

“This strange story of ours ought to be told”
Narrative and its Production in *The Moonstone*

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Introduction

In *The Moonstone* (1868), by which he was to be best remembered, Wilkie Collins returned to the narrative method of *The Woman in White* in which various witnesses give their testimonies. But the object of collecting narratives is quite different from that of the former novel. Walter Hartright, the editor and one of the narrators in *The Woman in White*, says in the preamble:

the story here presented will be told by more than one pen, as the story of an offence against the laws is told in Court by more than one witness — with the same object, in both cases, to present the truth always in its most direct and most intelligible aspect.⁽¹⁾

The part of the story Hartright presents to the reader itself is collected as an evidence for a lawyer to retrieve Laura's identity. When he claims “the public attention in a Court of Justice” to his and other characters' testimonies, the contemporary reader was placed in the similar situation of a person in a courtroom of a case that would rouse “sensation.” As Thomas Boyle clarifies in his study of Victorian sensationalism, before the advent of the sensation novel the word “sensation” was used “in the newspaper reports to indicate an emotional tremor in the courtroom,” usually used parenthetically such as “(Sensation)” or “(Great Sensation).”⁽²⁾

Then look at the relation between the narrative and the reader in *The Moonstone*. The editor of the story, Franklin Blake, tells Gabriel Betteredge the object of collecting testimonies as follows:

In this matter of the Diamond . . . the characters of innocent people have suffered under suspicion already — as you know. The memories of innocent people may suffer, hereafter, for want of a record of the facts to which those who come after us can appeal. There can be no doubt that this strange family story of ours ought to be told.⁽³⁾

Or when Betteredge concludes his first narrative, he imagines:

In this matter of the Moonstone the plan is, not to present reports, but to produce witnesses. I picture to myself a member of the family reading these pages fifty years hence. Lord! what a compliment he will feel it, to be asked to take nothing on hearsay, and to be treated in all respects like a Judge on the bench (213).

The lawsuit analogies are similar in the two novels. The story of *The Moonstone*, however, is essentially the “family story” that is presented not to “a Court of Justice” but to “a member of the family.”

There is another difference between the two novels. While the most part of *The Woman in White* is narrated in the time of the incident, the story of *The Moonstone* is the product of the persons looking back on the past incident. The tension of the former novel largely lies in the simultaneity of the journal of Marian Halcombe, who is present at the most critical moment in the novel. In *The Moonstone*, however, the editor must manage the narrative otherwise the story would fall in anticlimax. This attitude is clear by the correspondence between the editor Blake and one of the contributors, Miss Clack. She asks:

In the meanwhile she would be glad to know . . . whether she may be permitted to make her humble contribution complete, by availing herself of the light which later discoveries have thrown on the mystery of the Moonstone (267- 268).

This must be prohibited by the editor, who says "Later discoveries she will be good enough to leave to the pens of those persons who can write in the capacity of actual witnesses" (268). The purpose of the story is not necessarily that it should purge the members of the family an unfounded suspicion. Rather the editor's purpose of compiling the story is to make a "family" story which is essentially enjoyed by its "family" members. However, to make such a story the editor must censure the improper elements for the family reading. Reading *The Moonstone* before its run in *All the Year Round*, Dickens praised it, saying "it is a very curious story — wild, and yet domestic — with excellent character in it, great mystery, and nothing belonging to disguised women and the like."⁴⁰ His phrase clearly shows the achievement of the novel and its difference from Collins' former novels like *No Name* and *Armada*, which portray the lives of "disguised women." Collins failed in the previous novels to evoke "wild" and "domestic" at once. Of course we must here remember the contemporary criticism of unsuitableness of domestic reading of the sensation novel.⁴¹ Therefore, his attitude of writing *The Moonstone* was how to domesticate wild elements, or to be precise, how to domesticate the sensation novel without damaging the sensation novel's taste too severely. Thus the editor-hero Blake and Wilkie Collins hold the same concern.

I

Though there is no "disguised women" in *The Moonstone*, Rosanna Spearman seems to be the most likely candidate for the role. She is taken from a reformatory by Lady Verinder to become a housemaid. Even if she is reformed now, to Betteredge, who remarks her sinful life is all "sponged out," she says pointing where once grease was in his coat, "The stain is taken off . . . But the place shows" (26). No one

knows at this point what her "stain" is but later in the letter of her death confession her past is revealed. Though her past career makes the other characters mistake her for an accomplice in the mystery of the Moonstone, her past life is not closely involved in the plot. It is as if to complicate the mystery the fact that she once was a thief must be revealed. But the details of her past are never to be fully clarified.

