THESIS

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TITLE:

"An examination of the plays of John Galsworthy and of his reputation as an index of changes in life and thought in the twentieth century."

U N I V E R S I T Y O F L O N D O N

An examination of the plays of John Galsworthy and of his reputation as an index of changes in life and thought in the twentieth century.

A THESIS submitted by

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for

The Degree of M.A. in English.

April, 1959.

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

This thesis is an examination of Galsworthy's plays, followed by an assessment of the fluctuations in his reputation in relation to life and thought in the century.

Part I has two sections.

Section (a) concerns the theatre in the early 1900's, with evidence drawn from histories, contemporary dramatic criticism and the drama. Five plays of the period are examined in some detail.

Section (b) opens with an examination of Galsworthy's letters, lectures and prefaces particularly as they reveal dramatic theory. There follows a study of the plays concentrating first on theme and then on characterisation. Choosing two plays, I have next attempted a criticism of technique as though they were actually taking place on the stage. An examination of a piece of dialogue, together with remarks on setting, stage directions, humour and the shorter plays, concludes this section.

The object of Part II is to outline the revolutions in life and thought during the century, and to set against them fluctuations in Galsworthy's reputation which (by their marked parallels) provide an index to the extent of the changes.

The first section traces these changes, particularly in the social, intellectual and aesthetic fields. Included in the latter is an examination of some experimental plays produced between 1920 and the present day.

The second section deals with Galsworthy's reputation, especially as reflected in dramatic criticism, and reveals parallels between its course and the impact of new ideas, particularly between 1920 and 1930. There follows some account of the frequency with which his plays have been performed in London, the provinces and in B. B. C. Sound and Television programmes. This section concludes with some personal observations arising from two play readings.

The conclusion in drawing together the two parts attempts to see why Galsworthy's plays, once so highly reputed, have suffered such extremes of fortune.

C O N T E N T S

N.B. Throughout the thesis page references to Galsworthy's plays are to Duckworth's edition of the plays published in 1929.

SECTION 1. AN INTRODUCTORY SURVEY

"Legs and tomfoolery" - such, reports J. T. Grein, is Henry Arthur Jones's summary of what the early 20th century audience demanded of its theatre. Hardly more flattering are Max Beerbohm's constant allusions to the stupidity of the theatre public. In 1905, reviewing Hauptmann's Thieves' Comedy he writes, "In England the theatre is regarded simply as a place for fatuousness".[1] Twenty years later Agate echoes the cry - "To the average playgoer a play is something to be enjoyed without mental fatigue."[2] And Kenneth Tynan, reviewing the 1958 season, can scathingly quote the leader column of a national newspaper giving its definition of the theatre. "It is something to do after dinner. It is a diversion. It is relaxation. If the theatre is not that it is nothing ..... The stage is an ingenious device intended simply and solely to entertain."[3] Oh weep for Aristotle, he is dead.

But is this apparent pessimism really necessary - is it indeed to be taken absolutely seriously? When one considers the state of the English theatre in the mid-nineteenth century, one realises that there has been a tremendous dramatic renaissance, comparable in the eyes of many literary historians to the first Elizabethan period. In 1958 there is a place for serious drama, even if it is not a very large one. There are both playwrights to write for this stage, and audiences to receive what they write. It survives with somewhat

1. Beerbohm M. Around Theatres (pub.1924; edition quoted 1953) p.566
2. Agate J. A Short View of the English Stage (1926) p.19.
3. The Observer, June 15, 1958.

of a struggle, but the very fact that it is there at all is heartening. And if we look back over the past fifty or sixty years we can see names and recognise movements which have played their part in this astonishing revival, and among these is that of John Galsworthy.

Here is a dramatist whose works form a valuable study not only for their own intrinsic interest but for the varying repute in which they have been held. From the production of his first play, The Silver Box, in 1906 he enjoyed a high reputation among the thinking public of his time (although he himself refers in his letters to the fact that his plays were not commercial successes.) In the latter part of this century, however, his reputation has fluctuated considerably. In this fluctuation can be traced far-reaching changes - changes in social organisation, in political loyalties, and, most important of all, in mental and spiritual values of which the two former are outward manifestations. Thus one may appreciate the dramatic artistry of his work for itself, and at the same time see, in the vicissitudes it has suffered in public opinion, an index of the phenomenal cultural upheavals which have made the fifty years of this century something between a millenium and a nightmare.

In order to gauge something of the impact he made upon drama, it is necessary to think briefly of his career. He came to the theatre with an established reputation as a novelist. In 1900 he had published The Villa Rubein and other stories, and though this

had had a mixed reception, his second volume of stories The Man of Devon had been well-received. In 1904 Heinemanns published The Island Pharisees, but it was the publication of The Man of Property in March, 1906, which really secured his reputation. His literary career, then, extends over a considerable period of time, his last work Over the River being completed in 1932, and an even more considerable period in point of the momentous changes which took place in those years. He himself writes in the preface to the Manaton edition of his works that he came to artistic self-expression "just at the date when the post-Darwinian sense of flux and of the relativity of the accepted standard which had overthrown the unself-conscious earlier Victorian acquiescence in the conventions, morals and standards, ideals and enterprises of their day, was beginning to utter in literature its challenge to nearly all accepted values." The years have seen that particular challenge swept away, and many others after it. Thus it comes that he who was regarded both intellectually and technically as something of an innovator has suffered such fluctuations of reputation, being regarded at one time as one of the "standard-bearers in the modern British dramatic movement" (Marriot - Preface to Great British Plays, 1929) and at another as a hopelessly out-dated minor playwright.

His published plays, which are the main concern of this study, number twenty full-length and seven short plays. There is evidence of an unpublished play The Civilised written in 1901. The most outstanding of his dramatic works seem to fall naturally into groups -

The Silver Box, Strife, The Eldest Son, and Justice being the earlier group. Next, The Fugitive, The Pigeon, The Mob, and A Bit o' Love form an intermediate section, while of the later plays The Skin Game, Loyalties, and Escape have something in common. However, classification can be pushed too far, as throughout the plays run unmistakably Galsworthian 'motifs' and such grouping as one makes is largely a matter of mental convenience.

Before going on to elaborate this outline of Galsworthy's dramatic work, it will be helpful to spend a little time on a more detailed study of conditions in the theatre in the late 19th and early 20th century so as to realise something of the reason for what he himself described as "his dramatic invasion" in 1906. For this purpose I shall first consider the stage generally, and then attempt to draw some conclusions from this and from the dramatic criticism of the time. I shall then pass on to some consideration of the plays running in London in the two years or so before the production of The Silver Box, with a more detailed examination of some of these.

The early part of the 20th century was still mainly the era of the actor-manager, a fact which had considerable influence on the types of plays produced. In his Short View of The English Stage 1900-1926 James Agate writes in the preface,"Nothing will be said about the decline of the great actor and the rise in general level of accomplishment among players....", and naturally the actor-manager system tended to produce the type of play with a

towering central figure surrounded by characters of far less importance, though this was not invariably the case. The best known of these actor-managers are probably Henry Irving, who in point of time belongs really to the 19th century, and Beerbohm Tree. During the first years of the century Tree took much of Irving's Shakespeare tradition to the Haymarket and His Majesty's, the very phrase "the beautiful theatre" being a clue to his attitude. "The little parish of St. James's" catered mainly for romantic drama, with some Shakespeare and some lighter comedy. Cyril Maude and Frederick Harrison, taking over the Haymarket, went in for even lighter comedy. The rule of Charles Frohmanmat the Duke of Yorks (1897 - 1915) is a fascinating period and it was he who, in 1902, produced The Admirable Crichton which ran for 328 performances. If one may anticipate a little and look on beyond the first years of the century one finds under his management a season (1910) which many historians regard as the peak of the Edwardian era - a season which saw the presentation of Justice, Misalliance, Madras House, Prunella, The Twelve Pound Look and a revival of Trelawny of the Wells.

One obvious effect of the system of actor managers was that the theatres themselves had their own personalities; one knew more or less what to expect when visiting them. Not that the diet was monotonous - but it was reasonably consistent, and had its own hall-mark. The coming of big business and impersonal syndicates has swept that away.

Not only had the theatres their own individuality, but the style

of acting appears to have been more forceful. Writing as early as 1899, Clement Scott speaks of the "old and the new method". Waller, Scott says, as Hotspur "combines the vigorous elocutionary power and strength of the old school with the variety, ~~taste~~ grace, ~~grace~~ taste and discretion of the new." [1]. His very choice of word, 'vigorous', 'power', 'strength', as contrasted with "variety, ~~taste~~ grace, ~~grace~~ taste and discretion" heralds a change. To those of us who have been brought up in the "stiff-upper-lip" school of acting, with the emotion which reveals itself by staring fixedly into the fireplace, there is something hypnotically fascinating about the legends which clothe those Titanic figures - Irving, Tree, Martin-Harvey, George Alexander, Forbes-Robertson, Charles Wyndham, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Irene Vanbrugh. Would Scott have been able to write so feelingly about a modern actress as he writes about Julia Neilson, as in The Home Secretary she makes a confession to her husband, "a confession so modest, so womanly, so true, with the voice half-broken by sobs and the face lined with agony"? More likely, in the somewhat improbable event of such a confession being made, it would be made with cigarette in one hand and pink gin in the other.

By present-day standards much of the acting would be judged over-histrionic - the "vigorous elocutionary power" would affront modern ears. The praise which A. B. Walkley gives to Irving would find little response. "A flamboyant of the flamboyants, he has conquered the drab public .... He has vindicated the supremacy of

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1. Scott C. The Drama of Yesterday and Today. (1899). vol. II p. 358-9.

Romance in the face of all Philistia".[1] It is told of Irving that in his day at the Lyceum "Always a special lime-light followed the chief's face with a small 'pin' light of steel blue. It was a rule of the house, that, however dark the scene might be, the spectators should be able to follow the play of Irving's features". (Ernest Short. Sixty Years of Theatre)

And what stories have gathered round the names of these actors ! Even at their most apocryphal one accepts them, because they fit the convention of the time. They are somehow larger than life, and part of the atmosphere of the era, or so it appears to us now. The story of Tree recounted by Macqueen Pope in Carriages at Eleven is not without relevance, and completely captivating. At a matinee of Henry VIII a man in the front row of the stalls was absorbed in a newspaper. Tree, in his scarlet robes, swept to the very front of the stage, knelt down with great concentration and said "What won the two-thirty?" The unfortunate newspaper reader was completely dumbfounded. Tree rose to his full height. "He doesn't know," he informed the audience. And continued the scene. One cannot wonder at the reception accorded him when he was given his knighthood. He was playing Malvolio at the time. "When," says Macqueen Pope, "he came to the lines, which seemed so apposite: "Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them" .. well, he stopped the show. The audience stood and cheered for minutes." These two incidents are a commentary on a passing era, an era of personalities, even of flamboyants. Here again

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1. Walkley A.B. Playhouse Impressions. 1892 p. 256

Galsworthy may almost be taken as a gauge of the new epoch. There is recorded in Short's Sixty Years of Theatre a story of Dame Sybil Thorndike rehearsing in one of his plays. "In despair she cried: 'I can't do it ... Do you want me to take away everything that is me?' 'Yes,' replied Galsworthy quietly, 'If you would do that, I think it would be quite all right. Shall we try again?' " There is in the contrast between the two stories a whole history of change.

Not, of course, that one can draw pleasantly tidy horizontal lines and say "Here ended the old drama and beginneth the new". Much of the drama of the first decade of this century did look backwards, rather than forwards. Themes tended to recur; the attempts of the parvenu to penetrate the circle of Society, the woman with the past, the compromising situation leading to suicide or reconciliation. The list of characters bristled with titles; servants were mainly useful as servants or as overhearers of incriminating conversations, or perhaps as victims of the unscrupulous. Even that enlightened man of the theatre J. T. Grein, writing in The Stage Year Book of 1910 of Maugham's Smith, needs must qualify his praise ever so slightly by saying " ..... the fact that ~~the~~ his central figure is a servant in my eyes somewhat lessens the standard of the comedy." The settings are in keeping with the characters. The Ambassador by John Oliver Hobbes has for its first act "a room luxuriously furnished; style Louis Seize" and for its second "the conservatory at Lady Beauvedere's. Dim lights. A fountain (with gold fish) playing in the centre ... Ballroom seen beyond". How our Angry Young Men would disapprove of the goldfish ! The opening

lines of the same play are delightful in their stilted unnaturalness. Alice. "Dearest Juliet, you have not yet told me why you accepted Sir William".

Not all the drama of this period can be dismissed in this way. Shaw, particularly with the advent of the Vedrenne-Barker management at the Royal Court Theatre (1904-7), was becoming increasingly known to the public. Granville Barker was himself making a name as a playwright; and the Irish drama - let Max Beerbohm speak for that. In April 1904 he writes :

"For ever and ever we" (i.e. the dramatic critics) "plod through 'Lady Thingummy's drawing room'.... and for ever Lady Thingummy (played by Miss-So-and-So with her usual grace and sensibility) gives her husband ... reason to suppose that her flirtation with Sir Blank Dash .... is a really serious affair, whereas, of course, all the while ...." Add a 'decimal point recurring' over that last dot. Imagine those dots running on, like the desert's grains of sand, for ever and ever, and then you will be able to enter into the feelings of a dramatic critic, and to realise with what joy he, condemned to an eternity and an infinity of barren drawing-room comedy or drawing-room comedy-drama, turns aside to such accidents as the Irish Theatre." [1]

But the Irish Theatre appeared mainly at St. George's Hall, not at a West End theatre. It is true that Vedrenne and Barker made a financial success of their theatre as well as being pioneers of the new drama. On the whole, however, the Edwardian audience was conservative in its tastes. Many dramatic critics have said in effect that an audience gets the play it deserves. The difficulty

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1. Beerbohm M. Around Theatres. p.314-5, first published 1924; edition quoted 1953.

in assessing that elusive body and its effect on the plays produced is that "the audience", a convenient conglomeration of half-wits, the composition of which remains for ever constant, just does not exist. As many theatres, so many audiences. As many in the audience, so many opinions, theoretically at all events. However, the Edwardian audiences appear, from their historians, to have had certain qualities in common with one another , chief among these - if one were to believe the dramatic critics - their stupidity ! And the theatre played apparently a greater part in most of their lives than in ours.

"The Theatre", writes Macqueen-Pope in Carriages at Eleven "was part of our social life. Except for the not quite respectable music-hall, it had no competitor in the realm of entertainment... It was - far more than it is to-day - a true microcosm of London." In outward appearance it was certainly different from our day, and that in itself is significant. The stalls audience would invariably be in evening dress; in fact they were almost part of the show itself. In the "upper circle", home mainly of the lower middle class, "best clothes" would be the order of the day. Beyond that, there was more laxity, and the "gods" were known also for their propensity for expressing their opinion more forcibly than other parts of the house. But even the courtly wording of the "Notice: Gentlemen are earnestly requested not to light cigarettes in any part of the Theatre ~~save~~ except the Smoking Room" indicates a subtle difference of approach when compared with "No smoking".

In matters less material it is less easy to judge the quality

of an Edwardian audience. Dramatic critics, probably by very reason of their calling, are not the most charitable judges of their lay brethren. Max Beerbohm admits that he has never fallen into the error of over-rating the public though he adds that he "takes this opportunity (1900) of insinuating to the purveyors of farce and melodrama that the public's stupidity has its limits." Agate, writing somewhat later, notes that "the British public has an extraordinary knack of refusing to be stupid when you most expect it to be" - a rather back-handed compliment. However, it becomes necessary here to draw some distinction between serious drama and 'the rest' ; obviously in spite of the pessimism expressed by Beerbohm and Agate not all the playgoers are fatuous. Certainly is is true that in Edwardian days, though mass entertainment on the scale of the cinema was unknown, the less serious were well catered for. There were plenty of places - Daly's, the Gaiety, the Hippodrome and so on - where these could be amused without any risk of being made to think, but it is by no means the whole picture.

A factor which probably influenced the dramatic resurgence of this period is, paradoxically enough, the work of those critics whose continual references to the fatuity of the public are by now well-known. Dramatic criticism was once more being taken seriously, even in the daily press. Clement Scott, writing in 1899, states that "first night notices" were scarcely heard of before he was given them to do in about 1875. "Nowadays," (e.g. 1899) "they are not the exception, but the rule." The more serious weekly and fortnightly periodicals of course had developed this aspect earlier - as

Shaw's journalistic career proves - but the gradual growth of dramatic criticism in the more popular press shows a body of informed and mainly progressive opinion which is to exert an unobtrusive, but by no means negligible, influence.

Apart, too, from its influence this criticism is useful as a guide to the type of play which the more serious-minded playgoers were looking for at this time. Shaw's views need not be reiterated; they are part of our dramatic canon. There are others, however, less well known, who, while differing among themselves on some points, have yet a common bond in their intense faith in the theatre as an art. To them, in the words of J.T. Grein, "the theatre is not a plaything, but an institution which should be the pride and mirror of the nation."

Clement Scott, the dramatic critic first of the Sunday Times and then of the Daily Telegraph, speaking of the play Clito talks of the "ultimate goal of moral rectitude" of the dramatist. In another context he refers to "the searching mirror of the stage," and inveighs against the "snap-shot" society dramas, with "their pronounced vulgarity, hideous presentments of men and women, and their cheap satire." When he predicts that Sweet Lavender "a wholesome, pure, refreshing and charming play" will outlast The Second Mrs. Tanqueray one doubts his judgment a little, and he himself came to realise that "the Ibsen reaction ... is a solemn, resistless fact". But he never for once doubted the seriousness of the stage, the nobility of its purpose and its reality. Why else would he say of Kate Rorke playing the part of Mary Pennington "This was not acting; it was truth. This was not

theatrical and stagey stuff; it was nature." [1].

The same cry rings through Max Beerbohm's criticism, when he was on the ~~Fortnightly~~ Saturday Review between 1899 and 1910. As early as 1899 he praised Grierson's Way because the central figure "is" a real character ..... I am grateful for this play because it shows me real and human characters, behaving in a real and human way, under stress of circumstances that are conceivable." As some measure of changing standards of reality one may refer to Cousin Kate by Hubert Henry Davies, produced in 1903 at the Haymarket. Beerbohm says of it "In Cousin Kate, the latest play by the latest playwright," the character which stands out for me most distinctly and gives me the most pleasure is the Rev. James Bartlett .... Mr. Davies "lets us see a curate who is quite human despite of his mannerisms" and he devotes his whole column to the clergyman. Before reading this review I had considered the Rev. James Bartlett the complete caricature - the stage parson par excellence. Another illuminating review by Beerbohm is the one quoted earlier with reference to the Irish theatre. Like Scott, he is always on the side of reality.

Another critic whose contributions to various newspapers deserve note is A.B. Walkley. He insists on the need for complete freedom - freedom to get away from the worn-out conventions both of theme and treatment. In one of his earlier reviews he has a delicious "Anglicisation" of Rosmerholm, the title of which becomes The Bridge by Moonlight (with real water). He praises the fresh, audacious treatment of Rosmerholm, with 'its intensely human' characters.

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1. Scott C. The Drama of Yesterday and Today. Vol.2, p.330. 1899

Hedda Gabler is a masterpiece of "piquant subtlety, delicate observation, tragic intensity". It is good to hear in these words a challenge to the artificiality of the stage.

It is indeed this very quality which, according to Galsworthy himself, prompted his first dramatic venture, The Silver Box in 1906. Writing in 1922 to Dr. Sadasiva Aiyar he says it was dictated by "revolt ~~against~~ at the artificial nature of the English play of the period, and by a resolute intention to present real life on the stage." [1.] A glance at some of the plays produced between 1904 and 1906 will give some idea of whether or not his stricture was justified, while a further examination of a selection will show something of the dramatic climate of the time.

Light drama of course predominates - but that is hardly surprising, and certainly not unique. (James Agate making an analysis of the years 1900 to 1924 finds that of the new pieces played during that time there were twelve serious plays to forty-two light comedies and farces - and that excluded musical comedies and reviews). Indeed, in the two-year period, musical plays and musical comedies feature most frequently - with titles fascinating to choose from, The Earl and the Girl being only one of many. Comediettas - their name is legion and how one meditates about The Dean's Dilemma! Who could resist the drama of The Price of Her Soul ? (And who indeed would hesitate to hazard a guess at its price ?) Romantic drama accounts for many of the theatres, The Garden of Lies being one of the more succulent titles. As to farce, the list could go on almost indefinitely - not least

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters of John Galsworthy. p.793. (1936)

in popularity being What the Butler Saw and The Officers' Mess and How They Got Out of It. The Green Room Book [1] holds one in thrall.

More serious plays, however, are not lacking. At the Royal Court Vedrenne and Barker produced Man and Superman, Major Barbara, John Bull's Other Island, and How He Lied to Her Husband. Also produced here in this period were The Voysey Inheritance, and Prunella. H. A. Jones is represented by The Heroic Stubbs and The Chevalier, and Pinero by His House in Order and Wife without a Smile. Both Sutro and Hankin have two plays - Sutro The Walls of Jericho and Mollentrave on Women, and Hankin The Return of the Prodigal, and The Charity that Begins at Home. Barrie, too, has two plays, Pantaloon and Peter Pan. Lady Windermere's Fan was revived, while Hall Caine's The Prodigal Son, and Dodo by E.F. Benson are two plays by other authors of higher standing than The Garden of Lies and so on.

There were about twelve Shakespeare plays, together with revivals of She Stoops to Conquer, The Critic, The Maid's Tragedy, and Dr. Faustus. Barker and Vedrenne also produced matinees of the Orestean trilogy and The Trojan Women. European plays included Lady Inger of Ostraat, The Wild Duck, The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont (Brieux) and The Thieves' Comedy (Hauptmann). The Irish Dramatic movement was represented by Spreading the News, The Pot of Broth, On Bailie's Strand and The Well of the Saints.

