than there is space to develop here, in *The Maniac in the Cellar*, though she tends to stress that it subverted a stable 'realism'. 'The Sensation Novel and Victorian Theories of Fiction', pp.38-73. See also Richard Stang, *The Theory of the Novel in England 1830-1870* (New York, 1959).
29. Oliphant, 'Sensation Novels', p.568.
30. 'Belles Lettres', *Westminster Review*, 20 (October 1866), 264-271 (p.270).
31. E.S. Dallas, *The Gay Science*, 2 volumes (1866): 'Now, in art, the two seldom go together, then; the fit are not few and the few are not fit. The true judges of art are the despised many - the crowd - and no critic is worth his salt who does not feel with the many. Great poetry was ever meant, and to the end of time must be adapted, not to the curious student, but for the multitude to read while they run ...', *The Gay Science*, 1, p.127. Dallas, who had been a member of the Aesthetic Movement in Edinburgh in the early 1850s, was the critic on *The Times* in the 1860s who probably wrote the review of *The Woman in White* pointing out the error in timing. *The Times*, 30 October 1860, p.6. See John Drinkwater, 'Eneas Sweetland Dallas', in *The Eighteen-Sixties*, edited by John Drinkwater (1932).

32. II, p.293. He argues: 'In the novel of character man appears to be moulding circumstances to his will, directing the action for himself, supreme over incident and plot. In the opposite class of novels man is represented as made and ruled by circumstance, he is the victim of chance and the puppet of intrigue. Is either of these views of life wholly true or wholly false? We may like the one better than the other. We may like to see men generally represented as possessed of decided character, masters of their destiny and superior to circumstance; but is this view of life a whit more true than that which pictures the mass of man as ... tossed hither and thither by accidents of life which we sometimes call fate and sometimes fortune? ...', *The Gay Science*, II, pp.294-95. Other discussions of sensation fiction include 'Aurora Floyd', *Spectator*, 31 January 1863, p.1586; 'Our Novels, Sensation School', *Temple Bar*, 29 (July 1870), 410-424; George Augustus Sala, 'On the Sensational in Literature and Art', *Belgravia*, 4 (June 1868), 474-493. R.H. Hutton wrote a series of reviews on sensation fiction in *The Spectator*: 10, 1864, p.1475; 9 June 1866, p.639; 23 July 1868, p.881.
33. *The Gay Science*, II, p.295.
34. Ollivant, 'Sensation Novels', 567.
35. 'Madness in Novels', *The Spectator*, 3 February 1866, p.135.
36. p.135.
37. Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret*, 3 volumes, 1862, I, p.164.
38. I, p.281.
39. II, p.202-3. The narrator reinforces this point at the end of the novel, when Robert Audley's hypochondria is linked to his own analysis of reading sensation fiction. 'I haven't read Alexandre Dumas and Wilkie Collins for nothing', he muttered, 'I'm up to their tricks, sneaking in at doom behind a fellow's back, and flattening their white faces against window panes, and making themselves all eyes in the twilight'. (II, p.188) 'Do not laugh at poor Robert because he grew hypochondriacal, after hearing the horrible story of his friend's death. There is nothing so delicate, so fragile, as that invisible balance on which the mind is always trembling. Mad today and sane tomorrow.' (III, p.193).
40. I, p.284.
41. Mrs Henry Wood, *St Martin's Eve*, 3 volumes (1866), 1885 edition, p.158.
42. Charles Reade, *Hard Cash*, 3 volumes (1863), 1908 edition, Note p.615. Reade wrote a lengthy reply to the *Daily News*, and this, with Bullman's letter and other related correspondence, is added to the Note in later editions of the novel.
43. Now to the first edition, reprinted with additions, p.626. It opens: 'I request all, - who, by letter or by viva voce have during the last five years, told me of some persons incarcerated or detained in private asylums, and other abuses, to communicate to me by letter. I also invite fresh communications ...' (p.626).

44. Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, translated by Richard Howard (1973). Todorov breaks the fantastic category down into four basic divisions: at one end the 'marvellous', where there is a complete break from the real; the 'fantastic marvellous', where inexplicable occurrences are given a supernatural cause; the 'fantastic-uncanny' where they are given a subjective origin; and the pure uncanny.
45. Sigmund Freud, 'The Uncanny' (1919), *Standard Edition of the Complete Works*, vol 17, pp.217-32.
46. Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy, A Literature of Subversion* (1981). Foucault's work traces the shifts in the discursive history of insanity in the West between the middle ages and the twentieth century: from the middle ages where it was seen as a kind of sanctity, an expression of a divine truth; through the sixteenth century, where the figure of the Fool was identified with a transcended and essentially human wisdom; through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which led to the 'Great Confinement' - in which madness became progressively excluded and hidden, becoming the repository of unreason and representing everything that reason denied. He argues that by the end of the eighteenth century this image came to constitute a threat reinforced by the means used to exclude it; the eighteenth century madhouse gave the mad a perverse kind of reciprocity and subjectivity in their very bestiality, and this in turn needed to be integrated by internalising the patterns of control through the reformed asylum and the rise of moral management in the early nineteenth century. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization, A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, translated by Richard Howard, second edition (New York, 1973).
47. T.S. Eliot, 'Wilkie Collins and Dickens', p.464; Robert Aasky, 'Wilkie Collins and the Detective Story', *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, 6 (June 1931), 47-60.
48. These analyses of detective fiction include: W.H. Auden, 'The guilty Vicarage', in *The Dyer's Hand* (1963); T. Todorov, 'The Typology of Detective Fiction', in *The Poems of Prose*, translated by Richard Howard (Oxford, 1977); John G. Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery and Romance* (Chicago, 1977); Dennis Porter, *The Pursuit of Crime, Art and Ideology in Detective Fiction* (Yale, 1981); Franco Moretti, 'Clues' in *Signs Taken for Wonders* (1983).
49. For example, Ernst Bloch, 'A Philosophical View of the Detective Novel', translated by R. Morella and S. Thaman, *Discourse*, 2 (Summer 1980), 32-51; Carlo Ginsburg, 'Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Evidence', translated by Anna Davin, *History Workshop Journal*, 9 (Spring 1980), 3-37.
50. Charles Rycroft, 'The Analysis of a Detective Story', *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 26 (1957), 229-243. An important elaboration of this approach is Albert D. Hutter, 'Dreams, Transformations and Literature: The Implications of Detective Fiction', *Victorian Studies*, 19 (December 1973), 181-209. See also D.H. Miller, 'From roman-policier to roman-police: Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*', *Novels*, 13 (Winter 1980), 153-176.

51. Edward Bulwer-Lytton, *A Strange Story*, 3 volumes (1862), I, Preface, p.iii.
52. I, p.i.
53. Wilkie Collins, *Memoirs of the Life of William Collins, Esq., R.A. with Selections from His Journals and Correspondence*, 2 volumes, 1848, I, p.43.

Chapter One

In the Complicated Labyrinths of our Frame:
Psychology as Social Perception in the Nineteenth Century

1. Quoted in V. Skultans, *Madness and Morals: Ideas on Insanity in the Nineteenth Century* (1975), p.172.
2. *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices*, *Household Words*, 24 October 1837, p.385. Compare this with 'A Walk in a Workhouse': 'Groves of babies in arms; groves of mothers and other sick women in bed; groves of lunatics; jungles of men in stone-paved down-stairs dayrooms ... In all these Long Walks of aged and infirm, some old people were bed-ridden and had been for some time ...', *Household Words*, 23 May 1830, p.206.
3. *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices*, p.386. For a brief summary of Collins's and Dickens's collaborations, see Introduction, note 17.
4. 'A Walk in a Workhouse', p.205.
5. The main articles on Insanity in *Household Words* (H.W.) are: 'The Treatment of the Insane', 6 September 1851, pp.572-576 (prob. Richard Oliver); 'A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree', 17 January 1852, pp.383-389 (Charles Dickens); 'Idiots Again', 15 April 1856, pp.197-200 (Harriet Martineau); 'Grand Jury Powers', 16 May 1857, p.457-463 (Henry Morley); 'The Star of Bethlehem', 13 August 1857, pp.144-150 (Henry Morley); 'Things Within Dr Conolly's Remembrance', 28 November 1857, pp.518-523 (Henry Morley); 'The Cure of Sick Minds', 2 April 1859, pp.415-419 (Henry Morley).
6. 'The Cure of Sick Minds', H.W., 2 April 1859, p.415. The article goes on to paraphrase pieces from *The Journal of Mental Science*.
7. For example, *The Journal of Psychological Medicine and Mental Pathology*, *The Asylum Journal*, *The Journal of Mental Science*, were all established during the 1840s. For an analysis of the rise of the psychiatric profession in the mid nineteenth century, see Andrew T. Scull, *Museums of Madness: The Social Organization of Insanity in Nineteenth-Century England*, second edition (Harmondsworth, 1982), pp.164-186 and Michael Donnelly, *Managing the Mind: A Study of Medical Psychology in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain* (1983).
8. On Collins's use of Mejan's *Recueil de Causes Celebres*, see Clyde K. Hyder, 'Wilkie Collins and *The Woman in White*', P.M.L.A., 34 (1939), 297-303. Collins described how he received a letter in the late 1830s 'asking him to take up some case of real or wrongful confinement in a lunatic asylum', in *The World*, 26 December 1877, reprinted as 'Wilkie Collins in Gloucester Place', in Edmund Yates, *Celebrities at Home*, third series (1879), pp.145-56, and Hall Caine, *My Story* (1908), p.336. The relationship of *The Woman in White* to the lunacy reform movement is also discussed by Barbara Fass Leavy in 'Wilkie Collins's Cinderella: The History of Psychology and *The Woman in White*', *Dickens Studies Annual*, 10 (1982), 91-141. Our historical perspective overlaps at times, but Leavy concentrates on the character of Anne Catherick as case study in the novel.