There is another character who is haunted by his own past like Rosanna. He is Ezra Jennings. He tries to save Blake from his predicament because like him he has also been pursued by "a horrible accusation" of which he cannot prove his innocence (420). He disappears in the middle of the novel without unfolding his mysterious past life. So there are two similarities between Rosanna and Jennings. As Anthea Trodd says that *The Moonstone* is "a masterpiece of equivocation," their past lives are highly made opaque.⁴² And both Rosanna and Jennings are similar in dying in expulsion from the society of the novel. Even though Blake and Betteredge sympathize with them, Rosanna is disliked by other servants and Jennings is estranged from the society as well as from Candy's house from the start. Blake notes of Jennings: "The poor wretch was evidently no favourite in the house. Out of the house, I had Betteredge's word for it that he was unpopular everywhere" (409).

Their estrangement from the society implicitly unites other characters with them. Sergeant Cuff, who is sent for from London for the investigation of the mystery, is one of those characters. As a detective, with an ambiguous "place" in society, he can move freely through the two worlds: the respectable world of Lady Verinder's country house, represented by Rachel Verinder whom he thinks is in debt, and the criminal underworld of London, represented by the moneylender Luker. In this point he is similar to Betteredge who bridges servants and nobler members.⁴³ However, Betteredge can place himself in the similar position as Lady Verinder because both "know" Rachel from her birth, while Sergeant Cuff is only an outsider and is baffled during the inquiry as he cannot read the true Rachel. Later he is again involved in the investigation of the mystery, when "his services are required to track

the diamond through London's dockland, a task clearly within his accepted competence."⁶ His domain of action is such underworld in the city. Obviously when he is in the country house, Lady Verinder, Blake, and Betteredge come to abhor his presence because of his identity as an outsider.⁹

Godfrey Ablewhite, another outsider and the real criminal in the case, holds also an ambiguous status. In appearance he is a reputed speaker at charitable meetings and a member of female philanthropic societies. In reality he is "a man of pleasure" who keeps a mistress (503). His double life itself makes his identity ambiguous but there is another implication of his estrangement from the respectable side. When Rachel calls off the engagement with him, his father is infuriated by the breaking-off. In anger he reviles against Rachel, saying:

I know your motive, Miss Verinder, for breaking your promise to my son! . . . Your cursed family pride is insulting Godfrey, as it insulted *me* when I married your aunt . . . Ha! ha! I wasn't good enough for the Herncastles, when *I* married. And, now it comes to the pinch, my son isn't good enough for *you* (288-289).

Though his marriage with the second sister of Lady Verinder was once called a "misalliance," his words are all his ravings. Still, if we consider his son's criminality, they anticipate the Verinder family's opinion about Godfrey because "he isn't good enough for her."

By the end of the novel all these outsiders to the Verinders' respectable society are relegated to the outside of it. Rosanna, Jennings, and Godfrey disappear. Sergeant Cuff retires to his house with a rose garden, except he reappears in the last scene of the London underworld. In addition, "fanatic" Miss Clack, who is a kind of trespasser and voyeur in the Verinders' London house, is impoverished and moves to France (291). And "semi-savage" Murthwaite, who feels uneasiness in English society, returns to his wild life in India (518).

Though all the characters unsuitable for the Verinder family disappear by the end of the novel, most

of them contribute to the family story that Blake edits. In a way they remain in the family story in the form of narratives. There is one important episode about one of the outsiders and his narrative. In England every time Murthwaite opens his mouth, his words evoke "sensation" because of his experiences in India. In a party he says to Rachel who wears the Moonstone on her bosom: "I know a certain city, and a certain temple in that city, where, dressed as you are now, your life would not be worth five minutes' purchase" (73). The "wildness" of his experience, however, loses its effect to Rachel, who "safe in England, was quite delighted to hear of her danger in India," and to the Ablewhite sisters, who are also delighted and "dropped their knives and forks with a crash, and burst out together vehemently, 'O! how interesting!'" This scene shows how the wild elements of Murthwaite's story turn into a kind of "entertainment" to the "domestic" Ablewhite sisters. As the Victorian reader enjoyed the sensation novel, Rachel and the Ablewhite sisters enjoy Murthwaite's sensational story. It is here the novel's whole design is revealed. If a member of the family is to enjoy the family story in the future as Betteredge dreams, the contributed narratives including those from the outsiders must be made harmless entertainment.