Passing from this list, I have selected five plays - excluding Shaw and the Irish dramatists on account of their being familiar to

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1. The Green Room Book, 1906.

all readers - in an attempt to present a representative cross-section of what a more thoughtful playgoer might at this time be able to see on the London stage. The plays are:

The Walls of Jericho	Alfred Sutro
The Return of the Prodigal	Hankin St. John.
His House in Order	Pinero A.W.
The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont	Brieux .E.
The Voysey Inheritance	Granville-Barker. H

Of these The Walls of Jericho and His House in Order represent the "society" drama so popular at the time; The Return of the Prodigal shows, for all its wit, a more realistic picture. The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont sounds a yet grimmer note, and The Voysey Inheritance exemplifies the new dramatic movement.

The Walls of Jericho was produced at the Garrick Theatre in 1904. It is the story of Jack Frobisher, who after farming successfully in Australia, returns to England and marries Alethea, daughter of Lord Steventon, a worthless old aristocrat. The scene is set for domestic difficulties. The play opens with a ball in progress. Jack is obviously ill-at-ease and out of his element; Alethea is flirting with Dallas, described by the author as "the usual kind of young man". To this ball unexpectedly comes an old friend of Jack's, Hankey Bannister, who has found gold in the Colonies and is extremely rich - a fact which causes quite a flutter among the unmarried young ladies of that circle. Lucy, Alethea's sister, worldly but good-hearted as indeed is Alethea herself, sets her cap at him, with commendable success.

Meanwhile Max, the brother, has "betrayed" a Miss Merton, and his family is prepared to make him abandon the girl. We then see Jack trying - in vain - to warn Hankey that he and Lucy are unsuited. An exciting scene shows Alethea losing heavily at cards, and generally behaving in a manner which a dutiful wife and mother would abhor. In fact the circumstances in which she is found with Dallas are, by the standards of romantic drama, compromising to a degree. Meanwhile Jack has taken the unforgivable step of advising Max to marry Miss Merton, and has given him the means to do so. The family is absolutely outraged. Lady Westerby, another woman of the Society circle, stands by him, telling him that she has herself once been in Miss Merton's plight. She advises him to take a firm line. This he does - announcing that he is returning to Australia with his wife and son. Alethea has other ideas. Egged on by her father who detests Jack she leaves him. Ten days of estrangement follow. At last, with judicious scheming by Hankey and Lady Westerby, husband and wife meet. Alethea is proved to be a devoted mother; Jack nobly offers to leave the child with her and turns to go. Alethea rushes after him.

Alethea. "No, no, I will go with you, Jack - I will go with you! And, oh! - I will try!"

Locked in one another's arms they are unaware of Lord Steventon's further entry, and of his bitter words to Lady Westerby, and of her reply which rings down the curtain :

Lord Steventon: "We have <u>you</u> to thank for this, my Lady!

Lady Westerby: No, Lord Steventon, let us thank God."

The story has all the elements of artificial comedy grafted upon

romantic melodrama. It has faint echoes of The School for Scandal but without the stinging objectivity of that masterpiece. Within the bosoms of most of these lady scandal-mongers beat hearts of gold, albeit well-hidden; Victorian England lies between the two plays. Certainly it is a play of the aristocracy; the cast glistens with titles. Here also is the parvenu - in fact two parvenus - and his entry into the charmed circle, but the sympathy is with the parvenu, which is a little more unusual. One finds the inevitable "betrayed" woman, the woman with a past, the matrimonial tangles, the compromising situation, and finally the happy ending. Characterisation, by modern psychological standards, is practically non-existent. Frobisher has some individuality, Lady Alethea a little. The others are types. It is a matter of considerable conjecture, too, how such an unpleasant father as Lord Steventon managed to have three children so fundamentally "decent" at heart; one must suppose they took after their mother. The setting is that of countless other romantic dramas of the time - the fashionable ballrooms and drawing rooms of Society. But it is good theatre. Even when read the whole play passes before one's eyes with tremendous vividness. It is a "well-made" play: the situation sketched in the first act is developed in the second and third acts, and concluded in the fourth. There are no loose ends. Nor, excluding the denouement, are there any extreme impossibilities. The play moves forward at a rapid pace, with plenty of emotional, even if sentimental, appeal. There is considerable tension and suspense. The part of Frobisher is an actor-manager's part. He dominates the play, and he has, particularly at the end of

the second and third acts - places of crucial interest - speeches of considerable length and vigour in the tradition of the Pinero play. Sutro is indeed the successor of Pinero and H.A. Jones rather than Granville-Barker, or Galsworthy, whose plays are in a different convention.

It is, of course, the convention that counts here. Given the deliberate artificiality of such plays, then the plot, characterisation, setting and so on of The Walls of Jericho are absolutely appropriate, as are the values of the play. True, there is some satire of Society, but too many good hearts are hidden under unpromising exteriors for the satire to have the bite of, say, The School for Scandal. But it is just heavy enough for the play. The convention also prevents our asking too many awkward questions - would Lady Alethea have behaved as she did, would Dallas, after his lapse, have behaved as a perfect gentleman? Questions of this kind are relevant to the realistic play; not to this. The final impression may be that of over-emotion and sentimentality, but it is also that of dazzling colour, bold strokes and good theatre.

In date of production His House in Order is not next after The Walls of Jericho, being presented at St. James in February, 1906, but it is nearest in spirit. The story of Filmer Jesson, M.P., whose first marriage to Annabel Ridgeley appears to have been so idyllic that his second marriage has little chance of success needs no reiteration. It is a compact plot, events lasting only a day and a half. There are no extraneous details. The play moves rapidly

forward and the resolution of the conflict is a complete surprise, though not improbable except at the very end - and that improbability is due to characterisation perhaps rather than actual incident. It is in fact in the characterisation that the falsity - as usually happens in romantic drama - lies. One does not, within the convention, demand complete realism, but even so I find the unrelieved ghastliness of the Ridgeleys hard to credit. Filmer seems hardly more than the archtype of a blind self-centred careerist, Hilary is a well-meaning but incredible busybody, and Nina ..... Her behaviour at the end leaves me speechless. There has been little to prepare one for the extraordinary act of self-immolation. After the first incredulous amazement, one's reaction is to shake her hard until she comes to her senses and gets on with the good work of debunking the Ridgeleys. One feels even a little impatient with the characteristic restraint with which Galsworthy expresses himself on the same subject. Writing to St. John Ervine about The Fugitive - a play which has a very slight resemblance to His House in Order - he says "The endings of H.A. Jones' Liars and of His House in Order have always been anathema to me." Granted, there is a certain obvious satire in the treatment of this odious family, but it falls flat because they are such obvious caricatures. Mr. Archer might find his serious purpose in that. This type of play is not primarily concerned with awakening the conscience of the audience, or with sending them out of the theatre with their heads teeming with new ideas. It is concerned with holding its audience's interest at that time, stimulating their emotions there and then. Regarded in

this way it, too, is good theatre. It has plenty of action, emotion, suspense and climax. But a modern audience would echo Galsworthy's sentiments.

The Return of the Prodigal produced at the Royal Court in 1905 is a very different type of comedy. The story is of the vicissitudes of the Jackson family, newly rich through their efforts in business, and now busy establishing ~~them~~ themselves in "County" circles. Unfortunately for them, just after the play opens, Eustace the black sheep of the family is found outside the house apparently in a state of physical collapse. He had been banished to the Colonies by Mr. Jackson and his elder brother Henry. He revives after his "collapse" and proceeds to make himself a thoroughly charming, unscrupulous nuisance, much to the chagrin of his father and brother. They offer various solutions, which do not meet with Eustace's approval, as they entail some little exertion on his part, which does not attract him. Finally he announces his intention of departing to the nearest workhouse - a gambit calculated to horrify his nearest and dearest on account of their social and political aspirations. This gentlemanly blackmail can hardly fail. Mr. Jackson agrees to give the 'prodigal' an allowance of £250, whereupon Eustace makes his exit, perfectly cheerful, completely unabashed and without the slightest rancour.

Here again are some of the features one has become accustomed to - the parvenus trying to make their way in Society; the titled aristocracy. But the sympathy is not with them, nor indeed is it with the "County". Characters from both groups are satirised, not for what they represent

but for what they actually are - for smugness, hypocrisy, snobbery and so on. The story is slight, and without any melodramatic trappings. As Max Beerbohm says when reviewing it, it is "pure, undiluted comedy." There is little in the way of action, and "nearly all its fun depends on the adroitness with which one of the characters turns inside out the conventional arguments of the other characters". William Archer was apparently "distressed" by the lack of a general idea, whether moral or social, and one critic, when the play was shown in the North, took Hankin severely to task for not driving the Biblical parable home. It seems quite incredible that the point could be so completely missed. The play is a brilliant piece of satire on the two circles of society, but not laboured till it becomes a moral treatise. The characters have more life and individuality than is usual at this time - Eustace has much of the charm of Algernon Moncrieff. The wit and delicacy of the whole play has indeed something of the spirit of The Importance of Being Earnest. I must admit to a sneaking wish that something of the same comic skill could have found its way into The Foundations.

Quite different again is The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont by Brieux, produced in ~~1906~~ 1905. The story is this. Monsieur Dupont had three daughters, Angela, Julie and Caroline. Angela, before the play opens, has committed an "indiscretion" and been cast off by her father. Caroline, a spinster with no chance of marriage and fervently religious, earns her own living. When the play opens an intrigue is in progress to marry Julie to Antonin Mairout. Both sides deceive

one another and the marriage takes place, with some comedy. After a short spell of happiness the marriage becomes loveless, and Antonin and Julie have a terrifying quarrel. Meanwhile Angela has returned to her home-town and Caroline has given part of her legacy to a clerk with whom she is in love and who, unknown to her, has been living with a married woman. Julie is practically determined to leave her husband, but finally her sisters persuade her not to, having convinced her of the ghastly horror of her position should she do so. The play ends on a note of "making the best of it".

At once one can see here a completely different type of play from any of the others so far examined. There are one or two of the stock features - the betrayed woman, the matrimonial difficulties. There is a certain amount of comedy in the intrigues of the respective parents; there is certainly emotional tension in the quarrel scene. But these similarities only set out in relief the differences. The treatment is completely realistic. Here is a situation such as might easily occur; its solution is bitter common-sense - the old adage "What can't be cured must be endured". No false heroics, no deus ex machina. Just "making the best of it". The characters are certainly in part types - the old parents come in this category. But the three daughters are studies in three different temperaments, and have something of the psychological truth one associates with later playwrights. It is a searing play, almost too stark in its reality.

The last play I have chosen, The Voysey Inheritance, was produced at the Royal Court in 1905. Though quite unlike the foregoing play The Three Daughters of Mr. Dupont in plot, in spirit it is

not dissimilar. The story needs no retelling. The treatment of that story is in the then modern convention, that of realism. The character list contains no titles. The Voyseys are solid middle-class professional people. They have - or think they have - money but they are not parvenus. There is no suggestion that they are not accepted perfectly naturally in their circle of society. They are not stock figures - except, to a certain degree, Booth Voysey; they are real people. There is a subtlety of character-drawing which one does not find in The Walls of Jericho or His House in Order. One is aware of the conflict in Edgar's mind almost from the beginning. Money, too, plays its part, but it is money earned in the hard grind of everyday life, not in the highly romanticised manner of Hankey Bannister. But it is unfair to push the comparison too far. One does not ask the performance of a Daimler from a bubble-car.

Technically, also, The Voysey Inheritance is an advance and shows the influence of Ibsen and Shaw. There is little action and much discussion. The climaxes are not neatly spaced out in the formal "well-made" play tradition. The weight of acting is shared more equally, though of course Edgar has the main part. The stage directions are not concerned merely with such things as goldfish and real water; they are part of the play, essays in interpretation. It is most certainly a play of ideas, while not so obviously as Shaw's. However the following extract from the opening scene, where Mr. Voysey is trying to make Edward understand his position, proves this point.

Mr. Voysey: "Why? ... why is it so hard for a man to see beyond the letter of the law! Will you consider,

> Edward, the position in which I found myself at that moment? Was I to see my father ruined and disgraced without lifting a finger to help him?

The feeling is not identical with that of Galsworthy in The Silver Box or Escape or Justice, but it has far more in common with him than with the Society drama of Pinero and H.A. Jones. Other ideas strike us as we read - the power of money, the position of women, what Beatrice calls "the luxury of feelings". It is a play which does not end with the curtain - as indeed do few of Galsworthy's either. One is tempted to speculate on what might have been the ending in other hands - not the sight of Edgar sitting "looking into his future, streaked as it is to be with trouble and joy". No - there comes a knock at the door; George Booth, struck with repentance at his harsh ingratitude, totters brokenly in to offer all his fortune to repair the Voysey inheritance - and ruin the play. It is the rising dramatists such as Barker and Galsworthy who have the courage to break from the tradition of the happy ending.

This then is something of the dramatic temper of the early part of the 20th century. One must acknowledge that the iceberg is, so to speak, two thirds submerged. For every serious play - and the interpretation of 'serious' must be wide - there are two musicals, comediettas and so on. But they are not our concern. There is, too, undoubtedly variety in the theatre, but it is possible to distinguish certain threads. There is the well-established romantic drama, compact, well-constructed, with pace, action, emotion, ingenuity, stagecraft. It makes little attempt at reality. Its themes repeat

themselves ad nauseam, the characters re-appear under different names - titled more often than not. The setting is wealthy; none of the characters appear to need to earn a living - a world not ours. But alongside this there are other strands - Shaw, of course, brilliantly individual and irreducible to categories; the Irish dramatists who with a sense of poetry in their very choice of the Irish idiom present themes which are a revelation of freshness and originality. Granville-Barker sets the first act of the Voysey Inheritance in an office, another departure. The movement is irresistibly forward, and one of the innovators is John Galsworthy.

SECTION II. JOHN GALSWORTHY AS A DRAMATIC ARTIST

a) A consideration of Galsworthy's dramatic ideas as revealed in his letters, lectures etc.,

To rank an author as a dramatic artist has naturally greater significance than merely to set him down as a playwright. Any artistic endeavour is prompted by incalculable forces, but surely two are chief among these, whether conscious or not - first, that inner compulsion which drives a man to make of the scattered fragments of experience a coherent pattern satisfying to his own needs, and second, the apprehension, half realised or dimly glimpsed, of the ultimate isolation of his own personality. Against this inexorable separation of mind from mind the most potent weapon is art, that attempt, now fumbling, now momentarily sure, to make contact with the thoughts of others. Shelley, it is true, speaks of the poet as a nightingale singing to cheer his own solitude, but he also claims that poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world, a view which implies both artist and audience. To imagine art as a clinically impersonal absolute is to imagine the artist sitting in an intellectual swing-boat pulling ineffectually at the rope which dangles before him, whereas he has only to pass the rope across to his lay-brother on the opposite seat and take his in return for the boat to swing out high and powerful. Without contact, a work is dead. The artist chooses his medium - colour, sound, stone, words - the weapon for his "raids upon the inarticulate", his attempt at communication.

Of all artists, this is most true of the dramatist, who chooses a medium which is in a double sense an act of communication for, as in music, his work is interpreted to his audience by others. As Galsworthy himself said in his Romanes lecture on the creation of character in literature, the characters are very much at the mercy of their impersonators. Moreover the impact is both momentary and permanent. One sees the action and stores the impression. The task of the dramatic artist is no light one, demanding many qualities.

First among these - a truism, but one feels sometimes overlooked - he must have something to say. Not that he need have a lesson to drive home or a sermon to preach. Conscious didactism, in the hands of less than Shaw, is a deadly virtue. And even Shaw nods. But powerful emotion, belief even of a negative kind, awareness, vitality - these an author must have. Nor is powerful emotion of itself enough.

Professor Ellis-Fermor so rightly says in The Frontiers of Drama that there are certain types of experience which are irreducible to dramatic terms, chief among these pure religious experience. The dramatist must then discern wherein lies the suitability of his material. What T. S. Eliot says of the poet is to a certain extent true of the dramatist: that much of his creative struggle lies in the transmuting of personal and private agonies into something rich and strange. Possibly some of the difficulty many of us feel with such plays as Waiting for Godot is that the experience is not adequately transmuted. Finally, having chosen the stage as his medium, the dramatist must be able to express his ideas in terms of the theatre. He must be a stage-craftsman. How far does Galsworthy fulfil these conditions ?

What had he to say? He had a great deal. Perhaps with the greatest writers, personality is a side issue; with those not so great some insight into their emotions and interests helps to clarify the substance of what they say. Only the lunatic fringe of criticism indulges in fantasies as to the manic-depressive state of Shakespeare's mind when he wrote Hamlet, but some idea of Galsworthy's sympathies throws light on many of the questions he raises in his plays. Marrot in his Life and Letters of John Galsworthy quotes an illuminating list, [1] found among Galsworthy's papers, of the causes to which at one time or another he gave active support. It contains some twenty-three items, ranging from such things as dental experiments on dogs or the docking of horses' tails to Prison Reform and Woman's Suffrage. It embodies some of Galsworthy's most serious causes and some which seem by comparison trivialities. This quality of unevenness shows itself in his plays - (Old Heythorp for instance in Old English staggers us with the grandeur of his character; his grandson Jack disgusts us with the complete dramatic irrelevance of his horseplay with the rat). It is an intensely varied list, as are the subjects of his plays. It shows, as they do, a mind alive to the less obvious issues of the day. Above all it shows that quality which informs all his work - humanitarianism.

In fact much insight altogether can be gained from his less formal writings - letters, conversations, lectures and so forth - before coming to his plays. Many of the topics found there - divorce, women's movements, prison reform - have direct bearing on the actual substance of his drama, while his views on art and literature are more

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1. Marrot. The Life and Letters of John Galsworthy (1935) p.215.

than relevant.

First then, that cause so close to his heart - marriage, divorce, the subject position of women and its attendant horrors - which is a subject he treats tragically in The Fugitive and with humour in The Family Man. Naturally he himself saw the cruelty in particular of the Divorce Laws. Replying to Hall Caine on the subject he writes, "It is, however, my deep conviction that an institution (i.e. marriage) so secured by the most fundamental virtues and qualities of our common nature can well afford to be generous and merciful towards that ten per cent of cases which are hopelessly miserable and unhappy .... In the eyes of the law marriage at present is nothing whatever but concubinage".[1.] Vide Soames and Irene, George and Helen in the unpublished The Civilised, George and Clare in The Fugitive. On the subject of prostitutes, he writes to the Secretary of the London Female Guardian Society "I would willingly become a subscriber to any such object were the law on this subject altered, and the treatment of these unfortunate women brought into correspondence with humanity and commonsense. They are, with few exceptions, compelled to the life of vice by the appetites of men, and for men to apply to them the present rough, unnecessary and inadequate police-court treatment is repugnant to the instincts of fair play and reason".[2.] There speaks the author of The Pigeon, The Skin Game and so on.

Another cause for which he worked untiringly was that of justice, and the machinery of justice. His efforts in the direction of prison

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.686.

2. Ibid. p.668.

reform need no expansion. The final word on his feelings about the whole subject is perhaps best expressed in his letter to Gilbert Murray about the ending of Justice. Granville-Barker wished the play to end simply with a re-arrest, and felt that Falder's death was out of keeping with the rest of the play. Galsworthy - and apparently Murray agreed with him - felt that death was the only real resolution. He writes, "It seems to me that you want to make the spectator feel: Thank God! he's dead-and beyond that awful process going on and on for ever; out of the hands of men. Only by giving him back to Nature can you get the full criticism on human conduct." [1] "That awful process going on and on for ever ..." the very phrase shows the sympathy and imagination which he congratulated Churchill on possessing when the latter was appointed Home Secretary. Indeed the whole play Justice is in no common sense the dramatisation of the many letters he wrote on the subject of "the closed cell" and the mental torture it involved.

Politics have little direct bearing on his drama. The Foundations has, it is true, a political element but it is not propaganda. The Mob has a political setting, but that is not the main issue. In much the same way, Galsworthy's letters show interest in politics, but the interest rather of the intelligent layman than the "Party man". He was intensely interested in the vital causes of his day, but politics became real to him in people and society, in the weapons forged by government in order to govern, and their effects. He comments on Socialism that "as a principle it has "the bottom knocked out of it by the fact that no codes of rules will make any society any better than the bulk of the individuals that compose it." The behaviour

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.252.

of the mob in the play of that name is a perfect example of the latter part of his dictum.

But more important than temporal issues in the shaping of a creative writer's mind is what a man believes or disbelieves of the non-material world. One of the keys to Galsworthy's position here is his own statement "I am not a Churchman, nor even, I suppose properly speaking a Christian." He had as little use in life as he had in his plays for what he called "that d.... sectarian rot". For the Christian dogma he has no use; for the Christian ethic every sympathy. Explaining his own position to an unknown clergyman he says, "No two men are quite alike, and each man's religion is the fullest expression of himself; and that he has got to find for himself ... The elementals that we want now ... are those attributes of unity - justice, love, and courage."[1] He has little patience with anthropomorphic conceptions of deity, and sees little evidence, beyond that of wishful thinking, of a future life, but he is in no way a materialist. Although he maintains usually an objective attitude to his characters one senses rather less sympathy towards such characters as Mazer in Exiled and Hornblower in The Skin Game who represent the materialist world. Galsworthy himself records "Our minds do and always will emotionally speculate on the unknowable, on what lies behind Nature, the Mysticism and the Miraculous Adjustment conditioning all things." To this idea of adjustment, balance, harmony and beauty he returns again and again. It is the guiding principle of his mind. "To me individuality is a means, not an end - the means by which the impersonal Creative Instinct works towards, but

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.706.

never more than momentarily attains, harmony and perfection, because it works endlessly through that rise and fall, that ebb and flow, which are the very conditions of endlessness....In short, to the sort of mind I seek to interpret to you, God is the joy of making things for ever, good, bad, or indifferent, but good for choice." [1] His view of existence as a continual state of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, seems to have some affinity to the philosophy of Yeats. I do not wish to suggest that Galsworthy was a mystic; indeed the usually accepted type of mystical experience is completely alien to him. "God is within us", he writes, "within the trees, the birds, and intimate matter, within everything. And there is no God outside us." But depth of thought cannot be denied him, mysticism or no. Again and again he insists that finite humanity can only interpret its existence within the terms of that existence as we know it. This attitude is apparent, too, in his plays. His characters are often hypersensitive, Stephen in The Mob, Michael in A Bit o' Love, but they are hypersensitive to humanity, not to any extra-natural conception. Michael is indeed a clergyman, but the opening stage direction is oddly phrased - "Michael Strangway, a clerical collar round his throat ...." It would appear that the clerical collar and all it stands for are in some way alien to him. And indeed his thoughts, in his most bitter hour, are not for Church dogma, but for his wife and her lover, for the hell he has suffered in his own mind, for all the agony of human suffering. So it is with Galsworthy himself. Life is only measurable through human feeling. There is no compensating heaven.

