

**THE BELLS; DRAMA IN THREE ACTS.
ADAPTED FOR PERFORMANCE BY
MALE CHARACTERS, AND SUPPLIED
WITH FULL DIRECTIONS FOR STAGE
MANAGEMENT, DIAGRAMS, ETC.**

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The Bells; Drama in Three Acts. Adapted for Performance by Male Characters, and Supplied with Full Directions for Stage Management, Diagrams, Etc. by Leopold Lewis & C. J. Birbeck

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LEOPOLD LEWIS & C. J. BIRBECK

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DRAMA
IN THREE ACTS

BY
LEOPOLD LEWIS

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diagrams, etc.

BY
C. J. BIRBECK
Professor of Elocution and English Literature

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JOSEPH F. WAGNER

THE BELLS.

ARGUMENT.

This play was founded on "The Polish Jew," a dramatic study of M. M. Erckmann—Chatrian.

Mathias, who forms a central figure through the entire play, had been, at a period of some fifteen years prior to opening of the first act, in very distressing circumstances; in fact poverty and ruin stared him in the face. He owed a sum of money which he was unable to pay.

One stormy night, the snow falling heavily, there came to the inn of which he was the keeper, a traveller who bore the appearance and in reality was, a Polish Jew. Whilst his horse and sleigh were being cared for by the hostler, he warmed himself by the fire and partook of some refreshments. At the expiration of about an hour he prepared for his departure. He took some money from a girdle which he wore about his waist and in doing so displayed a great quantity of golden coin.

Mathias, though previously a comparatively honest man, was sorely tempted. He saw an opportunity of retrieving his lost fortunes and, heedless of his conscience which smote him terribly, he determined to kill the Jew and possess himself of his gold.

He concealed himself some distance from the inn and when the Jew had seen his horse harnessed to the sleigh and had proceeded some way on his journey, Mathias, disguised, rushed from an ambush, axe in hand and followed closely after the sleigh.

He struck and killed the Jew, wrenched the girdle containing the money from the body, and in order to conceal the manner of the murder, he threw the corpse into his own lime kiln where it was consumed. He was never suspected.

The nervous dread proceeding from the remorse which Mathias now feels, the frequent hallucinations, the jingling of sleigh bells, which he imagines he hears, terrorize him and fill his family and guests with wonder and dismay.

CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY.

MATHIAS. The Burgomaster.

CHRISTIAN. A young Officer.

WILHELM. Brother to Mathias.

HANS,
FATHER WALTER, } Farmers.

PRESIDENT of the Court.

CLERK of the Court.

A MESMERIST.

A NOTARY.

DOCTOR ZIMMER.

FRANZ. A servant to Mathias.

TONY, }
KARL, } Guests.

FRITZ, }
POLISH JEW.

Judges, Barristers, Gendarmes, Guests, The Public.

COSTUMES.

MATHIAS. Black coat, high yellow vest, black knee-breeches, black cloth leggings—large fur coat and fur cap.

2nd dress. Drab coat and knee-breeches—stockings and buckled shoes. Iron-gray wig—smooth face—heavy eyebrows.

3rd dress. Blouse with hood.

CHRISTIAN. Officer's hussar uniform, boots and spurs. Blond wig and moustache.

HANS,
WALTER, } Similar to Mathias' dress. Gray wigs.
WILHELM, }

FRANZ. Brown velvet knee-breeches, gray stockings, shoes—white ballet shirt—red vest—waiter's apron. Black short-curved wig.

MESMERIST. Clothes entirely black—white turnover collar—long black hair—black moustache and chin beard—very pale makeup—eyes made very prominent.

NOTARY. Black coat, vest, breeches, stockings. Buckled shoes. Ruffled front to shirt. White dress wig. Makeup old.

PRESIDENT, } Black gowns—caps—white bag wigs.
JUDGES, }

BARRISTERS, } ditto.
CLERK, }

DR. ZIMMER. Dressed like the Notary. Gray wig.

POLISH JEW. Large cloak—fur cap—dark underclothes. Black wig and beard.

THE GUESTS. Like Mathias' second dress. Makeup youthful.

PROPERTIES.

ACT I.

White snow cloth down on stage from the 3rd up to 5th entrance, inclusive. Table and 3 chairs R. and L. Stove, kettle, etc., R. Sideboard L. Spinning wheel and stool center. Large clock, hands to work, up L. Several chairs and an oaken settee. Glasses, decanters and fancy china on sideboard. Several lighted candles on table R. Gun and game bag for Hans. Bottle of wine and glass for Franz, off L. 2 E. Lantern to be lighted for Franz. Wind outside. Snow falling all through act. Jug of wine for Franz. Glass to break in prompt entrance. Jewel box for Mathias, containing a necklace. Tray containing supper, wine, napkins, etc. Sleigh bells in prompt entrance. Curtain on window.

ACT II.

Carpet down. Fire in grate up center—tongs. Cabinet up L. Sofa down R. Table and 3 armchairs L. Chairs about the room. Desk down L. to be locked—key. Pens, ink and paper on table. Church bells outside. Snuff box for Mathias. Bunch of keys for Mathias. Large leather bag of (coin) money in desk. Book for Franz. Portfolio and sealed documents for Notary.

ACT III.

(In court room.)

Carpet down. Judge's desk center. Table R. and L.—chairs. Armchair R. center for Mathias. Papers and documents on tables and desk. Guns for Gendarmes.

(In bedroom). Chintz curtains on alcove L. Table at alcove, also chair. Bed in alcove, chairs R. Lighted candle on table. Bottle of water and glass for Franz. Key in door R. Sleigh bells in prompt entrance. Chime of church bells off stage.

ABBREVIATED STAGE DIRECTIONS.

The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

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|---|--------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|
| R. | Right of stage. | L. | Left of stage. |
| R. 1. E. | —Right first entrance. | L. 1. E. | —Left first entrance. |
| R. 2. E. | —Right sec'd entrance.
etc. | L. 2. E. | —Left second entrance.
etc. |
| R. U. E. | —Right upper entrance. | L. U. E. | —Left upper entrance. |
| D. R. F. | —Door in right flat. | D. L. F. | —Door in left flat. |
| <i>Flat</i> , means the scene running across the back of the stage. | | | |
| R. C. | —Right center of stage. | L. C. | —Left center of stage. |
| R. Cor. | —Right corner. | L. Cor. | —Left corner. |

C. D.—Center door.

C.—Center of stage.

Up.—Up stage toward the rear.

Down.—Down stage toward the audience.

X.—To cross the stage.

X's R.—To cross to the right of stage.

X's L.—To cross to the left of stage.

A Drop.—A scene let down from above.

Time of Representation.—One hour and three-quarters.

Place of Action.—Alsace.

Period.—The winter of 1833.

SCENERY.

ACT I.

Village Inn.

Double Set.