However, Blake as an editor cannot expurgate all the unwholesome elements of these narratives. On the one hand he must edit the narratives and on the other hand he must add note to Miss Clack's narrative that "Nothing will be added, altered, or removed, in her manuscripts, or in any of the other manuscripts which pass through my hands" (215). This holds true to other narratives. Blake's power is limited and his role as an editor is largely displaced by the contributors themselves. In fact the contributors who are essentially outsiders edit their own narratives by themselves. As I have suggested the past lives of Rosanna and Jennings are equivocated, but clearly the equivocation is their voluntary action. Before Rosanna briefly narrates her past in her letter to Blake, she writes: "I won't trouble you with much about myself, or my life, before you came to my lady's room" (348). Likewise, Jennings censors his own diary. Candy reports to Blake that "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" (510). These pages are what Blake "may feel an interest in looking at." His letters, which may disclose his past, are buried with his unfinished book and the remaining part of his diary. Without Blake's editing, those unnecessary narratives that may be disturbing to the family story are censored by Rosanna and Jennings themselves.

Besides, Jennings not only edits his narrative but also other character's narrative. During his treatment of collapsing Candy, he writes down his wanderings. Before he shows to Blake what he discovers from Candy's ravings, he puts much stress on the privacy of the information that he gets from Candy in delirium. At this point in his restoration of the delirium he again intentionally plays a role of an editor. While he takes down Candy's "'wanderings,' exactly as they fell from his lips" (415), he "reads" it and expurgates what is inadequate in it. Jennings explains:

Wherever my notes included anything which Mr. Candy might have wished to keep secret, those notes have been destroyed. My manuscript experiments at my friend's bedside include nothing, now, which he would have hesitated to communicate to others, if he had recovered the use of his memory (416).

In effect, what remains concerns Blake and it is the only part that is closely connected with the solution of the mystery. And, of course, the restoration of Candy's narrative from his delirium is the result of Jennings' other editing work. When he takes down Candy's words in delirium, he leaves "large spaces between broken phrases, and even the single words" (415). He then brings the confused narrative "into order and shape" by filling "in each blank space on the paper" by associating "the words or phrases on either side of it." Though his method is by no means logical or scientific, what he produces is, as Blake admits, the "smooth and finished texture out of the ravelled skein" (430). In this way Jennings edits the narrative first by piecing up sentences and filling blanks and secondly censoring the part that may be ignoble to Candy and unnecessary to the

solution to the mystery.

II

What is significant about the restoration of Candy's narrative by Jennings is that it also underlines the importance of the space which confines narratives in the novel. Jennings attempts to reconstruct Candy's delirium to prove his theory of "the brain and the nervous system" (414). In the course of his study he has come to doubt "whether we can justifiably infer— in the case of delirium — that the loss of the faculty of speaking connectedly, implies of necessity the loss of the faculty of thinking connectedly as well" (415). In other words, he thinks the surface incoherent "expression" revealed in Candy's delirium can indicate what he thinks in his "mind," which is concealed in the depth. The surface reveals what is in the depth by itself.

When Jennings restores Candy's narrative, reading the surface makes him restore the depth narrative. Similarly the Shivering Sand which confines Rosanna's letter constitutes its structural dichotomy of surface and depth. Rosanna who is fascinated by the Sand describes it as follows: "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!" (28) There is not, however, the discrepancy between surface and depth. The heaving surface indicates what is going on in the depth. Seeing "the awful shiver that crept over its surface," Blake also says, "as if some spirit of terror lived and moved and shuddered in the fathomless deeps beneath" (342). The shiver on the surface attracts Rosanna to death because it presents to her the agonized people like her under it, so the same shiver shows Blake the place that hides her letter, the confession of Rosanna's suffering soul. By the confession the truth that the thief of the diamond is Blake is revealed. As the restoration of Candy's narrative reveals the truth that Blake is administered laudanum, the surface of the Sand invites the truth in the depth. The surface indicates what it encloses. The surface induces the observers to reclaim the truth. Then what does this reiteration of these buried narratives mean?

The process of enclosure and disclosure of narratives, exemplified by Candy's and Rosanna's above, induces deferral, in other words suspense, in the story. As it were, by confining the narrative in a space, the novel controls the suspense of the plot. Significantly enough, there is one character that employs the process implicitly to heighten suspension. After failing in his first investigation in Lady Verinder's house, Sergeant Cuff comes to Blake to assist the pursuit of the diamond. When he hears what has happened between the interval, he speculates the real thief. He writes the name of the criminal on a paper and encloses it in "a sealed envelope." Sergeant Cuff says to Blake:

I suspected the wrong person, last year . . . and I may be suspecting the wrong person now. Wait to open the envelope, Mr. Blake, till you have got at the truth. And then compare the name of the guilty person, with the name that I have written in that sealed letter (487).