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.749. To an unrecorded Correspondent.

A similar thread can be discerned in his theories of art. Art for him is not an absolute. Its intimate concern is life, one's own experiences; its purpose, so far as it has a purpose, to awaken the minds of others. There is no Art for Art's sake for him. "The real search for truth (at all events to those who follow the arts) consists," he thinks "in the searching of one's own spirit in contact with actual experience and feeling,and phenomena observed." [1.] Of The Silver Box, Justice and The Pigeon he writes that 'they had "their inception in observation of human nature." In 1920 he gives this advice to a would-be writer. "Unless a man has lived and felt and experienced and generally found out what life means,he has nothing to say that's worth hearing .... See the workaday world as it is before you give others your vision of it,or anything else." Particularly illuminating is that phrase in the first quotation,"the searching of one's spirit in contact with actual experience". The searching of one's own spirit is not in itself enough. There is an objective as well as subjective aspect - a contact with actual experience.

When a writer has this experience of life he has something to say - he has a value. In a letter to Winston Churchill in 1920 he writes "The use of the writer's temperament, if it's any use at all - which,I suppose,is open to doubt - lies in his being the feelers, nerves and eyes of a people - the first part of the animal, so to speak, that receives the shock of impressions." [2.] His choice of the word 'animal'

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters, p. 707. To a Correspondent Sept.12, 1912.

2. Marrot. Life and Letters, p. 684.

to describe humanity is probably no accident. Many times his depression and sorrow for the lack of sensitivity of mankind is evident. How many of his plays turn on this point! Writing to Shaw in 1919 - certainly a difficult year - he laments "Greed - avidity of sensation and of conquest - rules our roost, and who shall alter the human animal, save possibly the slow, the very slow ages!" In his moods of less complete despair, however, he recognises the value of art; "To me man is a creature slowly (and mainly by means of art) emerging from the animal into the human being." [1] It is clear that he sees the refining influence of art even though he realises the infinitesimal slowness of the process. Art then is not a platform, not a pulpit. It is a scattering broadcast of the spiritual ideas of a mind more sensitive than most.

"Commitment" is a term widely used in certain critical circles of to-day. Its meaning seems to vary from an out-and-out propagandist "line" to a firm but objective enthusiasm for whatever one believes in. Galsworthy would have rejected the former, but accepted the latter. His reply to an invitation to join an idealistic but apparently left-wing group of French writers is preserved among his correspondence. "The power of an author" he says, depends on "untrammelled creative power". There is no place for "direct propagandist impulse". The real creative writer is "naturally lonely ..... Opposition, originality, arrogance, if you will, are part of his make-up." Again and again, he denied, in his own plays, direct reforming aims. What was accomplished on the practical issues, as for instance after the production of Justice,

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters, p. 735.

was good - but it was not the main artistic motive. That is why the application of the term "social playwright" to Galsworthy is misleading for so often the narrowest meaning is associated with the word "social". "Social" indeed he is, in that his eyes are turned on this world, mainly on those people who live out their drab, sombre existences on this earth. Humanity is his subject. "Social" he is not, in his plays, in the narrower sense of one busied in "good works" for the betterment of his fellows. That indeed was part of his life, but not the moving impulse of his drama. There the influence is indirect, the process not one of deliberate didacticism, but the stirring of his hearers by contact with feelings they had not recognised before. It may seem that to insist on this dichotomy in the term "social" is carping, but unless it is taken in its widest sense the word only partially describes the dramatic aims of Galsworthy - these are perhaps best summed up in his own words to Dorothy Easton in 1913. "Well, all one can hope to do is to make the blood of one's audience flow a little faster, whether they leave the theatre for or against." It is a greater awareness, a deeper sensitivity he strives to promote, not merely a social issue.

Coming next to his own particular theories of drama, one can gather much from his lectures, ~~and~~ prefaces and letters before turning to the plays themselves to see the working out of these ideas. Both the title and ~~an opening~~ an early sentence of his Romanes Lecture (1931) gave insight into one of his most fundamental tenets. The title is "The Creation of Character in Literature;" ~~the opening sentence reads:~~ he asserts at the beginning that "The theme is chosen because its selector suspects, in common with not

a few other people of the older fashion, that vitality of character-creation is the key to such permanence as may attach to the biography, the play and the novel". He treats character-creation in drama and in fiction separately but obviously considers it the writer's most important task. The dramatist, he thinks, is not as free as the novelist. The difficulty of conveying unspoken thought, the exigences of time and space, all the physical limitations of the stage are a part of "obeying the rules of your medium". The stage, in fact, inclines the creative writer rather to the fashioning of types than of individuals. Nevertheless, throughout the lecture the emphasis is on the portrayal of character.

More illuminating still, since it refers solely to plays is Some Platitudes Concerning ~~the~~ Drama.[1] After a few general remarks on the nature and purpose of drama, Galsworthy propounds his ideas on the methods open to the serious dramatist. First, it is possible to set before the public a picture of the code by which the public lives; this is "most common, successful and popular." Secondly it is possible to set before the public a picture of the code by which the dramatist lives, particularly if this is contradictory to the usually accepted standards, so that the audience swallows the dramatist's beliefs "like powder in a spoonful of jam." Thirdly - and there is little doubt which is Galsworthy's own method - it is possible "to set before the public no cut-and-dried codes, but the phenomena of life and character, selected and combined, but not distorted, by the dramatist's outlook, set down without fear, favour or prejudice, leaving the public to draw such poor moral as nature may afford. This third method requires a

[1] Published in The Inn of Tranquillity (1912); written 1909.

certain detachment .... it requires a far view, together with patient industry, for no immediately practical result." [1] To the making of a good drama, he says, "there must be brought an almost passionate love of discipline, a white-heat of self-respect, a desire to make the truest, ~~the~~ fairest, best thing in one's power; and ~~to~~ that to ~~that~~ these must be added an eye that does not flinch." [2] How typical this sense of discipline is of Galsworthy! His abhorrence of anything which savoured of theatricality is summed up in William Archer's remark that "he would sooner die than drop his curtain on a particularly effective line." (William Archer. Playmaking: a manual of craftsmanship, 1913, p.250). The same scrupulous restraint and desire to make "the best thing" in his power prompted him to omit from Escape the episode[3] with the Fox-hunter, though Mrs. Galsworthy urged him to include it. Some Platitudes goes on to discuss in some detail plot, character and dialogue; again the essential Galsworthy is to be seen. "A good plot is that sure edifice which slowly rises out of the interplay of circumstance on temperament and temperament on circumstance, within the enclosing atmosphere of an idea .... A human being is the best plot there is." Again a little later on, "Take care of character; action and dialogue will take care of themselves!" (Some Platitudes, p.196). He is indeed particularly illuminating on the subject of dialogue. "Good dialogue again is character, marshalled so as continually to stimulate interest and excitement;" it is "clear, of fine texture, furthering with each thread the harmony and strength of a design to which all must be subordinated." [4]

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1. Some Platitudes Concerning ~~the~~ Drama, p.190; Inn of Tranquillity, 1912 edit.
2. Ibid. p.192;
3. This episode can be seen in The Winter Garden, a collection of four dramatic pieces assembled by Mrs. Galsworthy after her husband's death.
4. Some Platitudes Concerning ~~the~~ Drama, p.195.

Almost any passage picked at random from the plays will illustrate this; in fact some critics have censured him on this very point, that the dialogue is too clear - a mistaken view, I think. One other important ingredient besides plot, action, character and dialogue Galsworthy notes - flavour. "...Flavour is the spirit of the dramatist projected into his work in a state of volatility, so that no-one can exactly lay hands on it, here, there, or anywhere .... A man may have many moods, he has but one spirit; and this spirit he communicates in some subtle, unconscious way to all his work." [1] His own spirit of gentle courtesy is instinct in his plays, even when his mood is generous anger.

Lastly he considers the future of drama, showing here a tolerance which some of his detractors would do well to imitate. "It is not unfashionable to ~~put~~ pit one form of drama against another - holding up the naturalistic to the disadvantage of the epic; the epic to the belittlement of the fantastic; the fantastic to the detriment of the naturalistic. Little purpose is thus served. The essential meaning, truth, beauty, and irony of things may be revealed under all these forms." [2]

He himself sees two probable developments - "the broad and clear-cut channel of naturalism," and "a twisting and delicious stream ..., a poetic prose-drama." This drama "through its fantasy and symbolism" shall incarnate "all the deeper aspirations, yearnings, doubts, and mysterious stirrings of the human spirit ....," and shall accomplish this "with beauty and in the spirit of discovery." [3] He does not, however, favour the mixing of the two forms. "Let us have starlight, moonlight,

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1. Some Platitudes, p.197.
2. " " p.198.
3. " " pp. 199-201.

sunlight and the light of our own self-respects." At the end of the essay we read the date of writing - 1909. It is a salutary shock to see how early in his dramatic career Galsworthy, the allegedly "old-fashioned" and "unimaginative" foresaw two developments with a vision he is not usually credited with.

Of all his more formal dramatic pronouncements I feel the preface to the Manaton edition of his plays, published by Heinemann in 1923, is the most important - important because of its inherent quality, and because it embodies his dramatic credo. More than this, I detect in it - possibly mistakenly - a note of defence, as if Galsworthy is answering charges which have been levelled at him. By 1923, the date also of the publication of Ashley Dukes's The Youngest Drama which contained a somewhat derogatory criticism of Galsworthy, the latter's reputation was beginning to be assailed. The preface opens, I feel, on a defensive note:

"I suppose no dramatist ever satisfies himself - certainly not this dramatist; but he has lived, watched, and written too long to believe in the sanguine promise of some new and wonderful dramatic form which in a golden future shall supplant the sordid ~~and~~ or inadequate drama of the day. The drama of the future, like the drama of the present and the past, will be just that of those few creators who in their various ways have enough personality and grip to compel a hearing ...." An admirably sane and acute comment. He goes on equally acutely:

"Art, at all times, suffers from two human habits - the tendency to affix labels, and form, round any outstanding artist, schools of steady and often pitiful decrescendo, and the tendency to over-sophisticated talk whose

preoccupation is the boosting of some new fashion and the destruction of the last ..." [1] In very fact, "Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back."

He then takes up the point of his so-called "under-expression". "I create characters who have feelings which they cannot express ... This comes from the sort of subject and the range of characters which I temperamentally select; and still more from the severely naturalistic medium to which I am predisposed." This severely naturalistic medium which he has adopted requires "rigorous fidelity" for otherwise the dramatist using it "has handicapped himself without attaining the peculiar, quiet intensity of effect which is that technique's legitimate reward." [2] The superficial readers of his plays do, I think, often mistake that "quiet intensity" for colourlessness and under-expression.

Again, he implies that his plays are accused "of being concerned with types, classes, social movements, and problems rather than with human nature." This he counters: "To deal austerely and naturalistically with the life of one's day is to find the human being so involved in environment that he cannot be dissociated." Characters like Mrs. Jones, Antony, Dancy and so on "are part of the warp and woof of a complicated society, in which the individual is as much netted-in by encircling fates as ever were the creations of Greek dramatists." [3] His characters, however, are not, as some of his critics assert, always beaten. "Spiritual victory is not synonymous with being married and living happily ever afterwards,

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1. Manaton edition of Galsworthy's work vol.XVIII (Plays Vol.I) Preface page ix.
2. Ibid. Preface page xi
3. Ibid. " " xiii

nor with the defeat of the material forces in our paths." A character may be seen "spiritually emergent, if not materially triumphant." And here occurs the famous dictum on Man and Society, "that Society stands to the modern individual as the gods and other elemental forces stood to the individual Greek." His final word is that the playwright who is "strongly and pitifully impressed by the encircling pressure of modern environments" - and he, surely is such a one - "is not conscious, however, of any desire to solve those problems in his plays, or to effect direct reforms. His only ambition in drama, as in his other work, is to present truth as he sees it, and, gripping with it his readers or his audience, to produce in them a sort of mental and moral ferment, whereby vision may be enlarged, imagination livened and understanding promoted." What better aim could there be?

I have quoted at some length from this preface because I consider it important as a definition of Galsworthy's dramatic principles, and as an indication of the charges which were even at that time being made against him - charges of under-expression, typing of character, manipulation of event. And before considering the less formal utterances about drama to be found mainly in the letters, there is one other piece of work I consider particularly relevant at this point - that is, A Note on John Galsworthy by H.V.Marrot, privately printed in 1929. Marrot himself says [1] that Galsworthy supervised the preparation of the pamphlet and actually phrased parts of it; it can then speak of his dramatic works with absolute authority: "In the first place they are not "Problem Plays" .... "A situation takes shape in his mind, its dramatic possibilities

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1. Marrot. ~~Life and Letters.~~ A Note on John Galsworthy: preliminary note p. 6.

force themselves upon his imagination: and his treatment of that central situation is to him just an effort to light up its essential features and its secret places, and reveal it to spectators under a new aspect which has never presented itself to them ..... he is not concerned with results .... No: Life as it is lived is the stuff of drama, and of that stuff his dramas are made .... the only difference between him and his spectators is not that he has more capacity to feel sympathy, but that he has more imagination ... He is essentially a believer in the attitude: 'there it is, take it or leave it'."

When we pass from Galsworthy's formal writings on the subject of drama and dramatic principles we shall find again the same accents and the same emphases in his letters, conversations, discussions. Sometimes he speaks of plays in general, sometimes of his own work in particular. I have collected those passages and references which I consider most relevant.

Speaking of his own work, he many times makes the point that he does not deliberately plead causes. One extract must suffice: "In regard to my plays: It may perhaps be as well to bear in mind that I am not a reformer - only a painter of pictures, a maker of things - as sincerely as I know how - imagined out of what I have seen and felt. The sociological character of my plays arises from the fact that I do not divorce creation from life; that, living and moving, feeling and seeing amongst real life, I find myself moved now and then - not deliberately and consciously - to present to myself the types, and ideas, and juxtapositions of life that impinge on my consciousness, and clarify it all out in the form of a picture." [1]

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.329.

He goes on to say that the three plays, The Silver Box, The Pigeon and Justice "are not sermons deliberately written". On another occasion he says "My purpose in writing? I haven't any conscious purpose except to express myself, my feelings, my temperament, my vision of what life is. I don't address any particular audience and I don't care what lessons and morals people get out of my writings." It is the creative artist who speaks, not the social worker.

The first of the two foregoing quotations is also instructive from the more specifically technical aspect of his work, and is borne out by other remarks. He speaks of the process of dramatic selection going on in his mind - the material presenting itself in "the types, ideas and juxtapositions of life" which impinge on his consciousness, and "its clarification in the form of a picture". This visual element is evident in all his writing and several of his friends allude to the almost photographic quality of his mind. A discussion with the American author James Boyd bears out this characteristic as applied to his creative work.

"With plays", Galsworthy argued,"it is only a question of 'the fourth wall'; if you have a subject of sufficient dramatic interest, and visualize it powerfully enough, perfectly naturally, as if you were the fourth wall, you will be able to present it to others in the form of a good play". [1.]

Exactly the same idea is expressed when a German student wrote to him on the subject of Ibsen. Galsworthy replied: "My own method was the outcome of the trained habit (which I was already employing in my

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters, p.565.

novels) of naturalistic dialogue, guided, informed, and selected by a controlling idea, together with an intense visualisation of types and scenes. I just wrote down the result of these two, having always in my mind's eye not the stage, but the room or space where in real life the action would ~~take place~~ pass." [1].

In both these we see the same qualities - qualities which his novels and drama illustrate at every turn. First the detail of visualisation - the scene for instance in the Underwoods' dining-room, with a bright fire burning (in Strife) the vivid blue of the curtains in the dining room of Stephen More's home, the Boardroom in Old English, one could multiply the examples again and again. But over all is the "controlling idea"; the two must come together. It is not the unnecessary elaboration of a fountain with goldfish.

And lastly, before considering in detail the plays themselves, it is instructive to see something of Galsworthy's own ideas about them. As we know his plays were on the whole not 'popular' successes. He was acclaimed by the critics and the intelligent playgoers of his day rather than by the masses. He himself was well aware of this. Writing to Sir George Alexander in 1913 he says:

"I'm afraid there is no way out of it - West End theatres cannot apparently be kept open except by not providing such plays as Synge's or Yeats'...." (others follow) "... You were, as you say, so very kind as to ask me to write for your theatre. I have received such requests from other leading actor managers; but I cannot honestly believe that any play I have written would have been accepted on the

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters, p.714.

condition that I might cast it as I thought it should be cast (without extravagance) to get out the essence of the play. Actor managers, I take it, nearly all in management as lovers of the theatre, and believers in themselves - some of them are only magnetic and striking personalities rather than interpreters. Why should they put on plays in which the leading parts are cast as the author feels they should be cast? If I may take two instances, the plays Strife and Justice ..... I should not have the indelicacy to ask even you to put up these plays, taking an inferior role, or not playing at all. You are, of course, the attraction to half your public; and half the commercial value of the play. Whatever you may wish to do, you have always that fact before you. What I have always before me is the essence of my play. How to reconcile these two factors I have not yet discovered". [1.]

How indeed can they be reconciled - the coolly objective portrayal of such figures as Bill Cheshire (The Eldest Son) and the highly coloured romantic figure of Frobisher (The Walls of Jericho)? It is the new drama against the old, the minority against the majority.

Yet Galsworthy does not always rank himself among the 'new' dramatists. His letter to the young German student quoted earlier in this section concludes with:

"Please do not take me as typical of the modern school of dramatist. If you write to Granville-Barker or Masefield, you will receive totally different answers."

He refutes also the assumption that he belongs to the intellectual school of drama. Writing in 1915 he says: "You are down on the

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters, pp.711-2.

'intellectual' drama, and I suppose would put all my plays into that damned category. But why? Though they all use the negative method, they are all founded in the emotions of love, pity, and hatred; and the "ideas" for them would hardly fill a tea-cup, unless by "ideas" are meant the main lines of feeling, that hold all work together. They may be bad plays, but are they really 'intellectual'? [1].

From this brief survey of his personality and attitude to drama it is possible to see the main pattern of Galsworthy's work emerging. Most plainly of all one sees the strong humanitarian bias of his mind. It is fatally easy, now that many of the evils against which he fought have been remedied or partially remedied, to belittle his efforts - too easy to call his dramatic issues trivial and obvious. A deeper study will disprove this. Another thread which emerges is that of his belief in the harmony of the Universe. So strong is this that it leads Schalit to this conclusion: "Studying Galsworthy's novels and dramas thoroughly, we find that in almost every one harmony is disturbed and that only through catastrophe can it be restored ... Galsworthy cannot stand the distorted, the unnatural; his aim is balance." Art, imperceptibly working through its various media, is slowly bringing humanity to a greater sympathy with this principle of harmonious beauty. Humanity indeed perceives through its own imperfect faculties; the artist serves as the more delicate antennae. The dramatist's chief function is not so much to preach a cause as to rouse his audience to greater awareness and mental vitality - the actual direction of this vitality matters less than that it should be stirred one way or the

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters, p. 735.

other. But the process is slow and the plays of such a dramatist doomed to unpopularity. Undaunted he pursues his way. Let us follow.

b) An examination of Galsworthy's plays, firstly as regards themes.

Galsworthy came to the theatre a mature writer, and the opinion both of the critics and public bears out the fact that his work shows peaks, and sometimes depths, rather than a progressive development in the usually accepted sense. One may gain some idea of this by looking at the receptions accorded to the plays in the order in which they were produced.

His first play, The Silver Box (1906) was well-received by the Press, whereas his second, Joy, had few enthusiastic notices. Strife (1909) was well-received by critics and public, and The Eldest Son met with moderate enthusiasm in the theatre and a favourable Press. Justice, the peak of the early group, had a sensational first-night; the Pall-Mall Gazette records the gallery's chants 'We want Galsworthy'. The next play, The Fugitive, had a mixed reception, and The Pigeon was greeted with even less approval. The northern audience appears to have appreciated The Mob, produced in Manchester in March, 1914, though the Manchester Guardian did not care greatly for it. Galsworthy records of the next play, A Bit o' Love, that 'it went quite well', but it had the lowest sales of all his plays. His diary for Thursday, June 26, 1917, has this entry: "First production of The Foundations ..... A very good and lively and approving house," but it only ran for a week or so.

1920 saw his first commercial success, the production of The Skin Game, which immediately appealed to the public and the critics.

Of A Family Man there is little record, which suggests that it had a moderate reception. Loyalties, produced in 1922, was another great success, approved alike by audience and Press. The public saw little to praise in Windows, and the critics were at best lukewarm. Likewise the next play, The Forest, did not catch people's imaginations, and one critic went so far as to call it a bad play. Old English (1924) was accepted by the critics as a portrait, but not as a play. The Daily Telegraph however speaks of its 'splendid reception' by the public, influenced perhaps by the acting of McKinnel in the title-role. The Show was - understandably perhaps - not popular with the Press, but the diary reports that 'it seems to grip the audience.'