9. Cited in Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, translated by Richard Howard, second edition (New York, 1973), p.262. On the setting up of the Retreat, see R. Hunter and I. McAlpine, Introduction to Samuel Tuke, *A Description of the Retreat* (1818), reprinted 1964; and Anne Digby, *Madness, Morality and Medicine: A Study of the York Retreat, 1786-1982* (1986).
10. However, although Pinel and Tuke's methods were broadly similar, they were not absolutely compatible. 'Moral' had different connotations in English and French, and Pinel's method concentrated more on behaviour modification, Tuke stressing self-control and judgment. See Kathleen Jones, 'Moral Management and the Therapeutic Community', *Society for the Social History of Medicine*, 5 (October 1971), 6-10; William Bynum, 'Rationales for Therapy in British Psychiatry', *Medical History*, 18 (1974), 310-25.
11. W.A.F. Browne, *What Asylums Were, Are, and Ought to Be* (Edinburgh, 1837), p.135.
12. 'A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree', *H.W.*, 17 January 1852, p.385.
13. 'The Star of Bethlehem', *H.W.*, 15 August 1857, p.146. The case of Norris, who was kept for years chained to his bed in a steel harness and became the emblem of the cruelty of the private madhouse treatment, is vividly described in John Conolly's *The Treatment of the Insane Without Mechanical Restraint* (1836), and is directly quoted in this article. For a discussion on the significance of this case, and Bethlehem Hospital, see Patricia Alderidge, 'Bedlam: fact or fantasy?', in *The Anatomy of Madness: Essays in the History of Psychiatry*, edited by W.F. Bynum, Roy Porter and Michael Shepherd, volume II, 'Institutions and Society' (1983), pp.17-34.
14. 'Things Within Dr Conolly's Remembrance', *H.W.*, 28 November 1857, pp.518-523.
15. 'Lunatic Asylums', *Quarterly Review*, 101 (April 1857), 353-393 (p.353).
16. See Roy Porter, 'The Rage of Party: A Glorious Revolution in English Psychiatry?', *Medical History*, 73 (1983), 33-50. Porter's work is concerned with exploring the complexities of eighteenth-century treatment and perception of madness, which have tended to be obscured by the rather monolithic histories of insanity that have been directly or indirectly inspired by Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*. See Introduction, note 43. For a critique of Foucault's method, as manifesting many of the problems of 1960s anti-psychiatry, see Peter Sedgwick, *Psycho-Politics* (1982).
17. George Cheyne, *The English Malady* (1733), p.44. Cited in Porter, p.43, who points out that similar characterisations of English madness continue throughout the eighteenth century. See also Vieda Skultans, *English Madmen: Ideas on Insanity, 1580-1890* (1973), and Michael V. De Porte, *Nightmare and Hobbyhorse, Swift, Sterne and Augustan Ideas of Madness* (California, 1974).
18. See Anne Digby, 'Moral Treatment at the Retreat, 1796-1846', in *Anatomy of Madness*, II, pp.32-73.

19. Samuel Tuke, *A Description of the Retreat*, p.132.
20. p.141.
21. p.141.
22. p.178. See also, Fiona Godlee, 'Aspects of Non-conformity: Quakers and the Lunatic Fringe', in *Anatomy of Madness*, II, p.73-98. On the shift between early moral treatment and the mid-nineteenth-century development of the psychiatric profession, see Scull, *Museums of Madness*, especially pp.125-158.
23. 'A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree', p.387.
24. Kathleen Jones, *A History of the Mental Health Services* (1972), pp.64-70, and W. Parry Jones, *The Trade in Lunacy: A Study of Private Madhouses in England in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (1972), pp.29-74.
25. See Scull, *Museums of Madness*, pp.50-70.
26. John Conolly, *The Construction and Government of Lunatic Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane* (1847), reprinted 1968, pp.8-9.
27. John Conolly, *The Treatment of the Insane Without Mechanical Restraints* (1836), reprinted 1973, pp.58-9. Other important mid-nineteenth-century descriptions of the non-restraint system include W.A.F. Browne, *What Asylums Were, Are and Ought to Be*, and 'The Moral Treatment of the Insane', *Journal of Mental Science*, 101 (1864), 309-37; John Haslam, *Considerations on the Moral Management of the Insane* (1817); Robert Gardiner Hill, *The Total Abolition of Restraint in the Treatment of the Insane* (1850).
28. For an analysis of the development of the ideology of domesticity, as the lynchpin of the reform of manners and morals, which was developed by early nineteenth-century evangelical reformism (particularly in the work of William Wilberforce and Hannah More), but which had become assimilated as a cultural norm by the mid-nineteenth century, see Catherine Hall, 'The Early Formation of Victorian Domestic Ideology', in *Fit Work for Women*, edited by Sandra Burman (1979), pp.15-33; Leonora Davidoff, Jean L'Esperance and Howard Newby, 'Landscape With Figures: Home and Community in English Society', in *The Rights and Wrongs of Women*, edited by Juliet Mitchell and Ann Oakley (Harmondsworth, 1976), pp.139-176; Barbara Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem* (1983), especially pp.238-288; Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society* (1981) and *The Nineteenth-Century Woman: Her Cultural and Physical World*, edited by Sara Delamont and Lorna Duffin (1978). For further discussion of the 'domestication' of madness, see Andrew Scull, 'The Domestication of Madness', *Medical History*, 27 (1983), 233-248, and Donnelly, *Managing the Mind*.
29. Again, there is a danger in simplifying processes in the late eighteenth century for the sake of contrast; for discussion of the earlier links between sensibility, femininity and propriety, see Janet Todd, *Sensibility* (1986) and Mary Poovey, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer* (Chicago, 1984) and J.M.S. Tomkins, *The Popular Novel in England 1770-1800* (1932) (Chicago, 1984).

30. See Elaine Showalter, 'Victorian Women and Insanity' in *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors and Madmen*, edited by Andrew Scull (1981), pp.313-339. Elaine Showalter's book *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture 1830-1980* (New York, 1985) which had not appeared in England when this study was completed, discusses this process in detail. On the position of women in nineteenth-century medicine, see also Ludmilla Jordanova 'Natural Traits: a Historical Perspective on Science and Sexuality', in *Nature, Culture and Gender*, edited by Carol McCormack and Marilyn Stratham (Cambridge, 1980); Ludmilla Jordanova, 'Mental Illness, Mental Health: Changing Norms and Expectations', in *Cambridge Women's Study Group, Women in Society, Interdisciplinary Essays* (1981), pp.95-114; Sally Shuttleworth 'The Surveillance of the Sleepless Eye, the Constitution of Neurosis in *Villette*' in her forthcoming book on Charlotte Bronte and nineteenth-century psychology.
31. 'A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree', p.386.
32. Andrew Wynter, 'Lunatic Asylums', pp.358-9.
33. *The Construction and Government of Lunatic Asylums*, pp.59-60. Conolly remarks, too: 'Among the most constant indications of insanity are to be observed negligence or peculiarity as to dress; and many patients seem to lack the power of regulating it according to the seasons, or the weather, or the customs of society.' (p.39).
34. 'Insanity its Cause and Cure', *The English Woman's Journal*, 4 (September 1859), 1-14 (pp.12-13). The series also includes 'Insanity, Past and Present', part 1, 6 (January 1861), 305-32, part 2, 7 (February 1861), 383-397; 'A Lunatic Village' (an account of the famous moral managing community at Ghewell) part 1, 7 (March 1861), 19-33, part 2, 7 (April 1861), 94-102; Daniel Hack Tuke 'Insanity Among Women', 7 (May 1861), 145-147.
35. Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Lunatics, 1851, p.45. Cited in Andrew Scull, 'A Victorian Alienist: John Conolly, FRCP, DLG (1794-1866), in *The Anatomy of Madness*, volume 1: 'People and Ideas', pp.103-151 (p.103). This essay, together with R. Hunter and I. McAlpine's introductions to the reprinted editions of *Indications of Insanity*, *The Treatment of the Insane Without Mechanical Restraint*, and *The Construction and Government of Lunatic Asylums*, are the most useful sources on Conolly.
36. See Scull, 'A Victorian Alienist', pp.115-123.
37. John Conolly, *An Enquiry Concerning the Indications of Insanity* (1830), reprinted 1964, p.17.
38. *Indications*, p.35.
39. Showalter, *The Female Malady*, p.45.
40. Conolly set up Lawn House 'for the reception of ladies', in 1845, and Hayes Park in 1850. See Hunter and McAlpine, Introduction to *Indications*, p.xc.

41. John Conolly, *A Remonstrance with the Lord Chief Baron Touching the Case Nottridge Versus Ripley*, third edition (1849), p.3. Cited in Scull, 'A Victorian Alienist', p.129, and p.146, note 217. Scull also mentions that Bulwer-Lytton sought advice from Conolly and Forbes Winslow regarding the confinement of his wife Lady Rosina Bulwer-Lytton (p.145, note 209).
42. Introduction to *Indications*, p.XL.
43. Dickens's disclaimer reads: 'The statements and opinions of this journal generally are, of course, to be received as the statement and opinions of its conductor. But this is not so, in the case of a work of fiction first published in these pages as a serial story, with the name of an eminent writer attached to it. When one of my literary brothers does me the honour to undertake such a task, I hold that he executes it on his own personal responsibility, and for the sustainment of his own reputation; and I do not consider myself at liberty to exercise that control over his text which I claim as to other contributions.' *All the Year Round*, 26 December 1863, p.419. For a discussion of this incident, and Dickens's relationship with Conolly, see R. Hunter and I McAlpina, 'Dickens and Conolly: An Embarrassed Editor's Disclaimer', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 11 August 1961, pp.534-535.
44. 'Pascal, according to Wycherley, was a madman with an illusion about a precipice ... Napoleon an ambitious maniac, in whom the sense of impossibility gradually became extinguished by visceral and cerebral derangement ... But without intending any disrespect from these gentlemen, he assigned the golden crown of insanity to Hamlet' (*Hard Cash*, p.438); cf Conolly's *Indications of Insanity*: 'The celebrated Pascal was the subject of a false sensation, representing to him the edge of an immediate and fearful precipice ... the hallucination is mistaken for reality, then the man is mad.' (p.315).
45. Three of the most well-known of these exposures were John Mitford's pamphlets, *The Crimes and Horrors of Warburton's Private Madhouses*, and *The Crimes and Horrors of Kelly House* (both probably 1825) together with Richard Paternoster's more sober *The Madhouse System* (1841). See W. Parry-Jones, *The Trade in Lunacy*, p.36 and p.227. Kathleen Jones argues that Reade directly adapted Paternoster's case in *Hard Cash*. 'Public Opinion and the Sensation Novelist', *The History of the Mental Health Services*, pp.160-66.
46. See Wayne Burns, *Charles Reade, A Study in Victorian Authorship* (New York, 1961), pp.203-8. Burns argues, not altogether convincingly, that Reade's interest was in part motivated by fears for his own sanity. Charles Reade, 'Our Dark Places', in *Readings* (1883).
47. *Hard Cash*, p.427.
48. p.428.
49. On the specific role of the Lunacy Commission, see N. Harvey, 'A Slavish Bowing Down: The Lunacy Commission and the Psychiatric profession 1845-60', in *Anatomy of Madness*, II, pp.98-131.
50. Cited in Jones, p.29.