Sure enough, the name in the letter coincides with that of the unmasked thief who has already lied dead. However, what is important here is not the accuracy of Cuff's speculation. By using the method of deferral by enclosed narrative, he is associated with the author. As Ross C. Murfin argues, "What Cuff has done, namely to delay a revelation, is what Collins has done or what any mystery writer does when he seals up his little secret in papers that his reader is not to open for a long time."¹⁰ In the case of Rosanna and Candy the revelation of the truth is delayed to heighten suspense by the manipulation of the plot and Cuff is intentionally employing the same method. The burial of narratives and the ensuing disclosure align those characters with the author.

Furthermore, here Cuff's role as an author is mixed with the role as an editor. What is curious about the letter is that it reveals only the name of the thief that he hits upon on the spot. He never mentions after the revelation the reason why he has arrived at the conclusion at this point. The narrative contributed by Sergeant Cuff in the form of report to Blake, in fact, supplements the evidence for his ratiocination but the

investigation related in it is directed after Godfrey turns out to be a real thief. Any reader who reasons in the course of the novel would suspect Godfrey by the time of Cuff's ratiocination excluding possible suspects who were in Lady Verinder's house at the night of the incident. Moreover, because well before that moment we naturally feel there is something mysterious about Godfrey's conduct toward the engagement with Rachel, the revelation of the truth is no more surprising to the reader, possibly except the fact that he disguises himself in the last scene. Then what Cuff does by the letter is just to confirm the ratiocination of the reader. As the reader's ratiocination inevitably coincides with Cuff's, there is no need to give evidence that is nothing but moral evidence. Here Cuff arrives at the conclusion before reinvestigating the case closely and he has only to give the only information that agrees with the expectation of the reader, who has followed the plot of the novel. He doesn't need to give unnecessary information about his process of reasoning that is identical with the reader. Relying on the reader's reasoning which must be accurate Cuff edits the information to make it most effective without spoiling the swiftness of the scene by too much explanation. He only has to produce later what he investigates as a retired detective, which the reader as well as the other characters as a novice cannot attain.

III

The most important narrative for the solution of the mystery is Candy's narrative that he administered laudanum to Blake. But its production is deferred by Candy's fever. Jennings and other two doctors are sent for and they disagree in its treatment. The two doctors see the rapidity of patient's pulse needing a lowering treatment and keep him "on gruel, lemonade, barley-water, and so on" (412). However, on Jennings' side he considers the feebleness of the pulse as exhaustion of the system and insists "the administration of stimulants" such as "champagne, or brandy, ammonia, and quinine." As the former doctors' treatment makes no effect, Jennings takes over them and his treatment succeeds. What is significant about this treatment is that

the administration of stimulants accompanies the transcription of Candy's wanderings in delirium. In a way the stimulants save not only Candy's life but also the buried narrative of Candy's mind.

Similarly the reproduction of Blake's theft is helped by Jennings' medical treatment. He administers laudanum to Blake, as Candy once did secretly to assuage his sleeplessness. Jennings explains the effect of laudanum as comprised "in the majority cases, in two influences—a stimulating influence first, and a sedative influence afterwards" (435). According to his surmise the stimulating influence of laudanum excited Blake's apprehension about the safety of the Moonstone, which was "hidden" in his mind and made him preserve it by himself. Then the sedative influence got over the stimulating influence and he became "inert and stupefied," and later fell into a deep sleep. The novel as a whole consists of the narratives which in themselves are private knowledge and by collected become public. And here in the reproduction of Blake's theft Rachel's private knowledge is also made public. Jennings' surmise is proved before the witnesses consisting of Betteredge, Bruff, and Rachel and Franklin's "secret" motive of the theft and Rachel's mysterious conduct which makes people mistake her "secrets" is publicly proved innocent. At the same time the reproduction of the theft produces other narratives—"a plain statement" of what have happened before them, drawn out by the family lawyer Bruff, signed by him and Betteredge, and of course it produces the journal entry of the scene of reproduction by Jennings (476). All these narratives are products of Jennings' treatment.