Then with Escape in 1926 came another great success. This play ran for a year, and moreover won the approval of many of the critics. The last two plays fall off considerably; both Exiled (July 1929) and The Roof were coldly received by all sections of the audience. With these two plays ends Galsworthy's dramatic career.

From this brief outline can be seen the trend of his work: the early period of success which includes The Silver Box and Strife: the more moderately received plays written mainly between 1913 and 1917; the peak of his commercial success with The Skin Game and Loyalties (1922). A period of cooler reception follows - The Forest, Old English and The Show. Then 1926 brings Escape, another 'hit', after which his dramatic power wanes. Thus it is wiser to abandon the idea of a line of development, and to look instead at the unity and integration of his work. Naturally this is more applicable to the substance of the plays than to technique; I shall, then, begin by

examining what he has to say, and come later to study some of the methods he used to present his material.

The more one studies his plays, the more one is struck by the fact of their complexity - a quality not usually associated with Galsworthy, and one which recalls his correspondence with St. John Ervine, about a criticism the latter had made of him in Some Impressions of My Elders. Galsworthy takes him to task for over-simplification. "In fact, you simplified me too terribly - I'm afraid I'm vastly more complex." Most people would probably endorse Mr. Ervine's view but I contend it is a somewhat mistaken one.

In much dramatic criticism the over-simplification occurs as a result of the constant reiteration of the words 'social reformer' and 'problem playwright'. These terms are in part justified - but only in part. As extracts from his letters have shown, Galsworthy did not regard himself as a propagandist or a poser of problems. His creative impulse is far more complex. Society and its attendant dilemmas form part of his thesis, but transcending this, forming as it were the apex of the triangle, is individual responsibility to, and for, this society. We are all - whether we be Falder or Stephen More - willy-nilly both judge and judged. The society of which we are part is also our own reflection, for as Galsworthy says in a letter, 'No codes of rules will make a society any better than the bulk of the individuals that compose it.' Each one of us must then bear his share of responsibility for our system.

Nor does Galsworthy entirely remove the responsibility for their actions from any of his characters. It may be impaired - impaired

by environment or social milieu - but in hardly any case is it completely denied. There are moments of free choice which have immutable consequences. Matt Denant experiences one of these when he decides to defend the prostitute, and what follows is inevitable. Often these consequences are shaped by the society of which we are part; that, I take it, is Galsworthy's meaning when in the preface to the Manaton edition of his plays he writes that he believes "Society stands to the modern individual as the Gods and other elemental forces stood to the individual Greek."

Emerging from this attitude to society is a not dissimilar theme - the much-discussed problem of heredity and environment. How much of what we do is the result of inborn character, and how much of the pressures exercised upon us by certain accepted codes of behaviour? Young John Barthwick in The Silver Box exemplifies this. Would he - could he - in other circumstances have been other than he is?

Indeed this intricate interweaving of personal and collective responsibility makes it impossible to label Galsworthy merely a social playwright. He does not preach prison reform or a re-assessment of the position of women. These are parts of a larger whole - the dilemma of man in the world he has made for his own protection; a world of sanctions and prohibitions apparently as irrevocable as the laws of Nature themselves.

A deeper study is then necessary to recognise the underlying truth of his work, a study which entails at the outset a forcible sundering of what is artistically inseparable. The multitude of tangled loyalties, of indissoluble tensions, has somehow to be analysed.

Only after this can one come to an appreciation of their unity. I propose then first to examine what might be described as Galsworthy's 'causes' - the qualities which have largely gained him the name of social dramatist - and thence to show how these form the base of the triangle, the apex of which is the individual being. Between apex and base is the subtly worked-out action and reaction of individual on society and vice-versa.

First then, the causes, which are visible in the assailing of accepted standards. The challenge to convention and facilely-followed patterns of conduct is one very striking element of his plays; for instance, he is particularly concerned with the whole question of marriage and the position of women, a theme which has comic treatment in A Family Man. John Builder is described in the opening stage direction in the following way: "His bearing has force and importance, as of a man accustomed to rising and ownerships, sure in his opinions, and not lacking in geniality when things go his way." Unfortunately things do not always go his way, especially within his own family. He is shown here as an over-bearing tyrant of conscientious rectitude, but not wholly unpleasant, who in the name of duty has subdued his wife to an apparent cipher and alienated both his daughters. He calls himself 'a plain Englishman', a title which in his eyes appears to be synonymous with the right to ride rough-shod over his women-folk. His views on marriage are simplicity itself - 'there's an eternal order in certain things, and marriage is one of them.' He is much aggrieved when he is involved in a great deal of unpleasantness just because he 'tried to exercise a little wholesome family authority,'

which included hitting one of his daughters with a cane. No wonder his daughters rebel and his wife very nearly leaves him for good! A contrast to his family life is that of his brother Ralph, who makes no attempt to dominate his family. There is however, for all its comedy, an underlying note of seriousness in the play, voiced most strongly by Builder's daughter Athene, who attributes her father's attitude, and that of men like him, to a sense of property "so deep they don't know they've got it." This of course is a constantly recurring theme in Galsworthy's work. The sense of property shows itself in the complete acceptance of a woman, with no allowance for her personality, interest or feeling - she is in fact a possession, a piece of furniture, useful and serviceable. It shows itself in the desire to dominate her, to subdue her every attempt at self-expression. John Builder may grumble at his wife's passivity but he would be the last really to want her different. His daughters' signs of spirit provoke him to intense anger. Are his children not his chattels? Anything else is unthinkable. It is precisely because at the end of the play he does begin to have some slight misgiving about his own role as the Almighty in his relations with his wife and daughters that the play does not end tragically. Almost imperceptibly his wife returns; 'mechanically' she adjusts the curtains; she pours out his usual glass of whisky. Builder sees her - and not at this point the expected outburst of rage. As she hands him the glass, he 'takes it from her, and squeezes her hand.' He 'makes an effort to speak, does not succeed, and sits drawing at his pipe.' A John Builder rendered speechless at all events hints reformation.

But the issue is less happy in The Fugitive, a play which embodies a similar idea. Here again is the loveless marriage of two completely incompatible characters - so incompatible that the heroine Clare in her own words cannot 'exchange a single real thought' with her husband, George Dedmond. The latter is completely self-absorbed; he hates above all things being made to look a fool. His eyes show his character; they are 'clear, small and blue-grey,' with little speculation in them. Unhappily married to Clare, 'one of those women all vibration', he asks why they cannot be happy. "I see no reason" she replies, "except that you are you,and I am I." He, as he says, has 'ordinary commonsense.' They are married. "The facts are that we are married- for better or worse - and certain things are expected of us." Here is the conventional view almost identical with that of John Builder; what can't be cured must be endured. Set against this is Clare's intense conviction that she cannot, and indeed ought not to, endure it. She cannot agree with her friend Mrs. Fullarton when the latter advises her to 'make terms, not tracks'. Her moral honesty is uncompromising; and over-whelmingly intense is her desire to escape from the humiliation of being the tool of a man she does not love. Thus after the initial conflict, when she has torn herself free, there is the added tragedy of her position. She herself sees this. 'I've no money, and I can't do anything for a living,except serve in a shop.' Indeed everyone warns her of the difficulties which lie ahead. The lawyer Twisden makes the position only too clear. Not only has she no money. She is a young and beautiful woman. No training, no money, and the doubtful blessing of beauty - little wonder

that she at first wondered if she should return to her 'owner', as she terms her husband. That indeed would have been the culminating degradation. George's utter vindictiveness in trying to ruin Malise can best be explained as the insensate rage of a property-owner bereft of a possession which he values mainly because it is his. Clare's final suicide is not a solution; it is not even a particularly heroic gesture. "I've been beaten all along the line" she says, "and I really don't care what happens to me." But it is inevitable. The hunt has brought down its quarry - convention, respectability, the old order ~~her~~ have hounded ~~its~~ their victim, a woman whose only crime was independence of mind. The Fugitive then embodies the idea of the hopeless position of a woman too sensitive to "make do", too much a thoroughbred not to jib at the rein, and yet not strong enough nor sufficiently trained to stand up to the rough-and-tumble of the outside world. It is a cruel dilemma which must have faced many women of that time.

Though it is in these two plays alone that the main theme is actually marriage and family life, it in some ways enters into several of the others, and is often linked with the problem of the unmarried mother and the prostitute. Galsworthy's views are remarkably consistent. The broken marriages are usually due either to incompatibility of temperament, or to the gradual extinction of the love of one or both partners. Money troubles, which according to modern statistics form the greatest single cause of broken marriages, play a comparatively small part. In several cases - even for instance in the case of Clare and George Dedmond, and of Michael and Beatrice Strangway - there

have been efforts to keep the marriage together. Ranged against the unfortunates who find themselves in this dilemma are the forces of convention, organised religion and English common sense. Marriage is an institution. The whole comedy of Hallmarked revolves round this same idea of marriage as the sine qua non of Society. All the dog-lovers in this play are loud in their praises of the unknown lady who so miraculously stopped their dogs fighting, but as the ghastly fact that there is a male in residence to whom she may not be married is borne in upon them, they get less and less eager to invite her to dinner or ask her to help in the parish. In fact when "Herself" appears ringless - having forgotten to put on her wedding ring after washing - their retreat in complete disorder is most diverting. Another play with a light handling of the idea is The Pigeon where organised religion - in the form of one Canon Bertley - attempts to reconcile an erring wife to her equally erring husband. A kind good-humoured man, this Canon Bertley, with about as much imagination as a stuffed elephant. "Husband and wife should be together," he says and that neatly disposes of any awkward questions. Unfortunately for his peace of mind husband and wife have different ideas and he has to admit to dignified defeat.

The reverse and tragic side of this coin is to be seen in A Bit o' Love. Here the broken marriage is a main, but not the only, thread of the plot. Michael Strangway, curate in a small village, has been deserted by his wife Beatrice. Ostensibly she is nursing her sick mother; in reality she is living with another man. She returns to Michael and beseeches him not to divorce her as it would ruin her lover's career. She begs him to let them live together as husband

and wife. After a struggle with himself, he agrees to do so, thereby of course completely defying Church dogma, though possibly upholding the spirit of Christ. The parish hears of his decision. Many of them merely despise him as a man too weak to claim what is his own - again the idea of property - but Mrs. Bradmere, the wife of the Rector, comes to reason with him. She is a rather forbidding lady, but not without a certain grim kindness. It is inevitable that her view should be that of the Church. "A son of the Church can't act as if for himself alone. The eyes of everyone are on him," she says; and later "I want you to do as the Church - as all Christian society would wish ..... if you can't take your wife back, surely you must divorce her. You can never help her to go on like this in secret sin." In other words you must ruin three lives because the Church Fathers have spoken.

In each play it is absolutely clear where Galsworthy's sympathies are. One of his characters - Dick in the play Joy - quotes an author of his acquaintance who says that "if marriage is a failure people ought to be perfectly free; it isn't everybody who believes that marriage is everything". This surely summarises Galsworthy's own feelings, and though it is easy now to say "how obvious", one must remember that at the time when he was writing his views were far from being acceptable to most people, and even now the problem is not resolved.

Another aspect of this question of marriage and family life is the plight of the woman who is tied to a physically cruel husband and who

is yet too poor to support herself and her children. This Galsworthy exposes most clearly - together with the attitude of the conventionally respectable towards her - in The Silver Box and Justice. In the former play, Mrs. Jones is deprived by the Barthwicks of the means to earn even a pittance and is shamefacedly ignored by John Barthwick as she mutely implores his help. In Justice the genuinely well-meaning Cokeson obviously feels that it is morally wrong for Falder to have anything to do with Ruth Honeywill, the innocent wife of a worthless husband, while James How actually makes it a condition of Falder's re-employment that he gives up his association with her. Both Cokeson and How are in their different ways kind and humane, yet neither has the imagination to see beyond their noses - and it is clear that Galsworthy intended his audience to realise this.

Allied to this theme is that of the unmarried mother and the prostitute. Faith in Windows is the most obvious example of the former. There are, of course, two ways of looking at everything. Mr. March's kind-hearted desire to hold out "a helping hand" is neatly parried by Mrs. March's question, "to girls who smother their babies?" This retort, if acid, is at least factually true. But Faith's own account of how it happened is emotionally more satisfactory - that she hardly knew what she was doing. Nor sadly enough can one doubt the accuracy of her father's rhetorical question, "What can a working girl do with a baby born under the rose, as they call it? Wonderful the difference money makes when it comes to being outside the Law." Everything is against the girl in Faith's position. Were it not for the desperate need for money, none of Galsworthy's prostitutes would have found themselves within

the power of the Law in their particular way. In a letter to the secretary of the London Female Guardian Society he says, "They are, with few exceptions, compelled to the life of vice by the appetites of men, they are kept in a life of vice by the appetites of men," an opinion which is very like that of the prostitute in Escape. Chloe Hornblower shows the horror of the life she was forced to lead: "'Tisn't fun that sort of life, I can tell you ..... You've never been right down in the mud ~~as I have been.~~ You can't understand what I've been through." The German girl in Defeat, driven to the streets by her nationality and embittered almost beyond hope, has yet humanity enough left to weep for the defeat of her father-land. In spite of Mrs. March's pronouncement that no girl gets 'outed' unless she is pre-disposed that way, one's sympathies are stirred for those women who have been forced to a life of vice by need, and yet are not wholly hardened by it.

Thus Galsworthy makes his own opinions clear, but by such means that the individuality of his characters is not threatened. They are not merely mouth-pieces for his ideas. Obviously he is wholeheartedly against a blind unthinking acceptance of marriage as an institution, but he demonstrates his position in a dramatic situation, not on a platform. There are some happy marriages in his plays; Mr. and Mrs. Beeston in The Roof are typical examples. This does not, however, alter the fact that many couples are bound in what Clare Dedmond describes as "the reconciliation of two animals, one of them unwilling." Never once is the organised, orthodox view of the unbreakable sanctity of marriage uttered by a character who makes any claim on our sympathy - this

~~latter~~ goes rather to the unfortunate victims of an inflexible code and to those who champion them, to those indeed whom convention regards as morally damned.

Although this question of the conventional attitude to marriage claims much of Galsworthy's attention it does not preclude him from recognising other forms of spiritual blindness, and again respectability and religion receive much condemnation. The 'safe' view is seldom the humane one. Mr. and Mrs. Barthwick are eminently respectable, but their dealings with the unfortunate Jones family show no charity. Joe Pillin, in Old English, is much alarmed by the dubious nature of the transaction he is forced into by Old Heythorp, but his objections are based on fear rather than outraged morality. Here Galsworthy is also condemning the standard of "what other people will think," as he does on many occasions. Religion, representing the established doctrine of the Church of England, is no less a target for his criticism. Adela Heythorp is obviously religious in the narrowest sense of the term - puritanical in her attitude to pleasure, grudging and ungenerous towards her father; in fact, a character who completely repels sympathy. Mrs. Bradmere, in A Bit o' Love, while less unpleasant than Adela, can see no path but that of orthodoxy. She has no idea of Michael's tortured mind, and his fundamental charity seems to her either weakness or sickness. In fact, her final baffled comment is "You must see a doctor." Her creed allows her to see no further.

Perhaps even more insidious in the gradual accretion of insensitivity is 'reasonableness', the clear common-sense of people like Mrs. March in Windows. Everything that she says in cold soberness is perfectly

correct. It is not what she has but what she lacks that is at fault - charity. The same is true of the professional philanthropists in The Pigeon. Here are two opposed attitudes. Professor Calway is the theorist who believes in 'treatment' for the drunkards, prostitutes and vagrants of this world. Sir Thomas Hoxton believes in "helping the deserving" and damning the undeserving. Their success is in proportion to their humanity - neither makes the slightest impression on the characters he sets out to reform. The only one who helps the three down-and-outs is the artist Wellwyn whose conduct is completely unorthodox and unpremeditated. He has no 'line' to sell, no experiment to conclude. He simply has human kindness.

Two other plays which show Galsworthy's hatred of the unthinkingly accepted standards of behaviour are The Mob and The Show. In the latter it is the morbid curiosity of the public, and its satisfaction by the Press which is so acutely revealed. The unconscious irony of the editor of the Evening Sun's comment is devastating, "Someone's got to stand up for the man in the street. Why shouldn't he know? News - so long as it's true ..... Ordinary discretion and decency, of course." And in the meantime ordinary discretion and decency, coupled with the curiosity of the man in the street, have tortured six people and irreparably blackened the memory of a seventh. Galsworthy leaves us in little doubt about his opinion of 'ordinary decency'. In The Mob the theme is somewhat similar; a crowd of ordinary citizens literally cause the death of a man whose only crime has been his loyalty to his own conscience. Stephen More is ostracised first by his own family who can see one faith and one alone - 'My country right or wrong'. The mob which brings

about his death is an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual aridity which causes his relations to desert him. The angry crowd kill his body; his family would have killed his soul. We shut our ears against the voice which cries in the wilderness lest it disturb our minds with questions we prefer not to hear.

Leaving now the attack Galsworthy makes on the conventional standards of everyday behaviour, one comes to his dramatic examination of justice and the processes of the Law. He has two plays - The Silver Box and Justice - which are completely concerned with this issue, while several others bear on it, including Escape, Windows and Loyalties. It is perhaps most useful to treat Justice and The Silver Box in more detail than the others, as it is here that Galsworthy expresses his ideas most forcibly.

The very title of the first of these implies its own question, and indeed many are the ideas it formulates as to the real nature of justice. One might quote the Judge in the trial scene, when he is sentencing Falder, who in his opinion has been rightly found guilty. He enumerates the factors which he must take into account - the grave nature of Falder's offence; his willingness to allow the blame to rest on someone else; the necessity of deterring others from following his example. He bears in mind certain extenuating circumstances - Falder's youth, his state of mind at the time. But it is perfectly obvious that he has no intention of allowing these any great weight. "The Law" he says, "is what it is - a ~~mighty~~ majestic edifice, sheltering ~~us all~~ all of us, each stone of which rests on another. I am

concerned only with its administration." And logically he is right. Falder has committed the forgery with which he was charged; no amount of argument can alter this. One would however feel happier about the judge's contention if one did not suspect that his verdict was influenced not only by the actual crime but by Falder's relationship with Ruth Honeywill which he patently regards as immoral. The Law is an instrument apparently impersonal but administered by the hands of fallible and prejudiced humanity. One can, therefore, as Galsworthy intends, look with more sympathy on the utterances of Frome, Falder's counsel, which are unashamedly emotional. "Gentlemen, men like the prisoner are destroyed daily under our law for want of that human insight, which sees them as they are, patients, and not criminals ..... Gentlemen, Justice is a machine that, when someone has once given it the starting push, rolls on of itself." It is an almost startlingly modern idea.

This inexorable process is terrifying in Justice as in many other plays. Possibly James How is right when he says of Falder that "if a man is going to do this sort of thing he'll do it, pressure or no pressure." It is the voice of common-sense. But whatever caused Falder to alter the cheque and the counterfoil, the moment Scotland Yard is called in there is no hope of his being saved from the consequences of what may well have been a momentary moral aberration. From the time when the detectives take him away, and Cokeson is left to voice his dismay - "Here! here! What are we doing? - till Walter's despairing comment near the end of the play - "That finishes him.

It'll go on for ever now" - the chariot-wheels of justice move on.

They have moved on, first to the punishment which was meted out to Falder, to the prison where he begins his sentence. The governor here is a decent man with a real sense of responsibility to the prisoners. The doctor too is not unsympathetic. He admits that solitary confinement is doing Falder no good - but that is equally true of a dozen other cases. So there is nothing for it but for Falder to stick it as best he can.

The wheels move on; he comes out of prison. "They" get him a "place" certainly, but the other clerks find out about his past. So he is driven by one crime to another and forges references in order to get another job. Inevitably justice catches up with him. It will indeed go on for ever - except that death breaks through the chains with which "they" would fetter him. The play makes Galsworthy's attitude clear; should it need any further emphasis his correspondence with Gilbert Murray about the end will provide this. Granville-Barker wanted the play to conclude merely with a re-arrest, but Galsworthy was convinced that Falder's death was essential, in order that the spectator should exclaim in relief "Thank God! he's dead - and beyond that awful process going on for ever; out of the hands of men." [1] The actual justice of the situation is not in question. It is the utter futility and inhumanity which is revealed.

Similarly in The Silver Box nothing can alter the fact that Jones did take the cigarette box - though the Barthwicks withdrew the charge - and did assault the detective. Again much of what the magistrate says is true. He tells Jones "If you choose to get drunk and break the

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.252.

law afterwards. you must take the consequences," no-one would deny that, but it is the kind of truth which lies by reason of what it omits to say rather than by what it says. "Call this justice?" shouts Jones as he leaves the dock. "What about 'im? 'E got drunk! 'E took the purse, but it's 'is money got 'im off - Justice ! " English law is probably more uncorrupt than most, and certainly bribery is almost unknown, but nevertheless the power of money is self-evident. It has in the first place given Mr. Barthwick a position of respect in the community. Why should his son steal ? It also of course enables them to pay a good solicitor to handle the case; nor is money the only thing which is on the side of the Barthwicks; there is class too. The magistrate's attitude towards Jones's drunkenness is very different from his attitude towards Jack's. Jones was in liquor when he committed his crime, Jack had had 'too much champagne' ..... quite another matter. When Jones asserts that his word is as good as Jack Barthwick's he might as well save his breath; there is the whole weight of money, common back-ground and tradition against him.