31. Mary Wollstonecraft, *The Wrongs of Women* (unfinished in 1797, when she died), edited by James Kingsley and Gary Kelley (Oxford, 1980), p.83.
32. Both Andrew Scull, *Museums of Madness*, and W. Parry-Jones, *The Trade in Lunacy*, develop excellent analyses of this process.
33. Parry-Jones, pp.234-240. Also Peter McCandless, 'Liberty and Lunacy: the Victorians and Wrongful Confinement', *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors and Madmen*, pp.339-363. One of the most widely publicised cases was that of Miss Turner, a patient at Acomb House, York, who was believed to be 'of sound mind' following the 1858 Enquiry (Parry-Jones, p.237). Reade mentions the case in *Hard Cash* (p.360).
34. Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Care and Treatment of Lunatics and Their Property (1839), pp.15-17. In addition to his evidence to the Select Committee, Perceval had published a pamphlet aiming to expose the inadequacy of the 1845 Act to deal with improper detention; 'Letters to the Right Honourable Sir James Graham, Bart, and to other Nobleman and Gentlemen, Upon the Reform of the Law Affecting the Treatment of Persons Alleged to be of Unsound Mind' (1846). See also R. Hunter and I. McAlpine, 'John Thomas Perceval (1803-1876), Patient and Reformer', *Medical History*, 6 (1962), 393-394.
35. C.J. Fox, who founded both Brislington House and Ticehurst Asylum was one of the early pioneers of the non-restraint system in private asylums. See Parry-Jones, *The Trade in Lunacy*, pp.112-127.
36. John Perceval, *A Narrative of the Treatment Experienced by a Gentleman in a State of Mental Derangement, Designed to Explain the Causes and the Nature of Insanity, and to Express the Injudicious Conduct Pursued Towards Many Unfortunate Sufferers Under that Calamity*, two volumes (1832 and 1840), edited, as *Perceval's Narrative*, by Gregory Bateson (1962), p.4.
37. p.25.
38. p.37.
39. pp.270-71.
60. '... But this may with truth be said, that the study of man's understanding requires to be pursued to a certain extent, to enable medical practitioners to perform an important part of their practical duties with credit ... Without such principles, the cure of lunatics may indeed be professed as a trade and a profitable trade ... those who would really be master of the whole subject of mental impairment and error, must make a wider survey of the functions of the mind, must study both its peculiar philosophy and the philosophy of morals ...', *Indications of Insanity*, pp.37-9.
61. 'New Discoveries in Ghosts', *HW*, 17 January 1852, p.403. For explorations of these two approaches, see Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Elliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (1983), *On the Margins of Science: the Social Construction of*

Rejected Knowledge, edited by Roy Wallis (Keele, 1979), and Barry Barnes, *Scientific Knowledge and Sociological Theory* (1974).

62. Mary Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret*, 3 volumes (1862), II, p.202.
63. For a detailed analysis of the interrelationship between the legal and medical professions, their establishment of criteria for defining insanity and criminal responsibility, and in particular the emergence of the administrative category of 'criminal lunacy' during the 1840s, see Roger Smith, *Trial by Medicine: Insanity and Responsibility in Victorian Trials* (Edinburgh, 1981).
64. James Cowles Pritchard, *A Treatise on Insanity and Other Disorders Affecting the Mind* (1835), p.3.
65. p.6.
66. John Barlow, *On Man's Power Over Himself to Prevent and Control Insanity* (1843). Barlow's is a popular manual of moral management, part of a series 'Small Books on Great Subjects'. Monomania, and the different subdivisions thereof, is also discussed in detail in J.C. Bucknill and D.H. Tuke, *A Manual of Psychological Medicine* (1858), Alexander Morison, *The Physiognomy of Mental Diseases* (1847) and W.A.F. Brown, *What Asylums Were, Are and Ought to Be* (1837).
67. See Smith, pp.37-40.
68. Pritchard, p.12. 'Moral Insanity - Dr Mayo's Croonian Lectures', *Fraser's Magazine*, March 1853, 245-259 (p.246). This article gives a detailed account of Thomas Mayo's Medical Testimony and Evidence in Cases of Lunacy: being the Croonian Lectures delivered before the Royal College of Physicians in 1853. With an Essay on the Conditions of Mental Unsoundness. It quotes Benjamin Brodie's *Psychological Inquiries: {Mayo} has shown that other [cases], in which the plea of 'moral insanity' was set up as an excuse for a crime, deserved no better appellation than that of "brutal recklessness" (p.247).*
69. *Psychological Inquiries: In a series of Essays, intended to illustrate the mutual relations of the Physical Organization and the Mental Faculties* (1864), *The Quarterly Review*, 96 (December 1854), p.115. The article precedes the discussion of moral insanity with a detailed discussion of recent research on the brain and nervous system, discussed by Brodie.
70. Pritchard, p.24.
71. pp.14-15.
72. p.19.
73. p.21.
74. Pritchard discusses how both Georget and Esquirol use the term incubation of madness, *Treatise on insanity*, p.17.
75. Pritchard, pp.156-80.
76. See Sander Gilman, *Seeing the Insane* (New York, 1982), especially p.58.

77. J.C. Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy*, translated by Thomas Holcroft (no date given), p.31-2. Lavater's original nine volume study was published in English in the late eighteenth century. See also, John Graham, 'Lavater's Physiognomy in England', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 22 (1961), 561-572. Graham notes how Lavater's *Physiognomy* was described in *The Gentleman's Magazine* as 'popular as the Bible itself' in 1801, and that there were over fifty-five editions in under forty years. His work had a strong influence, he argues, on Mary Wollstonecraft, Fuseli, Godwin and Mary Shelley.
78. Gilman, *Seeing the Insane*, pp.72-102 and 164-179.
79. For a very interesting discussion of this, see Janet Browne, 'Darwin and the Face of Madness', in *The Anatomy of Madness*, 1, pp.151-166. Holman Hunt, *Pre-Raphaelism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, 2 volumes (1903), 1, pp.100-101.
80. The role of Bell's physiognomy and its contribution to Pre-Raphaelite naturalism is discussed by Julie F. Codell's 'Expression over Beauty: Facial Expression, Body Language and Circumstantiality in the Paintings of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood', *Victorian Studies*, 29 (Winter, 1986), 255-291. Other contemporary discussions of physiognomy, include 'Physiognomy', *The Quarterly Review*, 90 (December 1851), 62-91; 'The Physiognomy of the Human Form', *The Quarterly Review*, 99 (September 1856), 452-491.
81. Wilkie Collins, *The Evil Genius*, 3 volumes (1886), 1, p.34.
82. 'Let us imagine to ourselves the overwhelming influence of grief on woman, the object in the mind has absorbed all the power of the frame ... What causes the swelling and quivering of the lips, and the deathly paleness of the face?' Charles Bell, *The Anatomy and Philosophy of Expression as Connected with the Fine Arts* (1816 edition), p.88, cited in Codell, p.271. E.S. Dallas's article 'On Physiognomy' in *The Cornhill* in 1861, compared the method favourably with phrenology precisely because it did not have phrenology's scientific pretensions: 'The absurdities of Lavater are as laughable as those of the phrenologists, and they are only less pernicious, because the good man had no scientific pretensions.' 'On Physiognomy', *The Cornhill Magazine*, 4 (July-December 1861), 472-481 (p.481).
83. Roger Cooter, *The Cultural Meaning of Popular Science: Phrenology and the Organization of Consent in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge, 1984), p.3. This is a superb exploration of the social and cultural constitution of scientific knowledge in the nineteenth century. For an outline of Gall's theory of cerebral localisation, see also Robert M. Young, *Mind, Brain and Adaptation in the Nineteenth Century: Cerebral Localisation and its Biological Context from Gall to Ferrier* (Oxford, 1970), pp.9-34.
84. Cooter, p.20.
85. George Combe, *The Constitution of Man in Relation to External Objects* (Edinburgh, 1829), pp.46-8.
86. 'On Physiognomy', p.476. Cooter offers a detailed account of how phrenologists initially stressed the 'inventive' aspect of the method and

- were pushed into stressing empirical accuracy by establishment scepticism in *The Cultural Meaning of Popular Science*, pp.19-35.
87. George Combe, *Phrenology Applied to Painting and Sculpture* (1855), p.23.
 88. Andrew Combe, *Observations on Mental Derangement* (Edinburgh, 1831), p.62.
 89. Johann Spurzheim, *A View of the Philosophic Principles of Phrenology* (1825), pp.133-34. Cited in Angus McClaren, 'Phrenology, Medium and Message', *Journal of Modern History*, 46 (1974), 87-97 (pp.87-8). Report of the Phrenological Society, *The Zolst*, 1 (April 1843), p.49. For Elliotson's involvement in penal reform, see Fred Kaplan, *Dickens and Mesmerism: The Hidden Springs of Fiction* (Princeton, 1975), pp.62-63 and Philip Collins, *Dickens and Crime* (1962), pp.36-66.
 90. On the lunacy reform movements involvement in phrenological societies, see Roger Cooter, 'Phrenology and the British Alienists, ca 1825-1845', in *Madhouses, Mad-doctors and Madmen*, pp.58-105. On the cultural significance of the movement, see also Steven Shapin, 'The Politics of Observation: Cerebral Anatomy and Social Interests in the Edinburgh Phrenology Disputes', in *On the Margins of Science*, pp.139-179. Phrenology was still being actively discussed in the periodical press in the mid nineteenth century, most notably in a series of articles by Bain comprised of extracts from *The Senses and the Intellect* (1855) and *The Emotions and the Will* (1859) and *On the Study of Character, Including an Estimate of Phrenology* (1861), in *Fraser's Magazine*: 'Phrenology and Psychology', *Fraser's Magazine*, 61 (May 1860), 692-708; and 'The Propensities, according to Phrenology', Part 1, 62 (September 1860), 331-347; Part 2, 62 (November 1860), 670-636; Part 3, 63 (February 1861), 246-259; Part 4, 63 (June 1861), 715-750.
 91. For an analysis of the development of neurophysiology out of phrenology, see Robert M. Young, *Mind, Brain and Adaptation*.
 92. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), 1816 edition, p.422. Cited in Robert Hoeltke, 'The History of Associationism and British Medical Psychology', *Medical History*, 11 (1967), 46-63 (p.47). See also H. Warren, *A History of Associationism* (New York, 1921).
 93. David Hartley, *Observations on Man, His Frame, Duty and Expectations*, 2 volumes, I, p.402. For further discussion of Hartley's ideas, and their role in the development of physiological psychology, see Barbara Bowen Oberg, 'David Hartley and the Association of Ideas', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 37 (1976), 441-454. Robert Young, *Mind, Brain and Adaptation*, pp.94-101; Karl M. Figlio, 'The Metaphor of Organisation: An Historiographical Perspective of the Bio-Medical Sciences of the Early Nineteenth Century', *History of Science*, 14 (1976), 17-53, and Karl M. Figlio, 'Theories of Perception and the Physiology of Mind in the Late Eighteenth Century', *History of Science*, 12 (1975), 177-212.
 94. Robert Whytt, *Observations on the Nature, Causes and Cure of those Disorders which have been commonly called Nervous, Hypochondriac, or Hysterical: to which are prefixed some Remarks on the Sympathy of the*

Nerves (Edinburgh, 1767). Cited in I. Veith, *Hysteria, the History of a Disease* (Chicago, 1965), pp.160-1. See also, W.F. Bynum, 'The Nervous Patient in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century Britain: the Psychiatric origins of British Neurology', in *The Anatomy of Madness*, 1, pp.89-103. Bynum points out that it was in the mid eighteenth century, and particularly with the work of Thomas Trotter, that 'nervous' shifted from meaning 'nervy' or 'of well strung nerves', to nervous weakness or debility, and particularly to become associated with femininity. On the development of the concept of sympathy and nervous sensibility, see James Rogers, 'Sensibility, Sympathy, Benevolence: Physiology and Moral Philosophy in *Tristram Shandy*', in *Languages of Nature: Critical Essays on Science and Literature*, edited by Ludmilla Jordanova (1986), pp.117-139.