Moreover, the administration of laudanum and the consequent production of narratives are synecdoche of the origin and the production of Blake's family story. All the unrest in the house is provoked by the "cursed" Moonstone and three Indians who have followed the diamond from India. As oriental opium stimulates the nerves of Blake, the diamond and the Indians hurl the house into turmoil as Betteredge says, "here was our quiet English house suddenly invaded by a devilish Indian Diamond—bringing after it a conspiracy of living rogues" (36). However, the Indians are not necessarily depicted as wicked. Bruff praises the chief

of them as "the perfect model of a client" (310), while the moneylender Luker is described as "an inferior creature to the Indian" (311). The Indians have very ambiguous status like the Moonstone that is beautiful but cannot be placed properly: "Its colour placed it in a category by itself; and, to add to these elements of uncertainty, there was a defect, in the shape of a flaw, in the very heart of the stone" (41). The contradicting opinions of the Indians and the Moonstone are replicated in the opinions about laudanum: the Colonel Herncastle's statement that he is watched by Indians is distrusted because he is "a notorious opium-eater" (39); Jennings is addicted to opium to assuage his bodily pain but it causes him a horrible dream of his past and his estrangement from society; Candy administers it to Blake as a medicine. Laudanum is double-sided, at once addictive and medicine, and "stimulant" and "sedative." Once addicted to it, it may cause disgrace but as a "stimulant" for a patient it may heal an inherent disease. It then should be administrated as an antidote."¹¹

In this context, we can reconsider the role of Indians and the "Indian" Moonstone. Though they may seem wicked or cursed, they can be administrated as a temporary antidote to the "family" disease. By "stimulating" the family and consequently laying bare the impropriety of the primarily "outside" persons, the Moonstone and the Indians relegate them from the family. After that they work as "sedative," restoring the disordered family. The family thus purified is made perfect by the marriage of Blake and Rachel without any outsider from the family. The "family" story which is provoked by the outsiders is closed by its first narrator Betteredge. The continuing story of the Indians and the Moonstone is succeeded by the outsiders. Betteredge explains the reason:

Let nobody suppose that I have any last words to say here concerning the Indian Diamond. I hold that unlucky jewel in abhorrence—and I refer you to other authority than mine, for such news of the Moonstone as you may, at the present time, be expected to receive (513).

The pursuit of the Indians with the Moonstone and the

ensuing reconstruction of Hindoo shrine of Somnauth are narrated by outsiders from the family — Sergeant Cuff's man, the captain of a ship that is bound for India, and Murthwaite who is now wandering in India. The family members are not suitable for the task.

Conclusion

In *The Moonstone* all the characters that are deviate from the norm of the society, whose moral center is the Verinder's family, are relegated to the margin or outside of it. Blake tries to edit the story of the mystery but when constructing it, the narratives which constitute the story must be obtained from all the characters who witness the process of the incident. The editor explains the purpose of the story in terms of law court analogy, though the analogy is only a disguise. Blake's real purpose is to make the story enjoyable in the family. While he must edit and make the story enjoyable, he also must make it decent or presentable in the family, that is, not too sensational. Here the interests of the two persons who construct the story agree. They are Blake and Wilkie Collins. In the novel as an editor of the family story Blake must censor the improper element in it. Constructing the novel from the outside the author Collins must make the novel not too sensational. Because his two previous novels were criticized rigorously and they never attained the popularity of *The Woman in White*, which, apparently at least, insistently supports the contemporary idea about family and home. As is exemplified in its "Preamble," it "is the story of what a Woman's patience can endure, and of what a Man's resolution can achieve" (1). Then in *The Moonstone* the relegation of improper persons and elements is simultaneously the design of Collins by which he is relieved of the responsibility to explicate the past lives of Rosanna and Jennings and also Blake's desire to establish his home, and his story, without any outsider in it.

For this purpose the characters that contribute to this family story are endowed with authority as an author or an editor. Some can self-censor their narratives. But at the same time like the author they can control the suspense of the novel by means of enclosure

and disclosure of the information. Their editing also condenses the information as Cuff's laconic "Godfrey Ablewhite" in his memo and Jennings' expurgation of things private of Candy, so that it can best lead the process of the novel. As a consequence, it can be said that in the novel these contributors all substitute the author. The author of the novel, the editor of the family story, and the contributors of the narratives in the story all work for the same purpose, the production of the whole narrative. In this sense, what Blake says about Candy's restored narrative, "this smooth and finished texture out of the ravelled skein" is an appropriate metaphor for the whole story that the author, the editor, and the contributors all aim to construct. By editing the narratives and reconstructing the mystery of the Moonstone, Blake tries to untangle the knotty incident and produce smooth texture. While making the plot intricate, Collins at the same time leaves clues to the mystery in the process and in the end makes the "smooth and finished texture."