Although I do not agree with those critics who say that Galsworthy ignores personal responsibility, it is of course obvious that in both the previous plays, as well as in most others impinging on the same theme, he does to some extent plead extenuating circumstances. This is true also of the play Escape; again Matt Denant does strike a detective, who unfortunately falls in such a way that he is fatally injured. The Old Gentleman whom Matt encounters in the fourth episode of the play points out, quite rightly, that "the detective was undoubtedly doing his duty." "And yet," he goes on, "Quite a question .....

Rather dangerous giving the police a discretion in morals. The police are very like ourselves; and - er - most of us haven't got discretion, and the rest haven't got morals." And as one's sympathy is with Matt throughout one must agree with the Old Gentleman that indeed it is quite a question, and that circumstances have an awkward habit of forcing themselves upon our notice when we might prefer to ignore them. Faith Bly in Windows is another case in point. What Galsworthy surely intends us to feel is not that justice is a travesty - for none of the characters is condemned for an offence he has not committed - but that firstly Justice is not, as it might appear, an absolute force working of its own volition, but is in the hands of men who, though perhaps honest and upright, are nonetheless fallible; and secondly that those who come within its power are not uniform and cannot be treated by a rigid set of rules. Weakness of character is not something to be condemned by the more fortunate strong-minded, but something to be helped, and where possible strengthened. There is such a thing as diminished responsibility, and this is not merely a question of sanity or insanity. There are states of emotional distress which strain the moral sense equally. Justice needs more humanity.

One aspect of the Law of which Galsworthy strongly disapproves is its treatment of suicide as a criminal offence. The most obvious example of this is Mrs. Megan in The Pigeon. She is an outcast from society. No-one wants her; in fact various characters have expressed, in their own particular ways, the opinion that for people like her death is the only solution - yet when she tries to take this way out, she is saved by the zealous constable and taken to the police-station

to be charged with attempted suicide. Not that the constable is unkind, but he "can't neglect his duty." But Wellwyn's comment seems to be that of every thinking man. "Of all the d --- d topsy-turvy - ! Not a soul in the world wants her alive, and now she's to be prosecuted for trying to be where everyone wishes her!" But as the representative of the Law in another play says - to Mabel Dancy, who tells him when he comes to arrest her husband that he is breaking her heart - "We're not allowed to take that into consideration, The Law's the Law." Should we not ask ourselves "By whose consent is it the Law?" It is by our consent. It is not enough to shift responsibility to the nebulous "They" of officialdom. We must ourselves assess the position. If we come out of the theatre even one iota more aware of what goes on in our name the play will not have been in vain.

Another of the recurrent ideas in the plays is the whole subject of class. It is highly complicated - as indeed it is in life - and is closely interwoven with the other issues, as again it is in life. One might indeed go so far as to call it one of the staples of society both as Galsworthy knew it and as we know it to-day. The divisions are not the same, and are less arbitrary, but the classless society is almost a mirage. In Galsworthy's dramatic world there are several different ways in which class makes its appearance. There, its implications are social, political, material, racial, and even individual. As an example of the latter one may take Matt Denant, whose response to the situations in which he finds himself is largely conditioned, one feels, by his caste and upbringing. Thus class is sometimes a subsidiary issue, sometimes a main one; it may be treated

seriously or with humour; it may result in tragedy or comedy, though the latter is more infrequent.

Let us take first the comic treatment of the subject in the play The Foundations, the story of Lemmy, the somewhat left-wing plumber who leaves an unidentified object in the cellars of Lord William Dromondy's home. After being taken for a bomb, it is later found to be in some undisclosed way connected with sanitation, but not before its discovery in the cellars has brought about some amusing situations, many of which embody class distinction in some form or other. One may note the position of various characters in this connection. Lord William is sincerely anxious to do something about the poverty of the working classes. When the play opens we hear that a meeting of the League for the Abolition of Sweated Labour is to take place at his house that evening. Lord William is obviously kind-hearted and well-meaning. "The whole thing's too jolly awful" he says. But his views are simple in the extreme. His speech-making is the despair of everyone, even his small daughter. One feels that the attitude of the whole League is rather that of conscientious 'doers of good'. The servants hold differing views. James, the young footman, has no objection to a revolution providing his master is untouched. Poulder, the old butler, is a die-hard of the die-hards. In his opinion, "Unless you're anxious to come down, you must not put the lower classes up." Mrs. Lemmy, the plumber's mother, who has had a very hard life, is not particularly class-conscious, and certainly not embittered. Lemmy himself is the most incendiary of them all and even he is a most amiable revolutionary. He wants to see the blood flow, but he does not

particularly mind whose blood it is. Apart from this his views are laudably practical. His own chances in a revolution are plain. "I may go up - I cawn't come dahn." He does however voice the most weighty sentiments of the play when he asks Lord William where his wealth comes from, and answers his own question. "It all comes from uvver people's 'ard unpleasant lybour." This is surely intended to be taken seriously. However, the more comic note is heard again at the end, when he is addressing an ugly crowd which has collected outside. After a pleasant "Dahn wiv the country, dahn wiv every~~thing~~ fing. Begin again from the foundytions," he goes on to assure them that Lord William is harmless, and should be kept as a museum-piece. He then announces veal and ham and port at the back for those who want it, calls for cheers for Lord William, and dismisses the crowd, which departs presumably perfectly happy and satisfied. Lemmy makes his exit after a rather cryptic remark to the assembled company, "Next time yer build an 'ouse, don't forget, it's the foundytions as bears the wyte." There is no very clear picture of class warfare in this play, which is complicated by the fact that Lord William is himself thoroughly sound if of somewhat limited intelligence. We are given a picture of sweated labour certainly, of poverty, unemployment and the like, but the edges are, so to speak, blurred by the comic spirit which gives the play a certain warmth and geniality. Indeed the point which emerges most clearly is one upon which aristocrat and plumber agree - that, of all qualities, kindness is the most necessary. One must admit, however, that the problem here is over-simplified, and that a government of well-meaning Sir Williams is hardly likely to rebuild society.

However the purely comic presentation is unusual. Galsworthy is most often in deadly earnest about the clashes of interest which arise from different backgrounds. Many of these clashes have their root in material circumstances, in the poverty and unemployment which Big Business so often imposed on the working classes in his day. The power of money and the truth of "Unto him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath" must have been ever present in his mind. Strife, The Pigeon, The Silver Box, Windows, Justice, Exiled, - all these show its applicability plainly, and other plays touch on the issue. How right is the tramp, in Exiled, who has been put in prison for sleeping out because he had no money when he says, "What is it to them where I sleep, s'long as I'm not doing 'arm? You can bring out your five bob and say you're having a fresh-air cure, or some such classy bunk, and they lick your boots and put you in the papers. But a poor beggar that ain't got the price of a room on 'im - ." Equally ~~true~~ right is Ferrand, in The Pigeon, when he tells Wellwyn "Ah! Monsieur, I am a loafer, waster, - what you like - for all that, poverty is my only crime. If I were rich, should I not be simply veree original, 'ighly respected, with soul above commerce, travelling to see the world ? And that young girl, would she not be 'that charming ladee,' 'veree chic, you know!' And the old Tims - good old-fashioned gentleman - drinking his liquor well. Eh! bien! - what are we now? Dark beasts, despised by all. That is life, Monsieur." Possessing nothing they are not even allowed the freedom to dispose of their own bodies. Nor is the power of money only negative; it has a very positive value as has been shown in

The Silver Box. Again and again Galsworthy hammers the point home. The power of money and the power of class are often in some way connected. It is not always that the one is synonymous with the other. Some of the wealth has been newly acquired, as in the case of the Hornblowers. On the other hand the Hillcrists are well-placed financially and socially, nor are there any signs of straitened circumstances in the home of the Winsors (Loyalties). It seems that in many cases money breeds an insensitivity to the needs of others. Galsworthy condemns neither money nor class in themselves. It is the abuse which excites his anger.

The Barthwicks in The Silver Box may be taken as typical examples. They have money; they have a most satisfactory social standing. No doubt they are pillars of every institution they support, but the complete hollowness of their moral position is devastatingly revealed in such innocent-sounding fragments of dialogue as the following:
Mrs. Barthwick: "..... These Socialists and Labour men are an absolutely selfish set of people. They have no sense of patriotism, like the upper-classes, they simply want what we've got. "
Mr. Barthwick: "Want what we've got! (He stares into space). My dear, what are you talking about? (With a contortion) I'm no alarmist."
Mrs. Barthwick: "Cream? Quite uneducated men."
One imagines the breakfast table, the couple sitting there in complacent comfort drinking their coffee and cream. No wonder the poor simply want what the Barthwicks have got. Admittedly the latter are disturbed by the sound of Mrs. Jones's child crying outside the house, but they do nothing to help her out of the trouble into which they have been instrumental in thrusting her. They are almost completely impervious

to the sufferings of those less materially fortunate than themselves.

The economic and social structure of society being what it was in Galsworthy's time, these unfortunates are usually found among the lower classes. Sir Charles Denbury in Exiled certainly is an example of how hard times came also to the aristocrats, as indeed they did to the Hillcrists in The Skin Game. But in general those who felt the strain of poverty most were the labourers, miners and such people of humble origin. The references to unemployment are too many to count. In the days of a Welfare State it is difficult to remember that within living memory the fear of "going on the dole" haunted many households. The plays in which this is most clearly shown are Exiled and Strife. Here again the acquisition of wealth seems to have bred as, in the Barthwicks, insensitivity to the needs of others. The opening words of Strife immediately sound this note:

> Wilder: I say, this fire 's the devil! Can I have a screen, Tench?

It only needs Underwood's ironic comment "We are not accustomed to complaints of too much fire down here just now" to indicate both the penury of the strikers and the attitude of the directors to them. Throughout the opening scene, and indeed the whole play, we are kept aware of the material differences between the two classes. On the one hand there is Wilder, who must get away in order to take his wife to Spain because she cannot stand the climate; on the other there is Roberts, leader of the strikers, whose wife dies of cold and hunger. Class here means money, and money means life itself.

Another play which demonstrates this division of class from class

by reason of wealth or poverty is Exiled. Here Sir John Mazer has worked himself out of his original class but has no sympathy with the miners whom he proposes to throw out of work by closing certain mines. The issue here is more complex. Class cuts across class - in fact Sir Charles Denbury, the representative of the aristocracy, pleads for the miners. It is rather that the interest of big business is set against that of the individual worker whose living is threatened by the economics necessary to the former. The crux of the whole matter is to be found in a very short piece of dialogue between Sir John, Sir Charles and two of the miners.

Goffer: ..... Ye take our livin' from us an' when we open our mouths ye answer 'Bosh'. I tell ye this; if ye think ye've got the right these days to scrap 'undreds of men, women, and children, without so mooch as 'by yor leave', ye make a big mistake.

Sir John: Now we're getting down to it. I say I have the right. It's the only way to put industry on its legs again.

Tulley: What's tha say to that, Sir Charles?

Sir Charles: It's the question we're all faced with these days, Tulley, and it's devilish hard to answer.

Sir John is economically speaking right. The winding-up of unproductive units is the first concern of any expanding industry. Ethically the matter is much more difficult and one may justifiably feel that Galsworthy did not answer the problem he set. In fact he may not have intended to answer it, since it was at that time an almost

insuperable problem and with automation it seems that it may rear its head again.

Before going on to the most important aspect of class consciousness which Galsworthy analyses - its actual social impact - it is possible here to take a somewhat wider view of his attitude to capitalism and big business as seen in other plays besides Strife and Exiled, where he deals mainly with its effects on definite sections of the community. In Old English we see something of its workings in connection with individuals, and in The Forest the more remote issues of capitalist policy are examined, as for instance the intricacies of share manipulation, and high finance.

Apart from these revelations of big business methods, the two plays have little in common. One's sympathies in Old English are all with Heythorp who juggles quite cheerfully with the finances of his company, and manages to provide for the family of his illegitimate son by means of a highly dubious transaction. He is in fact at the beginning of the play persuading his Company to buy certain ships, and is himself not merely accepting, but positively insisting on, a personal commission in the form of a settlement on his grandchildren. The audience has several glimpses of far from happy creditors and directors. As a matter of logic one should feel for them, particularly as dramatic irony sees to it that the onlookers in this case know far more details of the deal than the participants. But no moral sense on earth will keep us from hoping that Ventnor will be defeated and that Heythorp will bring off his gamble even though it is strictly illegal. It is

difficult to feel any sense of responsibility towards the shareholders who may be losing money because of Heythorp's financial manipulations; the personality of the latter completely takes our sympathy.

On the other hand The Forest gives a really appalling picture of high finance. Like the jungle forests, which give the play its name, the issues are dark and mysterious, but the machinations of Adrian Bastaple stand out starkly. Wrap it up as one may in terms of company-promoting and so on, his business comes down to making money by whatever means he can. If hundreds of small investors are ruined, if men live through experiences which torture their minds, if indeed they lose their very lives it means nothing to him. As one of the other characters says, with him it is "self for self and the devil take the hindermost". It is indeed "forest law". Of all Galsworthy's plays which have in any way to do with the world of Capital this gives the most terrifying picture. Such utter ruthlessness - the sending of men to almost certain death and the completely unscrupulous falsification of the outcome of the expedition - is horrifying. The very fact that it is unique and that Adrian Bastaple has no counterpart in any of the other plays suggests however that Galsworthy was not condemning capitalism but rather giving a highly individualised picture of a certain type of personality with whom money has become an obsession.

It is paradoxically almost a relief to turn from pictures of malignant evil to what provides some of the most fundamental and most human of Galsworthy's work, that is, the intangible and impassable

barriers between classes from the social point of view. Here, at all events, though the results are often tragic, the motives are not usually wholly evil; they are complex with the complexity of ordinary human nature, and all the more convincing because of this. While many of the plays have social conditions as a subsidiary issue, there are two which must surely spring to mind instantly, since they both have some form of class conflict as their main theme. These two, of course, (The Eldest Son and The Skin Game) though similar in theme, are radically different in one respect; - in the former the conflict is really within one family who might have been expected to hold similar opinions, and in the latter it is between two families who are likely to represent opposing standards of value. Part of the interest lies in the grouping and re-grouping of the characters within this pattern.

The Eldest Son opens with a picture of an established social order, undisturbed by any discordant element. The aristocratic family, the Cheshires, is in undisputed possession of its family inheritance. The only inharmonious note is that one of the village girls is pregnant by Dunning, one of Sir William's under-keepers. The attitude of various members of the family has significant bearing on the later action of the play. Sir William is insistent that they should marry, although Dunning is stubbornly against this. His daughters hold differing views as do his sons and son-in-law. Lady Cheshire is the most interesting and enlightened. While sympathising with the girl who is bitter and determined to marry the man at all costs, the older woman does not really favour the marriage as she feels that with such

a beginning it is doomed to failure. "If they marry like that," she says, "they are sure to be miserable" - a sane and humane opinion.

With practically no warning the Cheshires find themselves facing the same problem; Lady Cheshire's maid, Freda, is expecting a child, the father of which is Bill, the eldest son. This is a catastrophe.

They appear always to have treated their servants well, with firmness certainly but with kindness and consideration. They have however a high sense of duty to their own class. Here is Sir William on the subject when talking to Bill:

"The more I see of the times, the more I'm convinced that everybody who is anybody has got to buckle to, and save the landmarks left. Unless we're true to our caste, and prepared to work for it, the landed classes are going to go under to this infernal democratic spirit in the air." It is far from the creed of the 'idle rich'; the conception of working for one's community is inherent in it. But it is a class attitude, and placed in their predicament the Cheshires are for the most part true to their class. At heart they are all against him, and both his father and mother try desperately to dissuade him from marrying Freda. Sir William's arguments have no complexity. The marriage is just unthinkable. The strength of his emotion is heart-rending, and moreover one is struck by the sheer truth of it as he speaks to his wife:

"You and I were brought up, and we've brought the children up, with certain beliefs, and wants, and habits. A man's past - his traditions - he can't get rid of them. They're - they're himself ..... It shan't go on."

One can realise the pent-up force of his feelings in that last short sentence and the whole philosophy of his existence in his awareness of a man's roots and traditions. Nowadays our young folk would laugh at the "old buffer" but his words might well be heeded. Lady Cheshire too is against the marriage but whereas Sir William says straight out, "My family goes back to the thirteenth century," and one knows that his objection is an out-and-out class objection, with Lady Cheshire the position is rather more complicated. Her first re-action is astonished horror. She does not believe that Bill is in love with Freda and that he is really prepared to marry her.

> "It's all your life - and your father's - and - all of us. I want to understand - I must understand. Have you realised what an awful thing this would be for us all? It is quite impossible that it should go on."

So far indeed one might accuse her merely of social snobbery, but she goes on in her argument to say :

> "All such marriages end in wretchedness. You haven't a taste or a tradition in common. You don't know what marriage is. Day after day, year after year. It's no use being sentimental - for people brought up as we are, to have different manners is worse than to have different souls ..... Marriage is hard enough when people are of the same class ..... It's not fair to her. It <u>can</u> only end in her misery."

It is also true and yet how much is rationalisation? She does not yet however realise Freda's position. When she thinks there is

merely an engagement to be broken she will argue with Freda, but when she knows the girl is pregnant her own sense of right will not let her go further. The accepted considerations of class are no match for decency and fairness, qualities which paradoxically enough probably owe something of their origin to her very class.

It is left for Freda's father, Sir William's head keeper, to cut this knot of tangled loyalties. Studdenham is the representative, more than his daughter, of the yeoman-servant in society. He accepts his place in the hierarchy of the country without either undue pride or cavilling resentment. He has dignity and strength of will, with no hint of servility. The revelation of Freda's position is as bitter to him as it has been to Sir William. "Men have been shot for less" he says and he emerges from the interview every bit as well as the Cheshires. It is his own self-respect and sense of what is fitting which makes him scorn the "duty" marriage which Bill offers.

> "Don't be afraid, Sir William! We want none of you! She'll not force herself where she's not welcome. She may ha' slipped her good name, but she'll keep her proper pride. I'll have no charity marriage in my family."

The barriers may have been forged by class distinction, but human behaviour has its roots in character rather than in arbitrary conditions determined by birth.

The same, however, is not quite so true of The Skin Game. There is here a link between conduct and social standing, though it is, I think, a mistake to regard the play simply as an enquiry into the different ways of behaviour in different classes of society. The

conflict here, at all events as it affects the older generation, is caused by the opposing standards of value held on the one hand by Hillcrist, an impoverished land-owner, and on the other by Hornblower, the wealthy self-made business man. When these two confront one another a clash is inevitable. As Hillcrist puts it, "We are in different worlds" and Hornblower in turn reminds him " ..... ye've not had occasion to understand men like me." Hillcrist's world is the world where master and servant are bound together by ties of mutual responsibility. When Hornblower taxes him with idleness he replies with justifiable anger, "When you do the drudgery of your works as thoroughly as I do that of my estate -" Hornblower's world on the other hand is naturally that of "every one for himself." Such a trivial consideration as the tenancy of a cottage can mean nothing to him if it stands in the way of his business. "My works supply thousands of people" he says, and a cottage is not going to interfere with that. The two are poles apart.

The situation, however, is not quite so clear-cut as that. To see it neatly and tidily divided in that way would be a gross over-simplification which Galsworthy rightly avoids. Jill, Hillcrist's daughter, and Rolf, Hornblower's younger son, both feel at the beginning of the struggle that their family view-points need not be irreconcilable. It is tragic irony that as the struggle goes on they inevitably find themselves aligned against one another, unable to bring about any resolution. Nor are they the only characters whose behaviour prevents a clear-cut distinction between classes. Mrs. Hillcrist is in some respects the epitome of aristocracy yet she uses in her fight with

Hornblower a weapon which it is an understatement to describe as 'dirty', and the method she employs to persuade her husband to allow her to use it is sheer hypocrisy, as he himself half-acknowledges when he says " ..... and don't let's have any ~~more~~ humbug ~~nonsense~~ about its being morally necessary. We do it to save our skins." It is true that they have touched pitch ... and been defiled, but the play is the more forceful for this. Galsworthy is too keen an observer of human nature to divide the sheep from the goats, the aristocrats from the newly-rich.

In much the same way he comes to the problem of racial difficulties. While acknowledging there are fundamental differences between races, he yet manages to show that a simple division according to colour and creed misrepresents the inherent complexity of these problems. In primitive conditions, such as those in the African scenes of The Forest, the differences are easily apparent. The Arab girl Amina who is devoted to Herrick, a member of the expedition, is guided entirely by her emotions. She adores Herrick; she hates Strood, the leader. Her conduct hinges on those two facts. She is incapable of understanding Herrick's loyalty to Strood whom she would kill without the slightest hesitation - does in fact kill at the end. She is unreliable, treacherous, utterly devoted and afraid of nothing where Herrick's safety is concerned. Indeed we echo Herrick's "Who'd ever understand how their minds work?" In such circumstances as these, "East is east and west is west".

In different circumstances, however, the distinction is not so evident. Hundreds of years of civilisation, with its attendant prohibitions and sanctions, go to produce the situation which we find

in Loyalties. Here Jew is against Gentile - the Jew who is on the fringe of Gentile society, not quite "in" but not definitely at the beginning an outsider, a most delicate situation. He makes an accusation against an Englishman - an accusation which at first seems a wild shot, but which gradually and relentlessly is proved only too tragically accurate. One watches fascinated the shifting loyalties, now here, now there, now to race, now to principle. One alternately loathes and likes De Levis. What indeed is truth? Which cause demands the highest loyalty? As with all other questions Galsworthy forces us to ask ourselves there is no convenient ready-made answer.

Indeed the countless motives, sometimes deliberate, more often only half-understood or even sub-conscious, which prompt human behaviour, form too intricate a pattern to be neatly categorised and docketted - and of this Galsworthy was aware. I have forcibly sundered the different threads in order to see the material from which his plays are made. It would be absurd, however, to imagine that one can put one's finger on a certain play and say, "Ah, Galsworthy on the Position of Women or Galsworthy on Prison Reform." That would make him a pamphleteer, not a dramatist. The issues are inextricably woven together - family loyalty, class loyalty; hardship in marriage, hardship before the law; environment, heredity. It is impossible to draw hard and fast distinctions; for instance, perhaps it would be comforting to be able to rule a tidy vertical line between the classes, and to accept one standard of values for each. But what then of George and Clare Dedmond? It is not class which separates them.