95. The modification of Hume's empiricism by Reid is also crucial here. Brown argued that the mind did not merely respond to external stimuli, but combined this with existing sensations - the sensation was cumulative and compounded by memory. Hoeldtke, pp.56-7.
96. John Abercrombie, *Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* (Edinburgh, 1830). Dickens, for example, owned a copy. Fred Kaplan, *Dickens and Mesmerism*, p.4.
97. *Intellectual Powers*, p.96.
98. pp.97-155. Conolly makes a similar point in *Indications of Insanity*, p.191.
99. p.267.
100. Robert MacNish, *The Philosophy of Sleep* (Glasgow, 1830), p.50. MacNish, a leading exponent of phrenology, gives one of the fullest phrenological analyses of sleep and dreams here, and his principles are echoed by Abernethy, MacNish and Elliotson. See also Newnham's *Essay on Superstition* (1830); Benjamin Brodie's *Psychological Inquiries*; John Sheppard, *On Dreams in their Mental or Moral Aspects* (1831); Frank Seafield, *Literature and Curiousities of Dreams*, 2 volumes (1865), a fascinating 'commonplace book of speculations concerning the mysteries of dreams and visions, records of curious and well authenticated dreams, and notes of various modes of interpretation adopted in ancient and modern times'.
101. *The Philosophy of Sleep*, p.117.
102. *Intellectual Powers*, pp.262-289. Abercrombie does also argue, however, that the activity of dreaming should not be discounted as an insane activity - although his analysis of what constitutes a thinking process in a dream is the closest correspondent to waking states. 'It appears, then, that the mental operations, which take place in dreaming, consist chiefly in old conceptions and old associations ... But there are facts on record which show mental operations, in dreams of a much more intellectual character.' (p.288) He includes musical composition and the solving of mathematical problems in his cases. A similar point is made by Robert MacNish, who develops a phrenological theory of dreams to argue that preponderant organs influence dreaming as much as waking states: 'To speak phrenologically ... an excess of Cautiousness will inspire him with terror; an excess of Self-esteem

causes him to be placed in undignified situations ... Secretiveness, a deceiver, Acquisitiveness, a thief ...', *Philosophy of Sleep*, pp.65-6.

103. J.A. Symonds, the father of the symbolist poet of the same name was a physician in Bristol with an active interest in poetry and literature. He cites De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* in his analysis of hallucination. He was also a good friend of Pritchard, and supported his theory of moral insanity (see *Dictionary of National Biography*).
104. *Sleep and Dreams* (1851), p.12.
105. p.103.
106. Symonds, *Sleep and Dreams*, p.77.
107. John Ferriar argued that delusion was a well-known phenomenon, but cites Erasmus Darwin to discuss apparitions as optical illusions. *Sketch Towards a Theory of Apparitions* (1813), pp.12-14. 'On Visions and Dreams' opens: 'The age of ghosts is gone; but spectres are still occasionally seen ... some peculiarly nervous people have such visitors almost dally' and goes on to point out 'Even Dr Abercrombie, with all his marvellous powers of observation, and his devotion to the study of psychology, is extremely confused in his explanation of spectral appearance, though nothing can be better than the cases which he cites.' 'On Visions and Dreams', *Frasar's Magazine*, 7 (November 1862), pp.506-514 (p.512). See also Abercrombie, *Intellectual Powers*, p.352.
108. Symonds, *Sleep and Dreams*, p.27.
109. 'What is Mesmerism', *Blackwoods Magazine*, 70 (July 1851), 70-85 (p.70). The article is a lengthy critique of mesmerism, concluding: 'Let it be announced from all authoritative quarters that the magnetic sensibility is only another name for an unsound condition of the mental and bodily functions ...' (p.85).
110. See also Robert Darnton, *Mesmerism and the End of the Enlightenment in France* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1968), pp.3-7; Anton Mesmer, *Memoire Sur la Decouverte Du Magnetism Animal* (Paris, 1779), translated by V.R. Meyers (1948). Cited in Fred Kaplan, *Dickens and Mesmerism*, p.7.
111. Darnton, p.4.
112. The Zolst ran from 1843-1855. For a detailed description of Elliotson's career and an excellent account of the cultural impact of mesmerism in England, see Kaplan, *Dickens and Mesmerism*, pp.3-74.
113. Puységur developed the method of 'artificial somnambulism' in France in the early nineteenth century. See H.F. Ellenburger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York, 1970), pp.70-74.
114. J. Elliotson, *Human Physiology*, fifth edition (1840), p.674. Elliotson's quotation from Stewart is 'That these pretensions (of mesmerism) involved much of ignorance, or of imposture, or both, in their author, has, I think been fully demonstrated ... but does it follow from this that the facts witnessed and authenticated by those academicians should

share in the disgrace incurred by the empirics who disguised or misrepresented them? For Mesmer's practice, with respect to the physical effects of the principle of imagination ... are incomparably more curious than if he had actually demonstrated the existence of his boasted science ...', *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, III, p.221, cited in Elliotson, p.677.

115. Kaplan, pp.46-52. Elliotson discusses the implications of the Okey sisters in *Human Physiology*, who 'exhibit perfect specimens of double consciousness ... In their ecstatic delirium, they know nothing of what has occurred in their natural state: they know not who they are, nor their ages, nor anything which they learnt in their healthy state; and in that natural state they are perfectly ignorant of all that has passed in their delirium.' (p.1165).
116. Kaplan's *Dickens and Mesmerism* is the most comprehensive study of Dickens's close and long-standing involvement with the movement. Bulwer-Lytton's involvement in mesmerism as one aspect of his 'occult' interests is discussed in Robert Lee Wolff, 'Strange Stories: The Occult Fiction of Bulwer-Lytton', in *Strange Stories and Other Explorations in Victorian Fiction* (Boston, 1971), pp.143-322.
117. See Kaplan, p.99 and p.102; also *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, Volume 5, 1847-9, edited by Graham Storey and K.J. Fielding (Oxford, 1981), p.234, note 3.
118. 'W.W.C., Magnetic Evenings at Home: to G.H. Lewes', Letter I, *The Leader*, 17 January 1852, pp.64-65.
119. G.H. Lewes, 'The Fallacy of Clairvoyance', *The Leader*, 28 March 1852, p.305.
120. 'The Incredible Not Always Impossible', *The Leader*, 3 April 1852, p.328. See Introduction, note 9 and Kirke H. Beetz, 'Wilkie Collins and *The Leader*', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 15 (1981), 20-29. Beetz suggests that Collins dissented from *The Leader's* religious agnosticism.
121. Nine years later, too, Collins is described by George Elliot as entertaining G.H. Lewes, Spencer and Pigott with a satirical story of Bulwer-Lytton's occultism while *A Strange Story* was being serialised in *All the Year Round*. George Elliot, Letter to Sara Henwell, 6 December 1861, *The Letters of George Elliot*, III, 1859-1861, edited by Gordon S. Haight (Yale, 1954), p.468. The evening described is 30 November 1861. *A Strange Story* was serialised in *All the Year Round* between 10 August 1861 and 8 March 1862; and is an explicit discussion of the possibilities of mesmerism and clairvoyance.
122. See Henri F. Ellenburger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York, 1970), pp.70-76 and L.L. Whyte, *The Unconscious Before Freud* (1966).
123. William B. Carpenter, *Mesmerism, Spiritualism, etc., Historically and Scientifically Considered* (1877), p.22.
124. For a description of Carpenter's career and development, see J.E. Carpenter's 'Memorial Sketch', in William B. Carpenter, *Nature and Man, Essays Scientific and Philosophical* (1888), pp.4-113. The Memoir

mentions that Carpenter was a friend and neighbour of Wills, the co-editor of *Household Words* (p.43).

125. G.H. Lewes, *Problems of Life and Mind*, 3 volumes (1874-9). First Series, *The Foundations of a Creed*, 2 volumes, I, p.162.
126. William B. Carpenter, *Principles of Mental Physiology, with their Application to the Training and Discipline of the Mind, and the Study of its Morbid Conditions* (1874), pp.429-30.
127. pp.454-5.
128. p.454.
129. pp.540-1.
130. E.S. Dallas, *The Gay Science*, 2 volumes (1866). 'A science of criticism is possible and it must of necessity be the science of the laws of pleasure, the joy science, the gay science.' (I, p.6).
131. I, p.199.
132. I, pp.207-8.
133. I, p.209.
134. II, p.136. Dallas criticises both Spencer and Carpenter for their reductive conception of the 'play of thought'. Although he agrees with Carpenter that there is no clear boundary between reason and imagination, he argues that they cannot be differentiated by relating one to 'fact' and one to 'fiction'. (I, pp.187-8.) See also James Sully, *Sensation and Intuition, Essays in Psychology and Aesthetics* (1874).
135. Pritchard, *A Treatise on Insanity*, pp.156-170.
136. George Man Burrows, *Commentaries on Insanity* (1829) p.41. He comments, 'Habitual luxury, and the vices of refinement, are peculiar to the rich, and consequently a greater degree of susceptibility and irritability is super-induced. The lower orders, who ought more generally to be exempt from the concomitant of wealth and indolence, that is, disease, unhappily provoke it by their excesses; and thus voluntarily graft onto themselves the evils which, from their condition, they might otherwise escape.' (p.19).
137. 'Idiots Again', *MW*, 13 April 1854, p.197.
138. Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859). On the development of Darwin's theories and mid-nineteenth century organicism, see Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots*, Sally Shuttleworth, *George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Science: The Male-Believe of a Beginning* (Cambridge, 1984) and Ludmilla Jordanova, *Lamarck* (Oxford, 1984). See also Stephen Jay Gould, *Ever Since Darwin* (1981) and Gertrude Himelfarb, *Rooms in the Darwin Hotel* (1959).

139. In the Preface to *First Principles* (1862), Spencer emphasised that his concept of the 'Development Hypothesis' had preceded Darwin's and was independent of it. For further analysis of Spencer's evolutionary ideas, their relation to associationism, see Young, *Mind, Brain and Adaptation*, pp.150-190, and to Darwin, D. Freeman, 'The Evolutionary Theories of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer', *Current Anthropology*, 15 (1974), 211-237.
140. Herbert Spencer, 'Progress, Its Law and Cause', *Westminster Review*, 67 (April 1859), 445-485; reprinted *Essays: Scientific, Political and Speculative* (1858), p.3. Spencer discovered Von Baer's formula that 'the development of every organism is a change from homogeneity to heterogeneity', from reviewing Carpenter's *Principles of Human Physiology* in 1851, Young, *Mind, Brain and Adaptation*, p.168.
141. 'Progress, Its Law and Cause', p.3.
142. Herbert Spencer, *The Principles of Psychology* (1855), p.526.
143. This, for example, is the position put forward in Charles Bucknill and Daniel Hack Tuke's *A Manual of Psychological Medicine* in 1858.
144. Andrew Wynter, 'Lunatic Asylums', p.392.
145. Henry Maudsley, *Responsibility in Mental Disease* (1874), p.23. Maudsley was one of the most prolific and influential developers of psychiatric theory of the late nineteenth century. He was Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Professor of Medical Jurisprudence at University College, London.
146. For a detailed analysis of the development and meaning of the term (degeneration) in social and biological theory, and its impact on late nineteenth century novelists, see William Greenslade: 'The Concept of Degeneration 1880-1910, with Particular Reference to the Work of Hardy, Wells and Gissing', (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Warwick, 1982).
147. E. Ray Lancaster, *Degeneration* (1880), p.33, cited in Greenslade, p.14.
148. The concept of the residuum, or the 'submerged tenth' of a criminalised class of casual poor, and the particular fears that they gave rise to, is analysed most thoroughly in Garath Stedman-Jones, *Outcast London* (Oxford, 1971).
149. Cited in A. Ackerknecht, *A Short History of Psychiatry* (New York, 1959), p.49. See also Ian Dowbiggin 'Degeneration and Hereditarianism in French Mental Medicine 1840-90: Psychiatric theory as ideological adaptation', in *The Anatomy of Madness*, 1, pp.188-232.
150. Henry Maudsley, *Body and Mind* (1873), pp.44-45.
151. Morel, *On the Physical, Intellectual and Moral Degeneracy of the Human Race*, cited in Dowbiggin, p.192.
152. *Responsibility in Mental Disease*, p.3.
153. *Responsibility in Mental Disease*, p.29.