But the editor Blake's control is limited. In contrast to the other contributors who have the power of editing which is almost equal to the author, he cannot willfully edit the narrative as is shown in the negotiation with Miss Clack. When the letter of Rosanna distresses him, he even gives up reading and abandons the role of the editor. However, it is in the structure of the family story that his ingenuity of editing work is best displayed. Though its multiple narration is often emphasized, the most important feature of the narrative method in the novel is that it is constructed so that the outside parts of the story in India confine the family story in England. The episode of "The Finding of the Diamond" is placed as "Epilogue" outside the family story. It is in parallel position with "The Storming of Seringapatam," the sanguine episode of the battlefield of India and the Colonel Herculastle's pillage of the Moonstone, which is also placed as "Prologue" outside of the family story in England. Here we can trace the Gothic element in *The Moonstone*. In *Frankenstein*, for example, its "Chinese-box" structure is constructed so that the narrative confines its most disturbing and wild element, the monster, by placing his narrative in the center. In contrast *The Moonstone* inverts this structure.

By arranging the story in this way, the editor Blake controls and keeps "outside" from "inside" by differentiating them, but at the same time he makes the narrative keep his family members "inside" so that they are safe in the "family" story from "outside" episodes' influence. Consequently in *The Moonstone* Wilkie Collins' determination to achieve "wild" and "domestic" at once is realized.

Notes

- (1) Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White*, ed. Harvey Peter Sucksmith (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1973) 1. Subsequent references to the novel will be to this edition, and will be included parenthetically in the text.
- (2) Thomas Boyle, *Black Swine in the Sewers of Hampstead: Beneath the Surface of Victorian Sensationalism* (New York: Viking, 1989) 37. For the history of the use of "sensation," see also, 186-188.
- (3) Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone*, ed. Anthea Trodd (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1982) 7. Subsequent references to the novel will be to this edition, and will be included parenthetically in the text.
- (4) Charles Dickens, letter to W. H. Wills, 30 June 1867, letter III, 534 of *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, ed. Walter Dexter (Bloomsbury: Nonesuch, 1938); reprinted in Norman Page ed., *Wilkie Collins: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge, 1974) 169. Later Dickens changed his idea about the novel: "The construction is wearisome beyond endurance." (Letter to W. H. Wills, 26 July 1868, in Dexter, III, 660; Page, 169.)
- (5) See, for example, Margaret Oliphant's reviews in the *Blackwood's*. "Sensation Novels," 91 (1862) 564-584, "Novels," 94 (1863) 168-183, and "Novels," 102 (1867) 257-280.
- (6) Anthea Trodd, introduction, *The Moonstone* xxi.
- (7) About Betteredge's position Sue Lonoff notes: "Betteredge himself, as a family retainer with more than fifty years of service, holds a position midway between a servant and a trusted old friend, bridging the space between the domestics and the gentry and facilitating communication among characters of diverse classes." *Wilkie Collins and His Victorian Readers: A Study in the Rhetoric of Authorship* (New York: AMS, 1982) 195.
- (8) Anthea Trodd, *Domestic Crime in the Victorian Novel* (New York: St. Martin's, 1989) 27.
- (9) For the contemporary view toward a detective, especially about his ambiguous status, see Trodd, *Domestic Crime*, 12-44.
- (10) Ross C. Murfin, "The Art of Representation: Collins' *The Moonstone* and Dickens' Example," *ELH* 49 (1982) 658.
- (11) For Collins' attitude toward India and English colonialism, see Tamar Heller, *Dead Secrets: Wilkie Collins and the Female Gothic* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1992) 190-191, Lonoff, 176-179, and Trodd, introduction, xvii-xviii. In contrast to the colonialist Dickens, they consider Collins was implicitly sympathetic to the colonized. It is interesting that some reader praised too much the sympathetic element in *The Moonstone*. Geraldine Jewsbury said: "The 'epilogue' of *The Moonstone* is beautiful. It redeems the somewhat sordid detective element, by a strain of solemn and pathetic human interest. Few will read of the final destiny of *The Moonstone* without feeling the tears rise in their eyes as they catch the last glimpse of the three men, who have sacrificed their cast in the service of their God . . . The deepest emotion is certainly reserved to the last." *Athenaeum* 25 July 1868, 106; reprinted in Page, 170-171.