It might also be less wearying to be as sure of one's feelings about justice as the judge who sentences Falder, but how can we be? In the end we find ourselves confronted with the problem of personality - which makes each particular character act in the way he does - and no social doctrine will explain this. It is on that point, it seems to me, that all attempts to assess Galsworthy merely as a social reformer or problem playwright founder. They do not sufficiently take into account the apex of his dramatic triangle - the individual man entangled in this web of conflicting circumstances, often emotionally and spiritually mutilated by forces beyond his control, or occasionally rising triumphant above them.

He said himself, as has been quoted before, that to him "Society stands to the modern individual as the gods and other elemental forces stood to the individual Greek." And indeed as the previous examination has shown, the forces of Society, such as convention, religion, law, class, are incessantly beating down upon each one of us, but these are not in themselves sufficient to explain human tragedy. Environment counts for a great deal but so does heredity. James How may be quite right when in Justice he says of Falder : " ..... if a man is going to do this sort of thing. he'll do it, pressure or no pressure," though one must also agree with Bill Cheshire when he says we don't make ourselves. Whence comes that strength of mind which drives Roberts, in Strife to fight to the bitter end when his work mates who share his environment, give in? Again and again there are references, both by the characters themselves and by implication, to the fact that we do not choose what we are. Moreover beyond the circumstances of the society in which

we find ourselves there is another factor - our inherent character.

This is what Matt Denant discovers in Escape, a play episodic in structure, showing an escaped convict's encounters with different groups of people. Matt, whose chivalrous action has tragically resulted in a prison-sentence, makes his escape from Dartmoor, and before his recapture is helped or hindered by various chance meetings. The play could be taken, as indeed it was by many people, as an attempt to show the typical reactions of different social classes to such an encounter. This was not Galsworthy's intention. He specifically stated that "each character reacts to Matt Denant according to the individual circumstances of his or her life." [1] Not only this, of course, but we have Matt's own reactions to his situation. When the knowledge of his identity harms no-one he looks after his own interests, but when, as in the case of the two ladies Miss Grace and Miss Dora, he realises that his presence will cause dissension and distress, he quietly removes himself and risks capture. His final surrender, when he has taken sanctuary in the church and the Vicar is aware of the fact that he is hiding in the vestry, is the vindication of his character. Rather than let the Parson make the decision whether or not to lie to the farmer, who asks him on his honour "as a Christian gentleman" if he has seen the convict, Matt steps forward and gives himself up. As he comes to his own conclusion "It's one's decent self one can't escape," we know that he is right. It is a triumph of the individual over his circumstances.

The absolute reverse is seen in the case of Hillcrist in The Skin Game.

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[1] Marrot. Life and Letters. p.800.

One knows here that whether Chloe lives or dies, Hillcrist will live the rest of his life with the knowledge that he has betrayed his better self and those ideals that 'gentility' symbolises to him. We cannot excuse ourselves by saying "Other people do it." In the end it is our own conscience which is our harshest judge. Even Mr. Barthwick, whose conscience is by no means active, gives a sign that his mind is uneasy as with a "shame-faced gesture of refusal" towards Mrs. Jones he hurries out of Court. Studdenham, though he solves the immediate problem in The Eldest Son, could not remove, even if he would, Bill's share of moral responsibility.

I return then to my earlier position, that to say that Galsworthy attempts to remove moral responsibility is utter nonsense. He does in many cases admit extenuating circumstances, and postulates a kind of diminished responsibility, but that is no more than enlightened opinion is coming to do now. One does not expect a man with a weak heart to do hard physical work. Have we the right to expect a man with a weak character to do work which will expose him to temptation and then blame him if he succumbs? It is a thorny problem and one not wholly answered in the plays. But another aspect of it is clearly demonstrated - that those who have never been exposed to temptation or who have never felt any inclination to yield to it are hardly in a position to judge those who have. Only someone who has never been in difficult circumstances would dare to assert, as Mrs. Barthwick does, "It's just as easy to speak the truth as not. I've always found it easy enough." One judges Mrs. Hillcrist, whose strength of mind might have prevented her from descending to the depths she did, more severely than Falder,

whose character is indicated in an early stage direction - "he is a pale, good-looking young man with quick rather scared eyes." "To him that hath shall be given" is often true of material, but not of moral questions. From those whom heredity has favoured greater resistance is expected. Rather then does Galsworthy suggest a standard of values different from that often accepted. We are not indeed asked to condone theft, forgery, sexual laxity and the rest; we are asked to weigh in our minds and hearts whether there are not different degrees of responsibility, and furthermore - of greater importance - whether there are not other, more deadly sins. Is it not easier to forgive Faith Bly for killing her unwanted child than George Dedmond for what amounts to his murder of Clare through his vindictiveness? Yet society imprisons Faith and will doubtless tell George that he is well rid of Clare. Gossip, complacency, hardness of heart, the truth that lies by half truths, the cold-blooded joy of pursuit, self for self and the devil take the hindermost, insensitivity - seven new deadly sins, not one of them punishable by law, but capable of causing utter devastation.

Thus we are by our toleration of hypocrisy, smugness, spiritual blindness and all their attendant evils, responsible for our society, which in its turn exacts our obedience both by law and by custom. Those who fall foul of it are those who, for one reason or another, do not conform - either those who dare to be different or equally those who from character or circumstance cannot herd with the rest. At one extreme there is society; at the other an individual. Then comes the inevitable strain towards a point of balance, for each is bound to the other. The resolution is inevitable. As M. Schalit says, "in all

the serious plays the balance is restored only by catastrophe." Moreover it is not merely catastrophe affecting a particular character; one feels that society itself is impoverished. With the exception of perhaps The Mob, there is hardly any suggestion in any of the plays that the more fortunate members of the community have been really changed by what has happened in their midst. Take for example Justice. It might be argued that for Walter How, Falder's death means more than the extinction of one not particularly worth-while person, but Walter is not typical. Wister's comment is the epitome of the average. "He must have been mad to think he could give me the slip like that. And what was it - just a few months!" After Clare Dedmond's death in The Fugitive the onlookers seem for a moment awed by her death, but it won't last. The hunt will be on another day. In fact one feels that each successive sacrifice hardens the protective covering of insensitivity with which we clothe ourselves. It is a grim conclusion, but, I think, irrefutable. To quote Galsworthy's own words again, he sees man as "a creature slowly (and mainly by means of art) emerging from the animal into the human-being." And each victory for intolerance, hypocrisy and the like retards the process.

Technique.

Passing from the themes of Galsworthy's plays one comes to his manner of presenting them. Admittedly it is an artificial separation to divorce subject-matter and technique, particularly in his case. In a discussion with the American author James Boyd, Galsworthy asserted

that he considered young writers paid too much attention to technique. He himself "just visualized the scenes in a play, his people talking, the way they sit, their gestures, their faces, as much in his novels as he did in his plays." And this quotation embodies yet another difficulty. The scenes in the play, the people talking, the way they sit and so on, are bound in such a close unity that any examination of situation, character, and setting becomes arbitrary. Indeed, if I may quote M. Dupont's admirable dictum: "We hardly ever ask ourselves, where the dramas of Galsworthy are concerned, whether the situations are served by the characters, or, on the contrary, have been imagined for the purpose of setting them in the most revealing light: the two are so closely bound together, just as the plot is with the theme and philosophy with feeling." [1.]

Nevertheless it is evident from Galsworthy's own writing that he did consider character-creation of paramount importance. I have already quoted the opening of his Romanes lecture in which he affirms his belief that the lasting value of any literary creation, be it novel or drama, lies in the vitality of its characterisation. We may also remember his assertion about The Silver Box, Justice and The Pigeon - namely that they certainly embody ideas, but that they had their inception in "observation of human nature." And in this connection one may profitably adapt to his drama a statement he made concerning The Man of Property. "My strength ... lies in writing to a polemical strain through character." It is then not inappropriate to look in some detail at his methods in

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1. Dupont V. John Galsworthy the dramatic artist.(1942) p70.

this respect.

At the outset one must acknowledge that by the subjective self-analytical standards of the mid-century his characterisation is in the main external and objective. But having made that acknowledgment one may ask whether that is the only standard by which one is to judge. The undoubted emotional satisfaction most of us receive from the introspective self-questionings of Hamlet does not preclude us from enjoying the more objective grandeur of Oedipus. The one has the shadowed beauty of an English sky; the other the sculptured clarity of a Mediterranean landscape. Why claim for either superiority? Not that I would rank Galsworthy with Shakespeare or Sophocles, but to suggest, as is sometimes the case, that any type of character which is not imagined along the lines of a psychological case-history is therefore negligible displays a sad intellectual intolerance. There is no one royal road which leads to success, to the exclusion of all others. There is a type of drama, indeed, in which the physical situation has comparatively little importance, and the revealing of emotional states of mind takes precedence - one might here instance The Wild Duck, where until the final catastrophe the events themselves play a minor part. Obviously the minute probing of personality and the reaction of one character to another provides the dominant interest. But plays such as those of Galsworthy have incident and people so closely bound together that to preserve the necessary balance neither must be developed at the expense of the other. Again M. Dupont exactly seizes the issue; "Their author [i.e. Galsworthy] never presents(except perhaps in The Pigeon) a complete character; nothing appears in a drama of his,

beyond whatever impulses and interests really belong to the drama through affinity with theme, subject and plot ..... Here is artificiality indeed, but artificiality is the rule ~~of~~ in the theatre; and it is the part of the playwright to make his spectators forget about it, to 'take them in', and to foster illusion so that they become convinced that what they are watching is the truthful portrait of human nature." [1] How right M. Dupont is to insist on the artificiality of the theatre! It is not a slice of life; it is, like all art, life selected, edited, interpreted. It is life more highly-lighted or more subtly shaded than reality, so that we see in the theatre what we perhaps imagine we see - but only imagine - in everyday circumstances. And here again M. Dupont seizes the exact point in relation to Galsworthy. "Within the narrow field allotted to the display of ~~his~~ their personalities, his characters do not give us the impression of being cramped or incompletely drawn. Variations on the key-note always occur, cases of conscience take place, widely different mental attitudes are disclosed, which create the necessary illusion of complexity." [2] "The necessary illusion of complexity" - how admirable a phrase! The delicate balance of incident and character cannot allow an over-subtlety in characterisation. Indeed examining the plays by constant reading and re-reading, one finds that the complexity of character is illusory - in no derogatory sense - rather than actual, but constant reading is not the medium of the theatre. Admittedly the greatest drama lends itself to repeated reading and repeated discovery; in fact part of its greatness comes from this quality of inexhaustibility. Even in such plays the purely theatrical element has its part, since the

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1. Dupont. John Galsworthy, the dramatic artist, p.78.
2. Dupont. John Galsworthy the dramatic artist. p.79.

author has chosen presentation on the stage as his medium. And though Galsworthy is not among the greatest dramatists, I find his characters have the convincing vitality which produces that "necessary illusion of complexity." Critics question the profundity of his characterisation. If by profundity they mean the process of turning a personality inside out until no thought remains unrevealed, his portraits are not profound. They are visualised as one sees people's minds in one's own experience, two-dimensionally rather than three-dimensionally. That is, I am sure, what M. Dupont implies when he talks of the "narrow field allotted to display of his personalities" - that is, a deliberate limitation imposed by the convention within which he set himself to write. A Bill Cheshire revealed with all the intensity of a George Dillon would be as incongruous as an athlete in ballet-shoes.

One minor, but practical, detail which makes intense probing of the characters inappropriate is the very fact of the size of the casts of most of the plays. Excluding The Little Dream, the smallest number of actors is to be found in Windows, which has nine in the cast. The usual total is nearer twenty, and some have even more. Since Galsworthy is far too much of a craftsman merely to fill his stage for the sake of filling it, he must have some reason for preferring a large cast. Patently it must help him to convey the effect which he desires, the effect partly of the multiplicity of life. It may seem a far-fetched analogy to instance for comparison's sake O'Casey's plays of the Dublin tenements, but in Juno and the Paycock, The Plough and the Stars and so on, one is constantly aware of life going on around the characters, as one is in The Silver Box, A Bit o' Love, and many others. On the

other hand, a play with a relatively small cast such as Look Back in Anger seems cut off from the outside world - the prototype perhaps of a certain kind of existence, but isolated, not interlocked with the comings and goings of everyday life. It is again surely that one cannot form judgments which apply inflexibly to every play; a different aim implies a different technique - and the same author may use many different methods, suiting form to material.

The varying groupings of characters in Galsworthy's plays reveal something of his intentions. Sometimes as in Old English, The Mob and A Bit o' Love, one character is outstanding, though only in the first of these can that character be said to be an actor-manager's part, in the sense that he completely dwarfs the others. But in all three of them our interest is focussed mainly on the central character, and the rest, by reason often of conflict or contrast, direct our eyes to him. In other plays the pattern is different; pair is set against pair; group confronts group; characters recede in dramatic distance almost in concentric arcs of importance. It is sometimes argued that Galsworthy's patterns are almost too neat, too symmetrical, and indeed it is tempting sometimes to speak in terms of choreography. Balance of characters is however a well-recognised stage device. What better example can be cited than King Lear? It is the abuse not the use which annoys - the obtrusion of an over-stylised effect. I do not think Galsworthy is often guilty of this. The arrangement of his characters is a means to an end, not an end in itself.

In those plays in which the characters are set out in what I have

termed concentric arcs of dramatic importance, it is profitable both to note the general effect of this pattern, and to glance at some of the players who are almost outside the dramatic periphery, for it is in them that we can observe Galsworthy's eye for detail. Take for example A Family Man. Here there is an outermost fringe of characters who have very small parts - the servants, the Mayor and the councillors. Then the circle narrows; attention becomes directed to the family of John Builder - his wife and daughters - and thence to Builder himself. He is the most outstanding figure, yet so surrounded by his family and members of the public that we cannot think of him in isolation. We can only see him as he sees himself - an integral part of the life which goes on around him - and because of this his downfall seems, while well-deserved and up to a point amusing, nevertheless pathetic. Without this the play might have degenerated into a farce, and the grouping of the characters in this way is a great help.

As an example of Galsworthy's eye for detail even in his most minor characters one might well take Topping the butler in the same play. His first speech is one of those decisive little strokes which give him individuality without obtrusiveness. Maud Builder has just written an urgent note to her sister Athene. It is imperative that it should reach the latter rapidly and without her father's knowledge. She rings for Topping and gives him his instructions. He immediately comprehends the situation. "If I should fall into their hands, Miss, shall I eat the dispatch?" One is hardly surprised that he develops violent tooth-ache and the desire to visit his dentist on the day of a big horse-race. He is, in spite of the fact that he has little dramatic importance, a

character in his own right. One is reminded of a Breughel landscape, with the details of the country-side and its people etched in clearly but not distracting one's attention from the main figures. The ploughman continues his work while Icarus falls from the skies.

Coming to the "middle distance" of the character-pattern, one finds numerous examples of people who have definite dramatic significance as well as some individuality of their own. Dawker, Hillcrist's agent in The Skin Game is a case in point. He is instrumental in bringing about the tragic catastrophe, and this might be termed his actual dramatic function. But more than this, he is a figure not merely of paste-board; he has a personality of his own. We see him in contact with different people - with his employer Hillcrist, with Mrs. Hillcrist, with Hornblower whom he hates, with Chloe who is more or less his equal - and we note his varying reactions. We also see him in situations which provoke different emotions - situations where he has the upper hand, or where he is less successful. He takes his place in the perspective of grouping. Joe Pillin, in Old English, is another such character. He again has a definite dramatic function. It is through him that the fateful settlement is made on the Larne children. Beyond that of course his wavering personality provides the exact foil for the audacious, gambling old die-hard Heythorp. Joe Pillin will never die of a surfeit of life. His caution heightens our admiration for Heythorp's daring. Sometimes these minor characters seem almost to act as a chorus, commenting objectively on the action, receiving the confidences of the main characters, informing the audience of facts or

conveying to it a climate of opinion, keeping that detached wisdom that the actual participants cannot have. Mr. Bly in Windows and Miss Beech in Joy have this function. It is true that the former actually takes part in the action of the play by introducing his daughter Faith to the March household, but after this he stands outside the events, and his role is mainly confined to that of philosopher. Miss Beech could, as far as the action of the play is concerned, be removed from Joy without damage to the plot, but her main function is that of a detached commentator, drawing the attention of the audience to the theme Galsworthy wished to emphasise. Thus the minor characters play their different parts in the drama, and all in some way contribute their share to the revelation of the main personality and of the main issue.

These main issues may be developed, and main characters revealed, by means of group clashes of interest. The most arresting example of this is the play Strife, where the strikers confront the directors, each section having its main and minor characters. M. Dupont points out here the exact symmetry saying that "from the moment the strikers' delegates appear on the stage, the absolute counterpart of the capitalist group, our interest wavers between the highly emotional plot and the significance of its several components." I cannot entirely agree here. While obviously Galsworthy did intend the grouping to have a special significance, I contend that the main interest of the play is in the clash between the two sections as it is personified in their two leaders, Anthony and Roberts, and that the emotions of the audience are so caught up in the conflict between these two vigorous personalities that they do not stop to count minutely the numbers on each side, or note the parallel

characterisation, but are aware of it only as an impression throwing up into relief a struggle which is paradoxically enough almost a personal one. That seems to me Galsworthy's intention, rather than an exactly balanced symmetry. Another play where the character-grouping is not so neat, but where the contrast of group interests is apparent is The Forest. Here the two groups - those who promote the African expedition and those who take part in it - do not actually meet. Only at the end of the play does one survivor confront Adrian Bastaple, prime mover of the whole business. Nevertheless throughout the African scenes one is conscious of the gulf between the two parties - the safe comfortable existence of the financiers and the desperate, trouble-racked lives of those who are carrying out their plans. In the last act, the duality of interest becomes almost intolerable, and is all the more poignant because of the contrast in character between the two groups. Strood is by no means perfect, but his faults are not comparable to those of Bastaple, who is evil personified. The issue is intensified by the ranging of one set of interests and one standard of values against another.

Another method Galsworthy uses is to set his characters in pairs. An early play, Joy, and a late play, The Roof, may serve as examples. In Joy the different couples belong to different age-groups - the elderly Colonel and Mrs. Hope, Mrs. Gwyn and Maurice Lever in middle life, and Joy and Dick the young, almost adolescent couple. Each pair seems to represent a different view-point; and moreover each person in that pair shows a different facet of the view-point. Colonel and Mrs. Hope are the couple who have grown old together, happy with one another, grumbling at one another in the contented way of married security -

yet they do not regard Mrs. Gwyn in the same light. Within the unity of their love is the diversity of two separate personalities. Joy and Dick are on the threshold of adult life - Joy torn by emotions she cannot understand, and desperately unhappy. Dick has the greater wisdom and tolerance of a young man who has seen something of the world. And between the two couples stand Molly Gwyn and Maurice Lever. Mrs. Gwyn can neither look forward to the Hopes, nor back to the painful pleasure of young love. She wants to seize the present and what happiness it offers. The pattern of character-grouping is here more artificial than in some of Galsworthy's plays, but it does serve to bring out both the pathos of Molly's position and the difficulty of Joy's. We have become so accustomed now to regarding the child as the greatest sufferer in a broken marriage that Galsworthy's revelation of Joy's feelings may seem trite and unemphatic, but when the play was produced in 1907 it was not so usual to think in these terms. One may recall the child in The Walls of Jericho - certainly he is younger, but he is used merely as an off-stage instrument for a melodramatic reconciliation.

In the late play The Roof also one cannot fail to notice the "pairs" of characters - not in one sense dissimilar ~~from~~ to those in Joy. We have the elderly arguing couple, Mr. and Mrs. Beeton, who in spite of their bickerings are obviously very fond of one another. There are the two who are running away together, very much in love but not without some of the heart-searchings which are the accompaniment of such a position. Mr. and Mrs. Lennox are somewhat different from any of the characters in Joy. They are a couple in mid-life with two young daughters,

but there is the added complication of Mr. Lennox's serious illness. To off-set the rather arbitrary division into pairs there is the group consisting of the party of men who have gravitated together, and two people thrown casually together - Gustave the waiter, and the nurse. These two ~~latter~~ provide the stable background against which the couples move, and thus prevent the play from becoming too intolerably episodic. But one must acknowledge that here, too, Galsworthy's handling of the character pattern is more obvious and therefore less happy than in most of his plays.

Before leaving this study of Galsworthy's characterisation a more detailed examination of his methods must be made, as these are in part responsible for the fluctuations in his reputation which indicate something of the changing patterns of thought of the time. They may be best illustrated by reference to a selection of the central figures of the plays, but before doing this I wish to return briefly to the question of the recurrent "types" in his drama.

Much has been written about this aspect, a great deal of which I do not agree with. It is true that a character may be found in one play who reminds one of a character in another play. For instance John Anthony in Strife has many affinities with Sylvanus Heythorp in Old English, but they are by no means doubles. And when we consider that Galsworthy wrote over twenty plays, with often as many as twenty characters in each, it is hardly surprising that we find similarities. Another point which might be considered is the exact meaning of the word "type", which is used very loosely, denoting sometimes the special characteristics attributed by custom to a certain category of personality,

and sometimes merely to indicate the attitude of the speaker towards an individual, as in the phrase "a poor type". We are told we are all unique; theoretically this may be true but since we have no means of testing its truth it must remain an abstract speculation. That there appear to be certain elements of which character is compounded seems at least equally true. To modern sophistication the mediaeval idea of humours may appear childish but it groped towards a solution which we still have not found - the mystery of human personality. This problem is not made any the easier by the fact that we see most people as types; we can really only judge their actions and weigh their values by empirical standards gained from our knowledge of how similar people act in similar circumstances. Unless we are endowed with hyper-sensitivity, almost unlimited time, and plenty of money, the vast majority of us can hardly hope to see most of our fellows as anything but types. Is a dramatist then to be censured if he applies something of the same criterion to his own work?