154. *Body and Mind*, p.63.
155. Elaine Showalter's *The Female Malady* includes a discussion of the role of degenerative theory in opposing the demands of feminism. Both socialist and feminist debates themselves were permeated with evolutionary assumptions, as witnessed particularly by, for example, Olive Schreiner's *Women and Labour* (1911) and Havelock Ellis's theory of homosexuality. See Ruth Fris and Anna Scott, Olive Schreiner, and Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society* (1980).
156. Hysteria had been established as predominantly, but not exclusively female disorder by classical medicine; it became seen specifically as a nervous disorder in the context of Whytt's general theory of the sympathetic structures of the nervous system in *Observations on the Nature and Causes of Those Disorders which have Commonly Been Called Nervous, Hypochondriac and Hysterical* in 1764. By 1840 Thomas Laycock argued that while the nervous system was 'the seat of hysterical disease', there was a reciprocal action between the nerves, the sympathetic system and the uterus, which has 'rather a directing than an exciting influence on nervous affectations'. *A Treatise on the Nervous Disorders of Women* (1840), p.144. See Veith, *Hysteria*, especially pp.155-195.
157. 'It is reasonable to expect that any emotion that is strongly felt by great numbers of people, but whose natural manifestations are completely repressed in compliance with the usages of society, will be the ones whose morbid effects are most frequently noted.' Robert Carter, *On the Pathology and Treatment of Hysteria* (1853), p.21; cited in Veith, p.201. For an important reassessment of the simplistic 'repressive' conception of Victorian attitudes to sexuality see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, volume one, *An Introduction* translated by Robert Hurley (1979); Peter Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience, Victorian to Freud*, volume one, *The Education of the Senses* (Oxford, 1984), and M. Jeanne Peterson, 'Dr Acton's Enemy: Medicine, Sex and Society in Victorian England', *Victorian Studies*, 29 (Summer, 1986), 369-391.
158. F.C. Skey, *Hysteria* (1847), p.35.
159. Henry Maudsley, *The Pathology of Mind* (1879), p.466.
160. 'Sex in Mind and Education', *The Fortnightly Review*, 21 (April 1874), 466-483. cf also Herbert Spencer: 'More or less of this constitutional disturbance will inevitably follow an exertion of the brain beyond the normal amount; and when not so excessive as to produce absolute illness, is sure to entail a slowly accumulating degeneracy of physique', *Education, Intellectual, Moral and Physical* (1861), p.184.
161. Andrew Wynter, *The Borderlands of Insanity* (1875), p. 1.
162. Maudsley, *Responsibility in Mental Disease*, p.63.
163. p.40.

Chapter Two

Nervous Fancies of Hypochondriacal Bachelors:
Basil, and the Problems of Modern Life

1. Boswell's Column, edited by M. Bailey (1951), pp.42-3. Cited in Roy Porter, 'The Hunger for Imagination: Approaching Samuel Johnson's Melancholy', in *The Anatomy of Madness*, edited by W.F. Bynum, Roy Porter, and Michael Shepherd (1983), volume one, 'People and Ideas', 63-89 (p.66).
2. Wilkie Collins, *Basil, A Story of Modern Life*, 3 volumes (1852), 2, pp.263-6.
2. I, p.30.
3. 'The Progress of Fiction as an Art', *The Westminster Review*, 60 (October 1853), 343-374 (p.358).
4. p.372.
5. 'Edmond and Basil', *Bentley's Miscellany*, 32 (November 1852), 576-586 (p.577 and p.586).
6. Dickens reiterated that it was his admiration for Basil that first made him take Collins seriously as a promising author, in a letter to Collins when he was writing *No Name*: 'I cannot tell you with what a dash of pride as well as pleasure I read the great results of your hard work. Because, as you know, I was certain from the Basil days that you were the Writer who would come ahead of all the Field - being the only one who combined invention and power, but humorous and pathetic, with that invincible determination to work, and that profound conviction that nothing is to be done without work, of which triflers and feigners have no conception.' (Letter to Collins, 20 September 1862, in *The Letters of Charles Dickens to Wilkie Collins*, selected by Georgina Hogarth, edited by Lawrence Hutton (1894), p.124.)
7. *Basil*, Preface, I, pp.xi-xiv.
8. p.xi.
9. Review of *Antonina or The Fall of Rome*, *Gentleman's Magazine*, 30 (April 1850), 408-409 (p.408). The novel, in the tradition of Scott and Bulwer-Lytton, was well received, not least for its historical detail. 'But the work is not more remarkable for the characters it brings out than for the learning and perfect acquaintance with the times it alludes to; everything is truthful in it; it represents Rome as it was, and the Romans as they were, with all their insolence and recklessness, their idleness and improvidence.' (Review of *Antonina, or The Fall of Rome*, *Bentley's Miscellany*, 27 (April 1850), 373-378 (p.378).) Collins referred to the historical research that he had put into *Antonina* in The Preface to *Basil*: 'As the reading of past realities in books gave me the materials for making *Antonina*, so the reading of present realities in man, must give me the materials for making *Basil*. Industry in collecting useful information; discretion in selecting it; and care and diligence in using it, were just as important in the one case, as in the other.' (p.ix).

10. The 'hypochondria' was the region of the stomach immediately under the ribs, thought to be the seat of melancholy; Whytt uses the term 'hypochondiac' primarily in this sense of melancholy in analysing it as a specifically nervous disorder in *Observations on the Nature, Causes and Cure of those Disorders which have been commonly called Nervous, Hypochondriac, or Hysterical* (1767), and this overlaps with the sense that the word later acquires as its primary meaning, that the nervous disorder itself takes the form that the patient suffers from an imaginary disease. See W.F. Bynum, 'The Nervous Patient in Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Psychiatric Origins of British Neurology', in *The Anatomy of Madness*, I, pp.89-103.
11. *Basil*, I, pp.25-7. The 'morbid anatomy' metaphor is erased from the 1862 edition.
12. Compare the opening of *Basil* with the confessional openings of *Caleb Williams* and *The Confessions of a Justified Sinner*:

'My life has for some time been a theatre of calamity. I have been a mark for the vigilance of tyranny, and I could not escape. My enemy has shown himself inaccessible to entreaties and untried in persecution. My fame, as well as my happiness, has become his victim. Everyone, as far as my story has been known, has refused to assist me in my distress and has execrated my name. I have not deserved this treatment. My own conscience witnesses in behalf of that innocence, my pretensions to which are regarded in the world as incredible ... I am incited to a penning of these memoirs only by a desire to divert my mind from the deplorableness of my situation, and by a faint idea that posterity may by their means be induced to render me a justice which my contemporaries refuse. My story will, at least, appear to have that consistency which is seldom attendant but upon truth.' (William Godwin, *Caleb Williams* (1794), edited by David Macraeken (Oxford, 1977), p.3.)

'My life has been a life of trouble and turmoil; of change and vicissitude; of anger and exultation; of sorrow and of vengeance. My sorrows have all been for a slighted gospel, and my vengeance has been wreaked on its adversaries. Therefore, in the might of heaven will I sit down and write: I will let the wicked of this world know what I have done in the faith of the promises, and justification by grace, that they may read and tremble, and bless their gods of silver and gold, that the minister of heaven was removed from their sphere before their blood was mingled with their sacrifices.' (James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824), edited by John Carey (Oxford, 1970), p.97.)

13. *Basil*, III, p.296.
14. I, pp.39-40.
15. I, p.45.
16. I, p.35.
17. I, p.33.

18. I, pp.46-7.
19. I, p.291.
20. I, p.279.
21. I, p.96.
22. I, pp.120-121.
23. II, p.4.
24. I, pp.179-80
25. I, pp.199-200.
26. II, pp.23-27.
27. II, p.28 and 2, p.43.
28. II, p.46.
29. I, p.201.
30. I, pp.235-36.
31. I, pp.75-76.
32. I, pp.77-78.
33. I, pp.84-85.
34. I, p.154.
35. I, pp.158-59.
36. I, p.149.
37. I, pp.151-54.
38. John Abercrombie, *Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* (1830), p.267.
39. *Basil*, I, p.160.
40. Thomas De Quincey, *The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821), 1856 edition (1960), pp.84-5 (note).
41. J.A. Symonds, *Sleep and Dreams* (1851), p.78.
42. *Basil*, I, pp.160-1.
43. Symonds, *Sleep and Dreams*, p.24.
44. Audrey Peterson, in a discussion of the medical and fictional development of the concept of brain fever during the nineteenth century, argues that the simultaneous vagueness and medical

authenticity of the term made it an attractive device for many nineteenth-century novelists. The term was a colloquial development of the classical 'phrensy' and defined, at the end of the eighteenth century, as inflammation of the brain. In 1837, James Copland described brain fever as being characterised by: 'Acute pain in the head, with intolerance of light and sound; watchfulness, delirium; flushed countenance and redness of the conjunctiva, or a heavy diffused state of the eyes; quick pulse, heavy spasmodic twitchings or convulsions, passing into somnolency, coma, and a complete relaxation of the limbs.' (James Copland, *A Dictionary of Practical Medicine* (1837), p.228; cited in Peterson, p.447.) In general an attack of brain fever was described as developing abruptly and as a potentially contagious disease, though precipitated by moral causes. Audrey Peterson, 'Brain Fever in Nineteenth-Century Literature: Fact and Fiction', *Victorian Studies*, 19 (June 1976), 438-464.

45. *Basil*, II, pp.159-62.
46. II, p.175.
47. II, pp.168-70.
48. II, p.175.
49. De Quincey, *Confessions*, pp.233-35.
50. *Basil*, II, pp.176-80. De Quincey describes his architectural visions - the result of looking at Piranesi's pictures: 'With the same power of endless growth and self-reproduction did my architecture proceed in dreams. In the early stages of the malady, the splendours of my dreams were indeed chiefly architectural; and I beheld such pomp of cities and palaces as never yet was beheld by the waking eye, unless in the clouds' '... Now it was that upon the rocking waters of the ocean the human face began to reveal itself; the sea appeared paved with innumerable faces, upturned to the heavens ...' (*Confessions*, p.239 and p.249).
51. *Basil*, III, p.245.
52. III, p.258.
53. III, p.262.
54. III, pp.288-89.
55. III, p.147.
56. III, pp.25-26.
57. Kenneth Robinson, *Wilkie Collins, A Biography* (1951), p.73; Kirk H. Beetz, *Wilkie Collins: An Annotated Bibliography 1829-1976* (1978), p.2. Dickens rejected the story on the grounds that its treatment of hereditary insanity might cause distress 'among those numerous families in which there is such a taint' in 1852. 'The Monktons of Wincot Abbey' eventually appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* during November and December 1855 and was reprinted in *The Queen of Hearts* collection as 'Brother Griffith's Story of Mad Monkton', *The Queen of Hearts*, 3 volumes (1859).

58. Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Fall of the House of Usher', *Graham's Magazine* (1839), in *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* (1843), 1971 edition, p.130.
59. p.133.
60. p.131.
61. Wilkie Collins, 'Brother Griffith's Story of Mad Monkton', *The Queen of Hearts*, II, p.2.
62. II, pp.83-86.
63. Wilkie Collins, *A Rogue's Life, Written by Himself, Household Words*, 13 March 1836, pp.1-29 (p.157). The story was not published in book form until 1879.

Chapter Three

The Woman in White:
 Resemblance and Difference - Patience and Resolution

1. Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White*, 3 volumes (1860), edited by H.P. Sucksmith (Oxford, 1973), p.22.
2. p.22.
3. p.400.
4. See Introduction, and John Sutherland, *Victorian Novelists and Publishers* (1976), pp.171-81.
5. 'Sensation Novels', *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine*, 91 (May 1862), 364-384, p.363 and p.366. For a discussion of Collins's development of fictional conventions in *The Woman in White*, Walter Kendrick, 'The "Sensationalism" of *The Woman in White*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 32 (June 1977), 18-35 and Mark Hennelly, 'Reading Detection in *The Woman in White*', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 22 (Winter 1980), 449-467.
6. *The Woman in White*, p.75.
7. John Conolly, *An Inquiry Concerning the Indications of Insanity* (1830), p.17.
8. 'M.D. and MAD', *All the Year Round*, 22 February 1862, pp.511 and 513. This article also picks up on the debate about the definition of 'moral insanity' and what constitutes criminal responsibility. See Chapter One.
9. In the course of his evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee, Perceval argued that no one should be committed as insane on the evidence of doctors alone, but on medical opinion in combination with that of magistrates or clergy. Patients should have the right to appeal against their confinement, and should freely be able to correspond with friends or relatives. They should also be allowed to wear their own clothes, and not have their hair or beards forcibly cut. *Report of the Parliamentary Committee into the Care and Treatment of Lunatics and their Property* (April 1859), p.17-19. See also Barbara Fass Leavy, 'Wilkie Collins's Cinderella: The History of Psychology and *The Woman in White*', *Dickens Studies Annual*, 10 (1982), 91-141, for a discussion of the reference of the Select Committee Enquiry to the novel in relation to the figure of Anne Catherick.
10. John Perceval, 'Letters to the Right Honourable Sir James Graham, Bart., and to other Noblemen and Gentlemen, Upon the Reform of the Law Affecting the Treatment of Persons Alleged to be of Unsound Mind' (1846), p.33.
11. *The Woman in White*, p.380.
12. 'No pauper Asylum', Mrs Catherick insists: "I won't have her put in a pauper Asylum. A Private Establishment, if you please. I have my feelings as a mother, and my character to preserve in the town; and I

will submit to nothing but a Private Establishment, of the sort which my genteel neighbours would choose for afflicted relatives of their own." Those were my words. It is gratifying for me to reflect that I did my duty. Though never over-fond of my late daughter, I had a proper pride about her. No pauper stain - thanks to my firmness and resolution - ever rested on my child.' (p.498) This of course only emphasises her cynical obsession with propriety. The fact that the asylum is in a London suburb might have given it 'madhouse' connotations, since Hoxton was one of the main areas specialising in private madhouses in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. But the asylum itself does not bear this out. See W. Parry-Jones, *The Trade in Lunacy* (1972), p.36 and, for description of Fox's enlightened establishments, pp.112-127.

13. *The Woman in White*, p.386.
14. Alexander Morison, *Outlines of Lectures on Mental Diseases* (1826), p.125. The ability of madness itself to shape the habitual expression and thus the meaning of the face was a basic assumption of the physiognomy of madness. Morison, whose *Physiognomy of Mental Diseases* (1847) was one of the most influential mid-nineteenth century analyses, emphasised the importance of expression over structure. See Sander Gilman, *Seeing the Insane*, pp.92-100.
15. 'The Cure of Sick Minds', *HW*, 2 April 1839, pp.416-17.
16. *The Woman in White*, p.13. Compare this also with Prichard's analysis of female insanity: 'A female modest and circumspect becomes violent and abrupt in her manners, loquacious, impetuous, talks loudly and abusively against her relatives and friends, before perfect strangers.' *A Treatise on Insanity* (1835), p.19.
17. John Conolly, *The Construction and Government of Lunatic Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane* (1847), pp.59-60. See above, Chapter One.
18. *The Woman in White*, p.49. Conolly, like his contemporaries, stresses the importance of early education in establishing the correct associations, in *Indications of Insanity*, pp.190-196. The article on idiots in *Household Words* also stresses that early education can modify inherited characteristics of the 'weak minded'. 'Idiots Again', *HW*, 13 April 1834, pp.197-200.
19. *The Woman in White*, p.83.
20. p.90.
21. She is, however, described as briefly flashing the signs of mania when Percival Glyde's name is mentioned: 'A most extraordinary and startling change passed over her. Her face, at all ordinary times so touching to look at, in its nervous sensitiveness, weakness and uncertainty, became suddenly darkened by an expression of maniacally-intense hatred and fear, which communicated a wild, unnatural force to every feature. Her eyes dilated in the dim evening light like the eyes of a wild animal.' (p.91) It links the 'wildness' with Percival, though, as much as Anne.
22. p.84.

23. p.394.
24. p.514. The Biblical reference is to Exodus, 34:7. Philip Fairlie is described as 'the spoilt darling of society, especially of the woman - an easy, light-hearted, impulsive, affectionate man; generous to a fault, constitutionally lax in his principles, and notoriously thoughtless of his moral obligations where women were concerned'. (p.513).
25. p.32.
26. p.28.
27. pp.54-55.
28. p.381.
29. p.445. The concept of 'nervous' as meaning resolute, or 'of well strung nerves' refers back to the earlier eighteenth century usage of the term. See W.B. Bynum, 'The Nervous Patient in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century Britain: the psychiatric origins of British neurology', in *Anatomy of Madness*, I, p.90.
30. *The Woman in White*, p.1 and p.178.
31. p.1.
32. p.67.
33. p.18.
34. p.24. Conolly and Abercrombie both identify the loss of a coherent sense of time as one of the signs of derangement. Conolly, *Indications of Insanity*, p.177, Abercrombie, *Intellectual Powers*, pp.99-101.
35. *The Woman in White*, p.53.
36. John Barlow, *On Man's Power Over Himself to Prevent and Control Insanity* (1843), p.27.
37. *The Woman in White*, pp.65-66.
38. p.66. cf J.C. Pritchards 'Mental defection, or melancholy, which extinguishes life and gives the mind up to fear and anticipation of evils, lays the foundation for many kinds of varieties of monomania. The most numerous and the worst instances are those in which the thoughts are directed towards the evils of a future life.' *A Treatise on Insanity*, p.30.
39. *The Woman in White*, p.69.
40. p.25.
41. p.40.
42. pp.41-42.
43. p.42.

44. p.166.
45. p.166 and p.145-46.
46. p.158.
47. pp.149-50.
48. pp.167-78.
49. p.172.
50. pp.266-67.
51. p.241.
52. p.248.
53. p.231.
54. p.208.
55. p.197.
56. p.308.
57. p.222. 'He laid his plump, yellow-white fingers ... upon the formidable brute's head and looked him straight in the eyes.' (p.199).
58. p.147.
59. pp.194-95.
60. p.195. Eleanor Fairlie never does break into mania though.
61. Pritchard, *A Treatise on Insanity*, p.19. See also Conolly's treatment of the Nottridge case in Chapter One.
62. *The Woman in White*, p.195.
63. *The World*, 26 December 1877, p.5. Reprinted as 'Mr Wilkie Collins in Gloucester Place' in Edmund Yates, *Celebrities at Home*, third series, 1877, pp.145-56.
64. *The Woman in White*, p.211.
65. p.213.
66. p.560.
67. p.558.
68. cf U.C. Knoepfelmacher's point that Fosco, like Frank Sofly in *A Rogue's Life* and Captain Wragge in *No Name* represents an anarchic and rebellious counterworld to the dominant order of 'respectability' represented by Hartright, in 'The Counterworld of Victorian Fiction and

The Woman in White, The Worlds of Victorian Fiction, edited by Jerome K. Buckley (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1975), pp.351-371.

69. **The Woman in White**, p.211.
70. p.162. I owe this point about Marian's breakdown through loss of control of time, to Mavis Daly, 'Genette's Narrative Theory and Chinese Box Stories', unpublished BA dissertation, University of Bradford, 1984, p.34.
71. **The Woman in White**, p.259.
72. pp.305-7.
73. p.17.
74. p.471.
75. p.380 and pp.379-80.
76. p.379.
77. p.381.
78. p.423.
79. p.438.
80. p.413.
81. p.400-1.
82. p.379.
83. p.441.

Chapter Four
Skins to Jump Into
Femininity as Masquerade in No Name

1. Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son*, 3 volumes (1848), edited by Peter Fairclough (Harmondsworth, 1970), p.737.
2. Wilkie Collins, *No Name*, 3 volumes (1862), 1890 edition, p.21.
3. p.7.
4. Preface, p.i.
5. *No Name* is generally considered the novel in which Collins was most influenced by Dickens's editorial interventions. Dickens suggested various names for the novel, none of which Collins chose, but which clearly suggest unconscious processes and pressures: *Below the Surface*; *Undercurrents*; *Behind the Veil*; *Secret Springs*; *Latent Forces*; *Changed, or Developed?*; *Nature's Own Daughter*. Letter to Collins, 24 January 1862. *The Letters of Charles Dickens to Wilkie Collins*, selected by Georgina Hogarth, edited by Laurence Hutton (1892), p.120. He also stressed in the same letter: 'It seems to be that great care is needed not to tell the story too severely. In exact proportion as you play around it here and there, and mitigate the severity of your own sticking to it, you will enhance and intensify the power with which *Magdalen* holds on to her purpose.' (p.121).
6. *No Name*, p.7.
7. Preface, p.i.
8. p.433.
9. p.246.
10. p.52.
11. p.123.
12. p.42.
13. Wragge's name for a series of roles based on characters whose history he has carefully researched, p.235.
14. p.232.
15. p.361.
16. pp.434-36.
17. p.112.
18. This, as Gillian Beer points out, is one of the most important differences between Lamarck and Darwin. She argues that Lamarck's work 'follows the pattern of all stories of how things came to be the

way they are: need brings about change or - in more admonitory versions - bad behaviour results in loss and degradation.' *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative, in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (1983), p.24.

19. No Name, p.8.
20. p.104.
21. pp.104-5.
22. p.22.
23. pp.48-49.
24. Herbert Spencer, 'Progress, Its Law and Cause', *Essays: Scientific, Political and Speculative* (1858), p.3.
25. p.4.
26. p.26.
27. pp.204-5.
28. p.265.
29. p.219.
30. pp.188-89.
31. pp.5-6.
32. p.53.
33. p.134.
34. p.153.
35. p.226.
36. p.525.
37. p.200.
38. Unsigned review, *Saturday Review*, 17 January 1863, p.84.
39. No Name, p.483, cf F.C. Skey's definition of hysterical patients in Chapter One.
40. p.357.
41. p.521.
42. pp.443-44.
43. p.444.