The test surely is two-fold. First, are these characters, while general, yet sufficiently individualised that,in addition to being recognisably types,they still have power to surprise by action which one would normally regard as contradictory? In fact, are they humanly inconsistent? Secondly, is the part they play in the drama unobtrusive enough for them not to be required to stand as individuals? A hero who is a type and no more is not likely to be satisfactory by any standards, either those of to-day or of fifty years ago.

On the first of these two counts, are Galsworthy's "types" merely

pasteboard figures who annoy us by their flatness? One point which I personally have found worth noting in this respect is the difficulty I had when I came actually to examine his characters. "Oh yes," one thinks, "young idealist boy, old buffer, business man, aristocrat ..... all will fit neatly into their categories." But they have an awkward habit of popping out of their places or just not fitting into the niche one has prepared for them, or appearing in several different places. For instance, John Barthwick Senior might be taken as typical of a certain kind of business man. He is pompous, smug, complacent, impatient of the faults and habits of the son he has presumably allowed to be brought up in the lap of indulgence. He is desperately anxious to avoid notoriety, yet he does not run absolutely true to type. He is uneasy about the charge brought against Jones, partly, it is true, because it might "get into the papers", partly also because he is not convinced of his son's position - but, partly, too, I think because his conscience will not let him blind himself to what he is doing to the unfortunate Joneses. That he should turn away from Mrs. Jones as she mutely implores his help at the end of the play makes an effective curtain in that we see the innocent sufferer completely rejected by a society against ~~whom~~ which she has done nothing. The irony is certainly hammered home. But I believe that by this rejection and moreover by his "shame-faced gesture of refusal" Barthwick is all the more an individual. Would it not have been "typical" to make him ignore her altogether? By showing she is a reproach to his conscience, Galsworthy gives Barthwick the flavour of authenticity. While thinking of <u>The Silver Box</u> in this respect one might also remember that Mrs. Jones

herself is not the stock "char".

Now far then is it possible to push this idea of recurrent types? Certainly figures who have the same manners and the same code of behaviour do appear, though they are capable of reacting to their differing circumstances convincingly and in ways which surprise us. We may take first the group which might be described as "gentlemen of the services", mainly retired army officers. It is perfectly natural that men who have been subjected all their lives to a certain kind of discipline and have been influenced by a certain tradition, should share many qualities in common - whether the Army bred these qualities, or whether these qualities made them choose the Army is an interesting but irrelevant point. Even within the same play - Loyalties for instance - men with apparently the same background react differently. General Canynge, though personally on Dancy's side, and willing to believe him, yet has the honesty to admit there is evidence against his friend, and the integrity to see that truth matters more than personal loyalties. Colford on the other hand takes a more adolescent view - devoted, emotional, hardly ethical, and quite impractical, as the following fragment of dialogue shows:

"Colford. What? (With emotion) If it were my own brother, I couldn't feel it more. But - damn it! What right had that fellow to chuck up the case - without letting him know, too. I came down with Dancy this morning, and he knew nothing about it.

Twisden. (Coldly) That was unfortunately unavoidable.

Colford. Guilty or not, you ought to have stuck to him - It's not playing the game."

Canynge, while willing to help Dancy out of the dilemma, realises that there is such a thing as professional etiquette. Here are two men who might have been expected by reason of their calling to adopt something of the same attitude - but they refuse to act according to type.

Two other retired Army men, Colonel Hope in Joy, and Colonel Roland in The Show, might possibly illustrate the "old buffer" category, a little reminiscent of the father in William Plomer's satirical poem Father and Son, 1939. The two plays are so different that it is impossible to compare them, though the Colonels have something in common. They both have a certain reserve, both seem bewildered by the younger generation, both obviously set themselves a standard of honest, decent behaviour and expect the same of others, both have a simplicity and dignity which gains our sympathy. The same is not true of General Sir John Julian in The Mob. One can hardly plead much individuality for him. He admittedly seems typical of the mentality which argues blindly "My Country right or wrong," and while one may object as strongly to the opposite attitude of "My country always wrong," there is no doubt that the General's views make him a caricature, a serious Colonel Blimp. I am sure Galsworthy fully intended him to be an opposing foil to Stephen More, but I feel the emphasis is too heavy.

Another group that critics would have us label is that of the idealists. Stephen More, Michael Strangway, Wellwyn and possibly Hillcrist - these perhaps qualify for inclusion in that category. What exactly is an idealist? If he is a man who has no worldly common-sense, Wellwyn might be termed an idealist. If he is a man whose

standard of integrity is higher than that of those around him, then Hillcrest is one. If he is a man whose behaviour is so altruistic and high-principled that most people dismiss him as mad or bad, then More and Strangways are idealists. In fact all these characters have this in common, that their conduct is misunderstood or misrepresented by most of their fellows simply because it is more noble and full of real charity than is usual. But surely in other respects they are individuals. More, high-principled though he is, sees clearly enough where his ideals lead; his head is not so high among the clouds that he does not know where his feet are going. He can be weary, tempted, torn in mind, an individual not a type. Wellwyn is of them all the most deserving of the label, but Galsworthy himself regarded The Pigeon as "satire", "nightmare", "decoration" a fact which does not suggest that we should look too deeply into characterisation.

One could go on multiplying the types which Galsworthy's male characters are accused of falling into - the men of the world, the aristocrats with a strong sense of background and tradition, the professional people, particularly solicitors, the young boys falling in love for the first time, the "cads" - as if each betrayed himself by some kind of intellectual signature tune, as on a lower music-hall plane the stage Irishman identifies himself by his opening "Begorrah". My contention is that certainly Galsworthy uses the fundamental characteristics which we are accustomed to seeing in those around us, rather than those which only a few realise are present. His characters are then more readily recognisable than, for instance, those of Arthur Miller or

Tennessee Williams, but are not to be condemned for this reason.

Although the character grouping and the examination of the so-called types could be prolonged almost into a study in themselves - for instance one could spend fascinating hours in transforming The Pigeon into a ballet - there are other aspects to be discussed, mainly those concerning characters who play too important a part to be dismissed as types. I shall deal briefly with these in general, and then go on to a more detailed examination of two central figures, with the double object of revealing the character and the method of characterisation.

In many of the plays it is difficult to pick out the central figure, to which the label "hero" can be firmly attached. Rather is it as in The Skin Game a matter of varying accents and emphasis between several characters, with some slight shift towards one particular person near the end, as the play works to its climax. This enables the audience to appreciate the unity of the issue as it affects the various individuals without attention being directed to one character to the exclusion of others.

Of these individuals who, metaphorically and often literally, occupy the main acting area, it is only truthful to say that Galsworthy draws his male characters with greater sureness of touch than his female. M. Dupont thinks that the latter can really be classified in three groups - the "flappers", the "youngish wives by preference beautiful and endowed with irresistible sex-appeal" and "middle-aged wives" who are "definitely bossy, tyrannical, even ill-natured and malignant." Personally I think the generalisation is somewhat broad and needs considerable qualifying, but there is admittedly a great deal of truth in it.

The young adolescent girls who have relatively important parts have certainly some of the qualities one associates with flappers. Jill Hillcrist, for example, has besides her actual physical appearance - she is an upstanding 19-year-old girl "with clubbed hair round a pretty, manly face" - a direct outspoken-ness and confidence, which is redolent of the nineteen twenties. Dot Cheshire has much in common with her. Phyllis Larne might stand as an example of the youth of an earlier period; she has the unshadowed assurance of a generation which has not known major warfare - the action of Old English is set in 1905. She is known rather by her effect on others, notably her grandfather and Bob Pillin, than by her own actions, but she is, as the former puts it, "fresh as April". Everything she does has gaiety and charm. Joy, in the play of that name, is the nearest Galsworthy comes to a psychological study of an adolescent. She is not a particularly appealing girl - but adolescence is not a particularly appealing stage of development. She seems moody, ego-centric, demanding in her affections, yet for all that we cannot dislike her. Galsworthy shows the suffering of the child of a broken marriage with a sensitivity unusual at the time. Joy is not a type; she is a person in that agonising period of development when one is neither child nor woman - a period when apparent assurance and complete vulnerability go confusedly hand-in-hand, when one is as bewildered as other people by one's own emotions, when life is alternately heaven or hell, with an intensity which never returns. Whether Joy's emergence into womanhood is absolutely convincing is a moot point, and irrelevant here. I do firmly believe, however, that in her character Galsworthy shows an understanding such as he has not

always been credited with of the difficulties of a young girl in that unhappy position. If a current American colloquialism be allowed, she is something of a "crazy mixed-up kid". Children and young people are notoriously difficult to bring to life on the stage. Most often they seem either "whimsy" or precocious. Joy certainly is not in the legal phrase "a child of tender years", but she is young emotionally and Galsworthy has caught that quality.

Digressing slightly here we might glance at some of the other children in the plays. Jack Larne, the mischievous grandson of Heythorp, I find completely ridiculous. His ideas of practical jokes are ludicrous in the extreme and his conversation negligible. He provides light relief which could well be done without. Lady Anne Dromondy and Ada in The Foundations are more genuinely child-like. The former, while somewhat precocious is a little character in her own right - her desire to avoid authority, her curiosity and capacity for getting in the way are certainly convincing, while Ada, old beyond her years because of poverty yet still child enough to enjoy the novelty of the situation, forms a useful contrast. The children in A Bit o' Love are in some ways more convincing than their elders. Their conversation after Strangway has forced Mercy to release her caged skylark is typical childish argument - Ivy who is fond of Michael defending him, the others strongly against him - their comments falling quickly one after another, just as their thoughts occur to them. But on the whole children play no very big part in Galsworthy's plays. They are there mainly to bring out more clearly the effect of a situation on adults - to introduce pathos, to reveal the characters of their elders,

occasionally to convey vital information. There are no examinations of childhood for its own sake; there are few indications that children can be anything more than a little mischievous. His children are basically good and uncomplicated in their responses to circumstance; one can only wonder what Galsworthy would have made of such a novel as The Bad Seed.

Returning to the question of Galsworthy's female characters we are left with M. Dupont's two categories - the "youngish wives" and the "middle-aged matrons". It is significant to notice that there are, apart from Miss Beech and Adela Heythorp, no elderly or ageing spinsters and Miss Beech is certainly not an acidulated old maid. A play such as Brieux's The Three Daughters of M. Dupont can make of frustrated spinsterhood an issue of great emotion; with Galsworthy the accent is on marriage, often on sexual relationships. His portraits of young wives emphasise physical beauty and charm. Clare Dedmond, whose character will be analysed in greater detail later, is a case in point. Molly Gwynn is "a handsome creature"; Beatrice Strangway "is not strictly pretty, but there is charm in her pale, resolute face .....". Anne Morecombe, in The Show is described as "dark, very pale, with an excellent figure and a reticent beauty." Their physical attraction can almost be said to be part of their character, as it has largely shaped their destiny. They are intensely aware of the force of sexual desire and fastidious in their attitude to it. Usually they are women whom chivalrous men hasten to protect - womanly women, whose grace and charm is a stronger weapon than force of character. Perhaps a slight exception should be made here in the case of Margaret Orme (Loyalties), "a vivid young lady of about twenty-five". She has a

lively, if somewhat flippant, mind, and shows considerable sense of humour. One feels that in spite of her levity she is a woman of determination and courage. Nevertheless Galsworthy wrote nothing at all similar to Elizabeth Robins' Votes for Women (1907). In theory he may have believed in the emancipation of women, but in practice there are no careerists or suffragists among the characters of his younger women.

His older women have more force of character, though M. Dupont would call this, less kindly, bossiness and tyranny. Absolute truth to life is not necessarily the test of credible characterisation; nevertheless one cannot deny that most of us are not improved by age which unfortunately seems to accentuate most of our less pleasant qualities. There are many women like Mrs. March. And a dramatist who denied this would convince nobody. What would our music halls do without mothers-in-law anyway? Galsworthy, however, is too skilful a craftsman merely to "type" his older women. They are what they are, not because every woman develops in that way, but because character and circumstances have combined to form their natures and because it is dramatically right that they should be so. Mrs. Barthwick might at first sight be called a typical upper middle-class matron, self-satisfied, self-righteous, idolising her son and ruining his character, unimaginative, conventional in her behaviour and her attitudes of mind. All that she certainly is, but given the material from which her personality was formed, the situations which went to shape it, and the dramatic pattern into which she is to fit, I do not see how she could be other than she is. Moreover, there are those moments when she has the capacity to surprise

us in her reactions, as when she is distressed by the sound of the little Jones' child crying. She is not merely a stage caricature, though one has to admit there is no great likeableness about her. The same is manifestly true of Mrs. Hillcrist, a woman well in middle life. They are somewhat alike in physical appearance. Mrs. Hillcrist is "a well-dressed woman,with a firm, clear-cut face" while Mrs. Barthwick, also "well-dressed," with "greyish hair," and "good features," has "a decided manner". But where Mrs. Barthwick's hardness is caused mainly by lack of imagination, there is something almost positively evil about Mrs. Hillcrist, or if not actually evil, at any rate obsessional. She is absolutely implacable in her determination to get the better of Hornblower, and the relentlessness with which she pursues her object is frightening - it has a quality of near-madness about it. Again, it would be ridiculous to compare Galsworthy to Shakespeare, but I cannot help feeling something - diluted certainly, and less movingly powerful - of Lady Macbeth's spirit in Mrs. Hillcrist.

However, not all Galsworthy's middle-aged women are of this kind. Lady Cheshire, though certainly a practising member of a governing aristocracy like Mrs. Hillcrist, has with all her class-consciousness a breadth of mind and fundamental charity which is an essential part of her very nature. When she and Freda are alone together, after the partial revelation of how matters stand, in spite of the agony of mind she must be enduring, she manages to speak with sane common-sense and kindliness to the girl, while when she knows the whole truth she will do nothing to persuade Bill to abandon Freda. One can feel little but sympathy with Lady Morecombe in her fight to save her dead son's name.

Though her attitude to Daisy Odiham at first seems harsh, she says herself "I am an old woman,in great grief, I only want the truth, so as to know how best to serve my son's memory." And for that we forgive everything and admire her courage. It is,possible then, in Galsworthy's plays, to be middle-aged without being a gorgon.

In his drawing of women characters Galsworthy is not concerned with polemics, and wisely so. Women's causes make fascinating reading but they are ~~not~~ recalcitrant material for drama, since the issues date and the personalities can too easily become stock figures. He is instead concerned with what after all his audience would be mainly familiar with, the woman in her home, her problems, her spheres of influence, her moulding of the society around her. And while one may freely admit that his female characters have not the same power as many of his males, it would be crass foolishness to write off his portraits of women as failures.

In the abundance of material offered by the range of those male characters who play relatively important parts in his dramas, the problem is to select representative figures. Chronological order presents one method of organising such plenitude, so let us first consider some of the young men. Dick Merton in Joy is not characterised very strongly; his function is rather to set off Joy herself than to claim attention for himself. Nevertheless he is what mothers even to-day would call "a thoroughly nice boy", chivalrous, clean-living, thoughtful and with a sufficiently independent mind to be able to help Joy in her difficulties. John Barthwick is a complete contrast. His portrait is, of course, drawn with greater detail. The audience is given the impression of a

youth spoiled by his mother's indulgence, weak-willed, and irresponsible, sullen when taxed by his father with his extravagance and dishonesty - yet withal not a deep-dyed villain. It is some measure of Galsworthy's success with this character, that, despite one's basic conviction that Jack will finally lie about what happened on that unfortunate evening, one watches almost hypnotised the actual process of his weakening, and even experiences a feeling of disappointment and regret on his behalf that he does succumb to the temptation. Had he been merely a paste-board villain such feelings would have been pointless. Bill Cheshire has some affinity with Jack Barthwick. He, too, has obviously been irresponsible. There is no doubt that even before the discovery of his affair with Freda his father has been anxious about him; it is obvious too that here again the two generations have little common meeting ground. But in other ways Bill is quite different from Jack. He has at least some backbone and refuses to be bludgeoned by his family into something which is against his conscience. Talking the matter over with his brother Harold he says, "It's simply that I shall feel such a d - d skunk, if I leave her in the lurch, with everybody knowing. Try it yourself; you'd soon see!" If one analyses this short speech one sees several motives - his own self-respect, a certain feeling for the girl he refuses to leave in the lurch, and also an awareness of the strength of public opinion. So much for the people who think Galsworthy has no subtlety of characterisation. Bill is in embryo the kind of personality beloved by psychologists; the conflict between his own superficial inclinations and the standards of behaviour which tradition and upbringing have stamped indelibly upon him would create in

modern tragedy a fundamental neurosis. Indeed, this struggle between the desire to reject and the emotional compulsion to accept a certain code of values does produce in sensitive people an almost unsupportable tension. Yet The Eldest Son was produced in 1912.

These three young men are round about twenty; Falder is 23. How much more than three years difference in age there seems between the latter and Dick Merton who is a "quiet and cheerful boy of 20". How much indeed between Falder and Jack Barthwick! All the difference of environment, upbringing and even heredity. Whereas the first three young men have doubtless had well-to-do homes, public school and university education, leisure and freedom, Falder has had no such advantages. From the very first one is aware of this. There is none of the basic assurance in his personality. His quick, scared eyes are a definite indication of his character. He belongs to that class of society that live not in but always on the edge of poverty, that live from one pay packet to the next. It is not an existence conducive to moral stability or emotional security. These examples must suffice to show Galsworthy's variety among the younger men whom he has portrayed. Others could be found to represent other aspects, but that would labour the point unduly.

Among those characters who make up the main bulk of his personalities - the mature men with plenty of experience of life and the world - one can do no more than pick out a few to serve as illustrations. There are representatives of many types and professions - the public-school gentleman, the self-made business man, army officers, lawyers, clergymen, but strangely enough only one artist of any importance, and he is important rather for his attitude to Clare Dedmond rather than for his

own intrinsic character. I have chosen for brief mention two one might allude to as reluctant heroes; Stephen More, an idealist; and Hornblower, a parvenu. First then, the two reluctant heroes - Matt Denant and Hillcrist - so named because they are forced into the central position they occupy by unfortunate circumstances which combine with qualities in their own personalities to bring about the tragedies in which they find themselves. It would be tempting to look in both cases for the fatal flaw which brings about their downfall - rash impetuosity, one might argue in Matt, and lack of sufficient self-assertion with Hillcrist. But neither is conceived as an Aristotleian hero. They are somewhat more sensitive than their companions but they are not in any way supermen. They both have a standard of behaviour which they try to live up to - one feels that they have had similar upbringing and come from the same background. But they are in essence ordinary men facing dilemmas which are not particularly inspiring; in fact one might call them sordid. In facing their several problems Matt finds at last his own "decent self", while Hillcrist will go through life knowing he has betrayed his own ideals. Neither is cast in the true heroic mould, yet each finds himself called on for different reasons to exercise almost heroic qualities. The outcome in each case is absolutely credible.

Naturally when one thinks of Hillcrist one's mind immediately flies to Hornblower, the self-made business man in the same play. Galsworthy was attempting to show in him a completely different set of values, so that we must not judge Hornblower by the same standards as we judge Hillcrist. It is true that by Hillcrist's code Hornblower's action in turning the Jackmans out of their cottage when he had specifically

promised not to is inexcusable. But in Hornblower's own estimation he was perfectly justified in doing so. He was sorry, but they stood in the way of his expanding business; so there was no further argument. You cannot play football with cricket rules. We must on no account see Hornblower merely as the villain in a melodrama. His character is much more complex, and even in some respects excites our sympathy. Mrs Hillcrist's behaviour to his daughter-in-law, of whom he is genuinely fond, is even at the beginning of the play disgusting. One can well imagine her, in Jill's words, literally looking down her nose - and her merciless exposure of Chloe's past to prevent Hornblower from doing what he proposed is by any standard despicable. Although Hornblower's attitude to the Hillcrists when he feels he has the upper hand is patronising and self-satisfied, when beaten he preserves a certain dignity. There is too a genuine pathos, both when he is alone with Chloe after the revelation, and after she has been found unconscious in the gravel-pit. In the first instance he begins by raging at her, quite naturally, but more unexpectedly in a few moments other emotions come into play. He is confused, puzzled - as the stage direction has it, he "makes a bewildered gesture with his large hands." He says himself "I'm all at sea here." At the end, when Hillcrist and Charles Hornblower bring in Chloe's motionless body, he dominates the scene; and his parting shot to Hillcrist "Ye hypocrite" goes straight home to its mark. It is not merely the portrait of a stock figure, a hard-headed business man intent on nothing but money and success; it reveals a human being capable of genuine emotion, and of unexpected reactions, albeit a human being born and bred in circumstances so different from those of his opponents that no mutual understanding is possible.

And lastly in this consideration of important characters comes that class with which Galsworthy, in his novels and his dramas, is so successful - the old men. Two here stand out from the others, Sylvanus Heythorp in Old English and John Anthony in Strife. There are many difficulties in the creation of convincing and yet compelling pictures of old age. Physical weakness may be conveyed, but must not be over-emphasised. The greater rigidity of attitude, hardening characteristics into eccentricities, may form part of the portrait, but must not let it degenerate into a caricature. The mind must remain lively while yet showing a certain strain. Age there must be, but without a hint of senility. This Galsworthy accomplishes in both - and other - cases. Heythorp is physically infirm, yet he rises triumphantly above his infirmity. Anthony's precarious health remains an underlying murmur throughout, and doubles our interest in him. Both have indomitable will power; and both have the obstinacy which old age does nothing to lessen in men of their calibre. They are convincingly old, not men in the prime of life masquerading as grandfathers. Yet they retain their dignity and we feel for them not patronising pity but awed admiration. The Galsworthian gallery would be infinitely the poorer without them.