- 44. p.239.
- 45. pp.348-49.
- 46. p.284.
- 47. pp.275-76.
- 48. pp.277-78.
- 49. John Abercrombie, *Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* (1840), p.102.

Chapter Five

Armada!: The Sensitive Subject as Palimpsest

1. G.H. Lewes, *The Foundations of a Creed*, 2 volumes (1874), I, p.162.
2. Wilkie Collins, *Armada!*, 2 volumes (1866), 1908 edition, pp.39-40.
3. pp.20-21.
4. James Cowles Pritchard, *A Treatise on Insanity* (1835), p.14.
5. *Armada!*, p.54.
6. J.A. Sutherland, *Victorian Novelists and Publishers*, p.105. As Sutherland points out, George Smith was an aggressive publisher who actively solicited his authors. He had made Collins the offer in 1861, but the writing of *Armada!* was delayed both by an attack of gout and by the sheer intricacy of its structure. See Sue Lonoff, *Wilkie Collins and his Victorian Readers*, pp.33-37, for Collins's working methods on *Armada!*.
7. *Armada!*, Preface. The Preface concludes: 'Estimated by the clap-trap morality of the present day, this may be a very daring book. Judged by the Christian morality which is of all time, it is only a book that is daring enough to speak the truth.' For an excellent discussion of Collins's tone in his prefaces in relation to the critical establishment, see Lonoff, pp.55-66. Dickens's remarks to Collins on *Armada!* are also interesting: 'The plot is extraordinarily got together; its compactness is quite amazing ... but insuperable and ineradicable from the whole piece is - Danger. Almost every situation in it is dangerous. I do not think any English audience would accept the scene in which Miss Gwilt in that widow's dress renounces Midwinter. And if you had got so far you would never have got to the last act in the Sanitorium. You would only carry those situations on a real hard wooden stage ... and ... by the help of interest in some innocent person who they placed in peril, and that person a young woman ...' (Letter to Collins, 9 July 1866. *The Letters of Charles Dickens to Wilkie Collins*, selected by Georgina Hogarth, edited by Laurence Hutton (1892), p.146.)
8. *London Quarterly Review* (October 1866), pp.107-9. In *Wilkie Collins: The Critical Heritage*, edited by Norman Page (1974), p.156.
9. *The Athenaeum*, 2 June 1866, pp.732-3. (H.F. Chorley, a critic particularly hostile to Collins).
10. *The Saturday Review*, 16 June 1866, p.726.
11. *The Woman in White*, p.25.
12. *Armada!*, Appendix. This is followed, however, by another story of a bizarre coincidence concerning the name of the novel.
13. John Elliotson, *Human Physiology* (1840), p.619.
14. J.A. Symonds, *Sleep and Dreams* (1851), p.78.

15. Frank Seafeld, *The Literature and Curiosities of Dreams*, 2 volumes (1865), I, p.61.
16. Armadale, p.136.
17. p.137.
18. p.141.
19. John Abercrombie, *Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth*, p.267.
20. p.267.
21. Armadale, p.142. Hawbury also explains the intervals of oblivion between the visions in strictly physiological terms: 'It means, in plain English, the momentary reassertion of the brain's intellectual actor, while a deeper wave of sleep flows over it, just as the sense of being alone in the darkness, which follows, indicates the renewal of that action, previous to the reproduction of another set of impressions.' (p.139).
22. Abercrombie, *Intellectual Powers*, p.274 and p.280.
23. Seafeld, *Literature and Curiosities of Dreams*, I, p.72.
24. Armadale, p.133.
25. John Elliotson, *Human Physiology*, p.676.
26. Armadale, pp.134-5.
27. *The Woman in White*, p.378.
28. For example, G.H. Lewes, in *The Physiology of Common Life*, developed the concept of channels formed by culture directing and determining the flow of energy. *The Physiology of Common Life*, 2 volumes (1839-60), II, pp.55-58. See Sally Shuttleworth, 'Fairy Tale or Science? Physiological Psychology in Silas Marner', in *Languages of Nature*, edited by Ludmilla Jordanova, pp.244-289 (p.277).
29. E.S. Dallas, *The Gay Science*, I, p.249.
30. I, p.250-1.
31. I, p.200 and I, p.207.
32. Armadale, p.137.
33. p.236.
34. Abercrombie, *Intellectual Powers*, p.107.
35. Armadale, p.44.
36. p.81.

37. Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, p.526.
38. G.H. Lewes, *The Foundations of a Creed*, 1, p.123.
39. *Armada*, pp.55-56.
40. p.93.
41. p.95.
42. pp.213-17.
43. Abercrombie, *Intellectual Process*, p.421. Also Seafield: 'If our prevalent state and disposition of mind ... determine and shape the complexions of our dreams it follows that those evil dreams are not innocent ... Our success in our efforts after self government may be estimated partly by our dream correctness.' *Literature and Curiosity of Dreams*, 1, p.71.
44. *Armada*, p.284.
45. p.218.
46. p.357.
47. p.258.
48. p.373.
49. p.480.
50. p.334.
51. pp.428-29.
52. p.412.
53. p.479.
54. p.504.
55. p.532.
56. pp.621-22.
57. p.330.
58. John Conolly, *The Treatment of the Insane Without Mechanical Restraints*, p.43.
59. *Armada*, pp.625-27.
60. p.661.

Chapter Six

Truth Wearing the Mask of Delusion:
Detecting the Unconscious in The Moonstone

1. Wilkie Collins, The Moonstone, 3 volumes, 1868 (Oxford, 1982), p.262.
2. p.227.
3. pp.36-37.
4. p.91.
5. p.422.
6. Alethea Hayter notes this 'Chinese box' intricacy in Opium and the Romantic Imagination (Berkeley, 1970), p.299.
7. See Albert D. Hutter, 'Dreams, Transformation and Literature; the Implications of Detective Fiction', Victorian Studies, 19 (December 1975) 181-209, for the fullest example of this kind of interpretation, see also Sue Lonoff's chapter on 'Collins at Play' in Wilkie Collins and His Victorian Readers, where she analyses the ways in which Collins invokes and plays with the expectations of his audience.
8. Moreover The Moonstone cannot, pace T.S. Eliot, be described as the first English detective novel. An earlier novel, The Notting Hill Mystery, serialised in Once A Week, 1862 and 1863, and published in book form in 1865, can, according to Julian Symonds, lay claim to this title. Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel: A History (Harmondsworth, 1974), p.53-4. See also D.A. Miller, 'From roman-pollicier to roman-police; Wilkie Collins's The Moonstone', Novel, 13 (Winter 1980), 153-170, for an analysis of the way the novel overturns 'classic' detective story conventions.
9. As William Tinsley, the novel's publisher, noted: 'During the run of The Moonstone as a serial there were scenes in Wellington Street that doubtless did the author and publisher's hearts good. And especially when the serial was nearing its ending, on publishing days there would be quite a crowd of anxious readers waiting for the new number, and I know of several bets that were laid as to where the moonstone would be found at last. Even the porters and boys were interested in the story and read the new numbers in sly corners, with packs on their backs.' Random Recollections of an Old Publisher. Cited in Kenneth Robinson, Wilkie Collins - A Biography (1831), p.216. Sue Lonoff's Wilkie Collins and His Victorian Readers offers an extensive analysis of the reader relations at work in The Moonstone and of the novel's sources and antecedents.
10. Letter W.H. Wills, 30 June 1867; Norman Page, Wilkie Collins, the Critical Heritage (1974), p.169.
11. The Moonstone, p.384.
12. The Woman in White, p.213.
13. The Moonstone, p.395.

14. p.7.
15. p.513.
16. Preface to the first edition, p.xxxi.
17. pp.432-3. The passage from Elliotson is an exact quotation, *Human Physiology* (1840), p.646; Jennings writes the Carpenter passage on a separate piece of paper rather than quoting directly from a text.
18. Preface to *The Moonstone*, p.xxxi.
19. p.432-33.
20. p.433.
21. E.S. Dallas, *The Gay Science*, I, p.231 and p.235.
22. I, pp.236-37
23. William B. Carpenter, *Principles of Mental Physiology* (1874), pp.434-53.
24. pp.342-43.
25. William B. Carpenter, essay on 'Dr Mayo on the Relations of Crime, Insanity and Punishment' (1847). Cited in J. Estlin Carpenter's *Introductory Memoir in Nature and Man: Essays Scientific and Philosophical* (1888), pp.57-8.
26. Cited in *Introductory Memoir, Nature and Man*, p.56.
27. p.58.
28. In the Preface to the 1871 edition of *The Moonstone*, Collins reported that he dictated sections of the novel crippled with the pain of gout and relieved by laudanum. Collins undoubtedly was addicted to the drug, but this account is probably, as Sue Lonoff suggests, exaggerated; see *Wilkie Collins and His Victorian Readers*, p.186. As Hayter notes in *Opium in the Romantic Imagination*, Collins was not unduly incapacitated by the use of opium in the 1860s. For an account of the widespread medical use of opium in the mid nineteenth century, see Terry M. Parssinen, *Secret Passions, Secret Remedies: Narcotic Drugs in British Society 1820-1930* (Manchester, 1983), pp.22-61; he argues that it was not until the 1870s that opium addiction became seen predominantly as a diseased appetite, or morbid craving.
29. Thomas De Quincey, *The Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, 1856 edition (1960), p.181. He goes on: 'Wine robs a man of his self-possession; opium sustains and reinforces it. Wine unsettles the judgment, and gives a preternatural brightness and a vivid exaltation to the contempts and the admirations, to the loves and the hatreds, of the drinker; opium, on the contrary, communicates serenity and equipoise to all the faculties.' (p.181). Parssinen argues that De Quincey's *Confessions* was widely cited as a medical as much as a literary source.
30. *The Moonstone*, p.433.

31. p.432.
32. Elliotson, *Human Physiology* (1840), p.677.
33. *The Moonstone*, p.445.
34. pp.317-18.
35. p.408.
36. p.441.
37. p.464.
38. p.412. As Anthea Todd points out in the notes to the Oxford edition used here, Dr John Brown, a late eighteenth century Edinburgh doctor, the 'Scottish Paracelsus', gained an international reputation for advocating the stimulant method (p.534).
39. *Principles of Mental Physiology*, pp.429-30.
40. *The Moonstone*, p.415.
41. p.430.
42. p.440.
43. pp.510-11.
44. p.414.
45. The fullest analysis of the process of the psychic construction of the 'oriental other' in the Western imagination is Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* (1978).
46. John Reed, 'English Imperialism and the Unacknowledged Crime of *The Moonstone*', *CJLo*, 2 (June 1973), 281-290. Between December 1857 and June 1858 twenty-two articles on India appeared in *Household Words*. 'A Sermon for Sepoy, M.W.', 27 February 1858, pp.244-247, has been ascribed to Collins - an article that both reinforces and qualifies the dominant racism of the journal by pointing to the 'excellent moral lesson [the Indians] may learn from their own Oriental literature' (p.244). See also William Oddie, 'Dickens and the Indian Mutiny', *The Dickensian*, 68 (January 1972), 3-15.
47. *The Moonstone*, p.4.
48. p.34.
49. p.321.
50. p.227.
51. pp.68-69.
52. Collins's notes from C.W. King, *The Natural History, Ancient and Modern, of Precious Stones and of the Precious Metals* (1865), p.37.

The other sources that Collins mentions in the Preface to the first edition of *The Moonstone*, the Orloff diamond, pillaged from India and adorning the Russian Imperial Diamond, and the Koh-i-noor, also of Indian extraction, are also taken from King, who also mentions the diamond stolen from India by Governor Pitt (Lonoff, p.176).

53. *The Moonstone*, p.24-5. The sexual connotations of the Shivering Sands have been emphasised by Albert D. Hutter in 'Dreams, Transformations and Literature'. His argument is interesting, but here I want to stress the specific use of magnetic references.
54. *The Moonstone*, p.27.
55. p.28.
56. p.214. The way that the figure of Miss Clack corresponds to contemporary stereotypes and expectations is discussed by Lonoff, *Wilkie Collins and his Victorian Readers*, pp.184-6 and pp.204-6.
57. *The Moonstone*, p.194.
58. p.58.
59. p.91 and p.262.
60. pp.349-50.
61. p.162.
62. p.26.
63. p.350.
64. pp.46-47.
65. p.347 and p.466.
66. p.9 and p.13.
67. p.83.
68. p.369.
69. p.370.
70. p.47.
71. p.398-99.
72. *The Gay Science*, I, p.207 and p.210.
73. I, pp.207-8.
74. II, p.138.

Chapter Seven

Resistless Influences:

Degeneration and its Negation in the Later Fiction

1. Wilkie Collins, *The Fallen Leaves, First Series*, 3 volumes (1879), 1, p.3.
2. Wilkie Collins, *Man and Wife*, 3 volumes (1870); 1893 edition, p.176.
3. Wilkie Collins, *Jezebel's Daughter*, 3 volumes (1880), 1, pp.57-8.
4. The mould for this interpretation was set by Swinburne's couplet:

What brought good Wilkie's genius nigh perdition?
Some demon whispered - 'Wilkie! have a mission!'

which is repeatedly cited in subsequent critical discussions of Collins's later work. Swinburne goes on to argue that 'in some, but by no means all, of his later novels there is much of the peculiar and studious ability which distinguishes his best; but his original remarkable faculty for writing short stories had undergone a total and unaccountable decay.' Swinburne, 'Wilkie Collins', *Studies in Prose and Poetry* (1896), p.111. Robinson's biography suggests that Collins's later work is virtually marked by premature senility; Robert Ashley's *Wilkie Collins* (1952) presents a modified version of the same theme, arguing that poor health rather than turning to thesis novels, contributed to Collins's decline. William Marshall's *Wilkie Collins* (New York, 1970), gives a more positive account of his later fiction, as does Sue Lonoff in *Wilkie Collins and His Victorian Readers*, though she too lays stress on the 'detrimental' effect of Reade.

5. Bentley had published most of Collins's writing up until 1860; Basil was one of the novels chosen by him in an attempt to cut the price of first editions from 21s to 10s 6d. Collins wrote to Bentley that he was 'delighted to hear that your house is about to lead the way in lowering the present extravagantly absurd prices charged for works of fiction'. Berg Collection, cited in Gulnivere Guest, *Muddle's Circulating Library and the Victorian Novel* (1911), p.68. See also Royal A. Gettman, *A Victorian Publisher, A Study of the Bentley Papers* (Cambridge, 1960). On the Chatto deal, see Robinson, pp.273-6; also the Chatto correspondence in the University of Reading library.
6. Chatto was also responding to developments in 'mass' publishing that had been established earlier, particularly to the railway bookstall publishing phenomenon as well as the sensation novel itself. See Richard Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900* (Chicago, 1957), for an analysis of the complicated relationships between class patterns, literary and reading habits. Also J.M.S. Tomkins, *The Popular Novel in England* (1932), Margaret Dalziel, *Popular Fiction A Hundred Years Ago* (1957), Louis James, *Fiction for the Working Man 1830-1830* (Oxford, 1963), and, more recently, R.C. Terry, *Victorian Popular Fiction 1860-1880* (1983).
7. Letter to Bentley, 18 March 1873, cited in N.P. Davis, *The Life of Wilkie Collins* (1936), p.276. Collins hopes for the cultural elevation of a mass lower middle and working class readership of 'penny novel

journals', 'a public of three millions - a public unknown to the literary world ... which lies right out of the pale of literary civilization', are expressed in *The Unknown Public*, which first appeared in *Household Words*, 21 August 1858, pp.217-222, reprinted in *My Miscellanies*, second edition (1873), pp.249-264 (p.261). He pins his hopes for the development of the novel on this public, but stresses that the stories of the penny journals are marked by 'a combination of fierce melodrama and weak domestic sentiment ... Incidents and characters taken from the old exhausted mines of the circulating libraries ... There seems to be an intense in-dwelling respectability in their dullness' (pp.260-1).

8. See Tomkins, *The Popular Novel in England* for a discussion of the 'Minerva Press'.
9. This sense of the need to appeal to a mass popular audience is one of the central arguments of *The Gay Science*, 'Now in art, the two seldom go together; the fit are not few and the few are not fit. The true judges of art are the despised many - the crowd - and no critic is worth his salt who does not feel with the many.' *The Gay Science*, I, p.127.
10. Letter of Dedication, *Jezebel's Daughter*, I, p.v.
11. One of the explicitly tendentious purposes of the novel is the attack on the anomalous marriage laws of Scotland and Ireland; Geoffrey avoids marrying Anne by attempting to use the Scottish rulling that public recognition of marriage is equivalent to marriage itself, to palm her off on his friend, compounding her 'illegitimate' position. However the solution, Geoffrey's actual marriage to Anne, turns out to be a far greater source of danger, and this is reinforced by Hester's predicament of having her own property continually taken from her by her husband.
12. *Man and Wife*, preface, p.vi, cf Matthew Arnold: 'The Barbarians, again, had the passion for field-sports; and they have handed it down to our aristocratic class ... The case of the Barbarians for the body, and for all manly exercises; the vigour, good looks and fine complexion which they acquired and perpetuated in their families by these means, - all this may still be observed in our aristocratic class.' *Culture and Anarchy* (1868), edited by J. Dover Wilson (Cambridge, 1969), pp.102-3. Arnold goes on to argue that the chief defect of the Barbarian class is 'insufficiency of light'.
13. *Man and Wife*, p.46.
14. Henry Maudsley, *Body and Mind* (1873), p.63.
15. *Man and Wife*, p.32.
16. p.433.
17. p.437. An extremely interesting analysis of the contradictory representation of the pure fallen woman in women's reading of the mid-nineteenth century is Sally Mitchell's *The Fallen Angels: Chastity, Class and Woman's Reading 1835-1880* (Bowling Green, Ohio, 1981).
18. Wilkie Collins, *The New Magdalen*, 2 volumes (1873), 1908 edition, pp.13-16.

19. p.171.
20. p.96.
21. pp.195-96.
22. p.268.
23. p.30.
24. p.67.
25. p.237.
26. p.371-72.
27. **Wilkie Collins, The Law and the Lady**, 3 volumes (1875), 1898 edition, 'Note Addressed to the Reader', p.1.
28. p.84.
29. p.177.
30. p.175.
31. p.203.
32. p.210.
33. pp.217-18.
34. p.222.
35. p.234.
36. p.218.
37. p.226.
38. p.54.
39. pp.289-90.
40. **Henry Maudsley, Responsibility in Mental Disease (1874)**, p.40.
41. **Andrew Wynter, The Borderlands of Insanity (1875)**, p.17.
42. p.214. cf Maudsley: 'When the insane temperament has been developed in its most marked form, we must acknowledge that the hereditary predisposition has assumed the character of degeneration of race, and that the individual represents the beginning of a degeneracy which, if not checked by favourable circumstances, will go on increasing from generation to generation and end finally in the extreme degeneration of idiocy.' (*Responsibility in Mental Disease*, p.46).
43. p.363.

44. Jezebel's Daughter, I, Letter of Dedication, p.vii.
45. I, p.49.
46. 'He was calm [after his shackles were removed]; his attention appeared to be arrested by his new situation. He was invited to join in the repast, during which he behaved with total propriety. After it was concluded, the superintendent conducted him to his apartment and told him the circumstances on which his treatment would depend ... The maniac was sensible to the kindness of his treatment. He promised to restrain himself, and he so completely succeeded, that during his stay no coercive means were ever employed towards him.' Samuel Tuke, *A Description of the Retreat* (1813), 1964 edition, pp.146-7.
47. Jezebel's Daughter, I, p.47.
48. III, p.299.
49. I, p.255.
50. Wilkie Collins, *Heart and Science: A Story of the Present Time*, 3 volumes (1883), I, Preface, p.xiv.
51. William Rutherford, *Report of the Forty Third Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science* (1874), p.122. Cited in Robert M. Young, *Mind, Brain and Adaptation: Cerebral Localisation from Gall to Ferrier* (Oxford, 1970), p.239. Young gives a full account of Ferrier's work.
52. Unsigned review, *The Spectator*, 15 May 1880, p.627.
53. Preface to *Heart and Science*, I, p.ix and p.xiii. cf the Preface to the 1861 edition of *The Woman in White*: 'It may indeed be possible in novel-writing to present characters successfully without telling a story; but it is not possible to tell a story successfully without presenting characters.' p.xxxiii.
54. Preface to *Heart and Science*, I, p.xi.
55. *The Fallen Leaves*, 3 volumes (1879), I, p.87.
56. I, p.212.
57. Collins had visited the Brotherhood of the New Life during his American lecture tour in 1873, and had read Charles Nordoff's *The Communistic Societies of the United States* (1875). Robinson, p.292.
58. Frederick Denison Maurice, Letter to Ludlow, 4 December 1848; *The Life of Frederick Denison Maurice, Chiefly Told in His Own Letters*, edited by Frederick Maurice, 2 volumes, I, p.484. F.D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley were founders of the English Christian Socialist movement in the late 1840s.
59. See Henry Pelling, *The Origins of the Labour Party 1880-1900* (1954), p.126, Gareth Stedman Jones, *Outcast London: A Study of the Relationship Between Classes in Victorian England*, and Roydon Harrison, *Before the Socialists*.

60. **The Fallen Leaves**, II, pp.95-96.
61. II, pp.103-4.
62. III, pp.180-1.
63. II, p.159.
64. II, p.167.
65. II, pp.164-65.
66. This is most clearly stated by Max Nordau, who cites Morel and Maudsley in *Degeneration* (1895): 'Irregularities in the form and position of the teeth; pointed flat paletes, webbed or supernumerary fingers, etc.' (p.17).
67. II, p.169.
68. Wilkie Collins, **The Legacy of Cain**, 3 volumes (1889), I, p.30.
69. II, p.221-22.
70. III, p.280.
71. 'Recent Novels', *The Spectator*, 26 January 1889, p.120.
72. **The Legacy of Cain**, II, p.218.
73. Review of *After Dark*, 'Arts and Belles Lettres', *Westminster Review*, 9 (April 1836), 629-650 (p.640).

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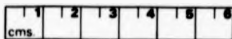
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