As when in a gallery one finds family likenesses among the portraits, and possibly detects in the painter a leaning towards a certain kind of face, so in the innumerable people who cross the stage in Galsowrthy's plays one recognises basic affinities of character. This is by no means tantamount to saying that he creates only types or that his characterisation is superficial. That it is unlike most contemporary character-drawing I allow. It is objective rather than subjective. His

personalities are presented as they might appear to a thoughtful observer, not to an omniscient psycho-analyst. But as characters conceived and revealed in this particular way, they live. They are humanly consistent enough in their behaviour to be human. After all, most people act in nine cases out of ten predictably - the tenth perhaps being a pathetic little gesture of defiance against the great impervious universe which engulfs us. So it is with Galsworthy's characters. Their creator is concerned not with the searching of the inmost recesses of a man's mind, but with his thoughts and actions in contact with the society of which he is part, often a nonconforming part. And for this purpose Galsworthy's method of characterisation is the most appropriate.

The two characters I have chosen to examine in greater detail, mainly as illustrations of how Galsworthy builds up the personalities in his play, are Clare Dedmond from The Fugitive and Ferdinand De Levis from Loyalties. They are chosen because they fulfil different functions, yet at the same time have qualities in common with one another and with other principal characters in Galsworthy's plays.

Clare, however, is unique in one respect. She is the only woman who is quite unquestionably the central figure in the play from which she comes. This gives her special interest, particularly as I have already asserted that I do not consider that Galsworthy's touch is as sure with women as it is with men. Is Clare the exception then ?

The key to her character is given by her own friend Mrs. Fullarton, who exclaims in despair "You're too fine, and not fine enough, to put up with things; you're too sensitive to take help,and you're not strong enough to do without it. It's simply tragic." She is absolutely right.

That is Clare's tragedy. She is far too sensitive - too sensitive to beauty, like that of the sunset on Westminster clock against the dark sky; too sensitive to people and her lack of contact with them; too fastidious about physical relationships - too much of a thoroughbred, with the nerves and highly strung spirit that go with it. She is completely unconventional. Who but she in the play would really imagine that she and George could separate simply because they have not a thought in common? She is, at times,uncomfortably honest, and knows herself. When she is describing her life as a shop-girl to Malise, she neither romanticises it nor makes a grotesque of it. She lived, she says, probably better than most shop-girls, many of whom were quite nice to her, but they didn't really want her, and in her heart of hearts she didn't want them. It is not snobbishness. It is honest acceptance of the inevitable differences which class and upbringing make. She has great courage in some respects, and the pride which cannot receive unless it can give in return. But it is courage partly arising from a wilful blindness to the outcome of her actions, and pride which will not recognize that though it may be more blessed to give than to receive, it is also infinitely more difficult to receive, but often no less blessed. She has a quick temper. One believes her brother when, speaking of their childhood, he says she could be a "little devil when her monkey was up." She is indeed governed by her emotions. Every rational element cries out to her to be less uncompromising - to make terms, as Mrs. Fullarton urges her. She is utterly adamant. No force of reason can move her. Reason indeed says that George in the first part of the play is not entirely wrong. Why can she not meet him part of the way? On every side reason bears down on her - her brother, her father-and mother-in-law,

Twisden the lawyer - all, that is, except Malise. But her nature is ruled by her emotions. She could no more compromise than she could fly. Yet even while one wishes she would be a little less unyielding, one realises it is impossible and paradoxically enough honours her for it - she is not indeed so uncompromising as to be inhuman. In the first scene, after she and George are left together, and he rounds on her for allowing their differences to be visible in public, remorse is mingled with her defiance. She is sorry - but she can't help breaking out. She knows he is unhappy too - but the situation is just impossible. There is no more to say. Her life with Malise is typical. She will not take where she cannot give, and when she finds she is ruining him she leaves him. Her suicide is the last desperate gesture of one who was "too fine,and yet not fine enough". Possibly it smacks of melodrama, yet it is difficult to see what other end she could have come to. She could not have returned to George or Malise. She might have dragged her life away selling gloves where she said herself "there's no sun, ~~no~~ or life, or hope, or anything." But for all "her trained stoicism of voice and manner", there is something "fey", something extravagant about her - her gestures, her way of expressing herself in times of stress, as for instance "I'm not wax - I'm flesh and blood". One cannot imagine her just drifting out of life, or being content for long with a mere existence. The complexity of her character make resolution of the conflict in any other way impossible.

By what methods then is this complexity revealed? The opening of the play strikes the first note. The set is the "pretty drawing-room" of a flat; there is a grand piano across one corner. It is obviously the home of a cultured, sensitive person. The short dialogue between

the two servants hints at the difficult situation between husband and wife, and when George enters one has the impression that if wife and husband are at variance, the room reflects her personality rather than his. There is a feeling of tension which develops steadily, through the family discussion which follows. It is obvious, well before her appearance, that Clare does not fit in; that she is indeed something of a worry to her brother and Sir Charles and Lady Dedmond. However, they build up an excuse for the fact that she is not, as she should be, at home to welcome them and her other guests. Clare's entrance, the climax of this part [redacted] of the scene, shatters the polite fiction they have created. She bursts straight through it when she reveals that she and Malise met on the mat - when she and George are supposed to have been dining together. Her character is indicated to the actress taking the part by the stage direction. She is a woman "all vibration, iced over with a trained stoicism of voice and manner." Her voice is level and clipped; in the short conversation she has with Mrs. Fullarton which reveals how near breaking point she is, her only sign of emotion is when she takes a flower from her dress and "suddenly tears it to bits." Most of the scene after her entrance is a series of conversations between Clare and other people - first with Malise, then with Mrs. Fullarton, then with her brother Reginald Huntingdon. In each of these the tension becomes greater and greater. One realises Clare's position, and her isolation. Malise is the only one who has any real comprehension of her feelings. After her brother leaves there is a slight easing of tension with a fragment of dialogue in which Poynter shows his obvious solicitude for his mistress, and then comes the final climax of the scene - her quarrel with George.

Thus at the end of the first act Clare's character is fairly well-established. The building up of her character prior to her delayed entrance has, through setting and dialogue, prepared the audience for what is to come. By her own actions and reactions to situation, by appearance, voice and gesture, by significant acting, such as the tearing of the flower, the impression has been deepened. Conflict and contrast add their weight - Dollie Fullarton, with her sympathy yet strong practical sense, provides the necessary foil for Clare. Her character is the impetus which sets the action in motion, and produces indirectly and directly situations which themselves rebound against her - George's vindictive action against Malise, the latter's dismissal from the Watchtower. One can hardly say that she is greatly altered by the pressure of events. She becomes more desperate certainly, but the essential Clare at the end of the play is not materially different from that at the beginning. Her character is a study in the interaction of personality and plot.

With Ferdinand De Levis the same is not quite so true, for he occupies a slightly different position and the characterisation in Loyalties has a rather different purpose. He shares the centre stage with his opponent Dancy, the emphasis being slightly more on him in the earlier part of the play, and shifting to Dancy in the latter part. Also, though not primarily a "thriller", Loyalties has the element of detection which gives it a purpose dissimilar to that of The Fugitive. De Levis however, has this in common with Clare; like her he is unlike all the other characters. There is, in his case, no-one at all to take his part. He is a "slightly exotic" young man, a Jew, intensely

conscious of his race, highly sensitive to his position on the fringe of the society he wishes to enter. He is astute, a quick thinker, and once his mind is made up he has absolute confidence in himself. One cannot help admiring the way he stands by his accusation of Darcy, although it appeared at first such a wild shot. He is quick tempered, naturally on the defensive. It is Darcy's taunt "you damned Jew" which makes him white with anger and completely implacable. Vindictive and venomous afterwards he is, but one feels he has a certain reason. The jibe which he flung at his opponents quite near the beginning of the play - "If I were in Darcy's shoes and he in mine, your tone to me would be very different" - has too much of the ring of truth for Canynge's suave reply, "I am not aware of using any tone, as you call it", to carry much weight. One quality which one does not so much sympathise with is his attitude to the servants. He is obviously not inclined to believe the butler, Treisure, as his "quick, hard look" betrays. Whereas Clare Dedmont is liked by her social inferiors, it is clear that De Levis is not. However, he is by no means a wholly unpleasant character - far from it. One sees a particularly likeable side of his nature when he calls to see Darcy and is confronted by the latter's wife, Mabel. He is "embarrassed" when he sees her - scarcely the reaction of a hardened self-seeker. When she tells him he is robbing her husband of his good name he replies, sincerely, "I do admire your trustfulness, Mrs. Darcy". I am sure that these two stage directions showing his embarrassment and his sincerity give the key to the way in which this short interview should be played. Without those words, De Levis might merely be sneering at Mabel - but with them such an interpretation is impossible. Rather less pleasant, but perfectly

understandable is his attitude when Darcy himself enters. There is a hint of malice in the stage direction which immediately precedes his exit. " ..... turning to the door, he opens it, stands again for a moment with a smile on his face, then goes." However, the contrast between his reaction to Mabel and his reaction to Darcy reveals a more positively likeable aspect and prepares us for his last appearance - when he comes to warn Darcy of the warrant for the latter's arrest. Had there been no sign of a kinder personality one might have been inclined to question this gesture a little, though throughout, in spite of his intense anger and desire for vengeance,one is not aware of meanness or pettiness. In fact his final words ring out with "a sort of darting pride", "Don't mistake me. I didn't come because I feel a Christian; I am a Jew. I will take no money - not even that which was stolen. Give it to a charity. I'm proved right. And now I'm done with the damned thing. Good morning!" Indeed one's mind goes back to his earlier retort to Darcy, "You called me a damned Jew. My race was old when you were all savages. I am proud to be a Jew." There is little doubt who emerges the best from the play, Jew or Gentile. Here again Galsworthy has made a telling picture of an outcast, rejected by and finally rejecting the society which he wished to enter.

He has done so by various dramatic devices. De Levis is revealed by his actions, by the attitude of others to him, by his varying reactions to situations and people. Much of course is done by contrast - contrast of incident, and of character. Stage directions are a guide to the actor interpreting the part, while the dialogue in this play is particularly cleverly worked out. One may examine for instance the first piece of

dialogue after De Levis has made his entrance (p.634). It immediately shows how far apart he and Charles Winsor are in their ways of thought. De Levis comes straight to the point, "I say, I'm awfully sorry, Winsor, but I thought I'd better tell you at once. I've just had - er - rather a lot of money stolen." It is worth noting here that the pause comes before the amount of money, and not before the word stolen. Winsor immediately picks this up. "What! (There is something of outrage in his tone and glance, as who should say: 'In my house?'). How do you mean stolen?" The conversation goes on, nearly every speech of De Levis making the breach wider. Winsor is faintly outraged that a man should have nearly £1,000 about him. De Levis does not notice, being too anxious to tell what happened. "..... I was only out of my room a quarter of an hour, and I locked my door." Winsor (again outraged) "You locked ——....."
De Levis (not seeing the finer shade) "Yes and had the key here." (He taps his pocket)..." It is a piece of very skilful dialogue, contributing to plot, establishing tension and revealing character.

Both the portrait of Clare Dedmond and that of Ferdinand De Levis are in their own ways examples worthy of study. In each the dramatic purpose is of course different. Clare is the centre figure in her play; her character is the pivot on which the action hinges. It is therefore the main interest of the play. De Levis on the other hand, is one of two principal figures and cannot therefore be developed in such detail. Also as Loyalties is more than a thriller, more also than a study in personalities, the characters form part of a complicated and tangled web of prejudices, one pulling against another, so that one has a sense of something greater at stake than the mere people themselves. Nevertheless

both Clare and De Levis may stand as illustrations of Galsworthy's general method of characterisation in his main characters.

His plays are in the main plays of action, but it is action which blends with character; in fact in the words of Aristotle he shows character issuing in action. He also reveals much through gesture, facial expression, minor movement, and ~~by~~ significant stage business, which in many ways act as small soliloquies and asides. Just as in life we give ourselves away by our unpremeditated actions, so his characters tell us much by the way they move, their sudden gestures and so on. Just as, too, we show different sides of our natures to different people, so his characters react in different ways to one another. And as our homes and surroundings are all part of our personalities, so the setting of his scenes either positively or negatively adds to the audience's knowledge of the people he is depicting. Contrast and conflict also bear their part, particularly in the group loyalties and oppositions. One watches by all these means, with an intensely visual perception, characters becoming clearer against their background, and though the plays are full of action, it is, as I have said before, mainly personality which issues in action, and the two elements, character and plot, are usually so nicely balanced that any separation cannot but be arbitrary.

In order to see something of the unity of these two elements, and moreover to examine dialogue and setting in relation to the theme and character, I propose next to look at two plays as they might actually appear on the stage, rather in the manner of Galsworthy's own habit of visualising his dramatic work. Thus the emphasis passes from what Galsworthy has to say to his manner of actually adapting his material to the conditions of the stage. I have chosen for this purpose

A Bit o' Love and Loyalties, the former because it is one of his less successful dramatic ventures, and the latter because it ranks with The Skin Game and Escape among his greatest successes.

The first impact A Bit o' Love would make would be, as one opened the programme, through its title. Frankly ~~the latter~~ this appals me. Galsworthy, as one realises from his informal writings, was fastidious in his choice of title, selecting and rejecting carefully, with an eye to dramatic significance. The one here in question is of course a quotation from the latter part of the play. But seeing it out of its context, and moreover in the unpleasantly precious form A Bit o' Love, one wonders how Galsworthy could have deliberately chosen anything so cloyingly sentimental, and incidentally so susceptible of unintended interpretations.

The curtain rises on "the low panelled hall-sitting-room of the Burlacombes' farmhouse on the village green" - presumably this would be indicated on the programme. It is a country setting, peaceful ..... and not giving promise of particularly vigorous action. This impression continues as the audience is given time, before there is any dialogue, to take in the set, and to receive a first impression of Michael Strangway, clergyman in Holy Orders, in appearance sensitive and somewhat unhappy, playing his flute before "a very large framed photograph of a woman". The "low, broad window above a window-seat" gives a homely atmosphere and the view glimpsed beyond - "the outer gate and yew trees of a churchyard, and the porch of a church, bathed in May sunlight" - accents the peaceful quietness, in which the only movement is Strangway's playing his flute. So absorbed is he that he does not notice the quiet entrance of Ivy Burlacombe, a girl of fifteen. Already half-consciously one is taking in his character - that of a sensitive dreamer.

The play gains pace with the entrance of another group of girls, somewhat noisier than Ivy and forming a contrast. In fact one's curiosity is immediately aroused by Mercy, who is concealing something behind her back, and completely changes the atmosphere from one of peaceful quietness to one of suppressed and whispering excitement - a very natural and well-observed touch. The confirmation class starts. Again Michael's character is revealed; his teachings are distinctly unorthodox, but are proceeding quietly until a minor climax is reached when Ivy suddenly refers to Mrs. Strangway. One feels Michael's tense reaction - as well as learning unobtrusively something of the situation. The pace quietens again and remains leisurely while the children talk to him of the flowers which grow in their native meadows until suddenly he realises that Mercy is hiding something. His white-hot rage when he finds a caged skylark she has brings very strong emotion to the atmosphere and there is another minor climax as he lets the bird go, an action which again reveals his character and also paves the way for subsequent happenings. After he has left them the children's argument is a welcome emotional relief; it is typical childish quarrelling, and leads them on to gossip about the presence of Mrs. Strangway in Durford. Thus the audience is given another clue to the mystery of what is wrong. The gossip is interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Burlacombe who brings us back to the adult world and quickens the tempo of the play by her bustling dismissal of the girls. One short episode has finished, and one has had an impression of an existence at once bright and clouded, village-life idyllic in some respects yet with a strong admixture of gossip and malice.

Next follows an incident for which I can find no dramatic excuse

whatsoever. A new character, Jim Bere enters. He must appear a shell of a man, physically weak and mentally not what he was. He has lost his cat, and has come to tell Michael about it. Except that again it reveals the gentleness and patience of the ~~latter's~~ priest's nature, I cannot see that it is anything but a sentimental episode which the play could well have done without. It is pure bathos.

Mercifully, it is brief and heralds a contrasting incident, the entrance of "a capable, brown-faced woman of seventy, whose every tone and movement ~~express~~ exhale authority." Here then the atmosphere changes and the pace becomes brisk. The audience soon learns something of Mrs. Bradmere's position and her character. In fact when she and Mrs. Burlacombe face one another, Greek meets Greek. Mrs. Bradmere is going to stop any gossip concerning the curate. She has authority and she intends to use it. Tension is rising steadily now, and the audience has been informed thoroughly and skilfully of the situation between Michael Strangway and his wife Beatrice. After this minor passage of arms the next event which grips the audience's attention is the sudden appearance of the one whose character has been built up from the beginning - Beatrice Strangway, who sends Ivy to find Michael.

The climax of the whole first act is their meeting - a meeting which the audience knows Mercy is listening to. The audience is prepared for Beatrice's attitude. She has come in, swiftly, irresolutely - not as one who is returning home. Michael is not so prepared. He comes in; "all his dreaminess is gone". "Thank God!" he exclaims, and stops "at the look on her face", an intensely moving moment. Galsworthy then unfortunately strikes a melodramatic note when Beatrice comes to the point of what she has to tell Michael. ..... "You see - I've - fallen,"

but apart from this the meeting is harrowing; both are torn by emotion, Beatrice by her feeling for her lover, Michael by his own passion and by his very real love for his wife. The height of emotion is reached when he wins the struggle with his own desire and realises that his nature would not allow him to hold her against her will. "Go! Go, please, quickly! Do what you will. I won't hurt you - can't - but - go!" His intense emotion works to a crescendo in that last "Go!" And after she has left him he stands "unconsciously tearing at the little bird cage," till Mercy in her anxiety to get out quietly bangs against the door and disturbs him. The tension then breaks and one might indeed question whether the appearance of Jack Cremer whose wife has just died is dramatically justified. It points an obvious parallel - far too obvious. Cremer appears to draw comfort from the conversation, but there seems little dramatic point in it. One might accuse Galsworthy here of wishing his audience to wallow in vicarious suffering. The curtain falls on a quiet ending as it opened on a quiet beginning, and at this point, presumably the first interval, one looks rapidly back over the preceding act to collect together the impressions so far received.

The main dramatic situation has been indicated both by incidental conversation and by definite action. We know the problem which faced Strangway, and how he has solved it. The principal characters have been introduced, and their personalities indicated. We know then what type of play we are watching - the struggle of a man with his own desires and passions. How will it develop ?

The curtain rises, for the first scene of the second act, on a different set - the village inn - and one's mind is instantly alert for a different type of incident. After an amusing bit of by-play

with little Tibby Jarland, the landlord, Goodleigh, finds himself confronted by Mrs. Bradmere, who has come to see that there is no more gossip about the curate's affairs. We are not then surprised to hear all the scandal being thoroughly turned over after she has gone. Most of the men do not like Strangway; their remarks about, and their attitude to, him reveal both his own character and the difficulties which a man of his unconventional, imaginative sensitivity encounters in an intensely parochial village. There is real malice in much of the gossip, particularly when Jarland, Mercy's father, is taking part. He obviously detests Michael. Grim comedy is introduced with the appearance of Clyst, who appears to be the wit of the village, He proceeds to burlesque a person whose name he does not mention - it is obviously Strangway. The climax of his entertainment comes when he reads a poem from a scrap of paper he has found - reads it"with mock heroism". Most of the men think it extremely funny, and none of them have much good to say of the curate. Jarland is just giving his - very unfavourable - view of ~~the latter's~~ Strangway's character and conduct when with dramatic suddenness Michael appears. Jarland, who is the worse for drink, abuses him for taking Mercy's bird, and taunts him with Beatrice's unfaithfulness. The climax of the rapidly rising tension comes when he shouts "Lüike at un! Lüike at un! A man wi' a slut for a wife." This is more than Michael can bear; he attacks Jarland and manages to force him through the open window. The tension broken, the curate rushes out. It is a little difficult to say how an audience would react to the comedy which immediately follows. It seems almost too good to be true that Jarland should have gone straight through the window into a cucumber frame, and I wonder whether the crash of broken glass from outside might not detract

from Strangway's exit. However I should be sorry to lose Clyst's comment "Tam's hatching of yöre cucumbers, Mr. Goødleigh" and the badinage which follows. The curtain falls almost immediately then on Goødleigh's appropriately ironic comment, "Tes a Christian village, boys."

The next scene, played against the same set and following in time-sequence almost immediately upon the other, has been praised by some critics. Personally I find it tedious in the extreme. It is an unofficial parish meeting and consists almost entirely of disagreements on the method of procedure. Doubtless this does happen at parish meetings, but the humour - particularly possibly for those of us who are country-born - is heavy-handed and quite unnecessary. Whereas the previous scene builds up a feeling of animosity, gave further revelation of character and had a malicious amusement of its own, this is merely the Townsman's idea of the country bumpkin. There is no addition to our knowledge of the main characters, of the dramatic situation or of the emotional issues involved. All we have learnt is that the curate is to be hissed when he leaves the church.

Scene III reveals yet another set, outside the church, one which could be effective except that scenes played in semi-darkness can become irritating. However the eerie atmosphere and the electric tension of those waiting in the dusk to hiss the curate could hardly be conveyed in any other way. Voices call softly to one another. The last hymn is heard from the church, and finally the Blessing. After this the excitement of those waiting outside the church communicates itself to the audience. There is the stage direction: "..... a perfectly dead silence. The figure of Strangway is seen in his dark clothes, passing

from the vestry to the church porch. He stands plainly visible in the lighted porch, locking the door, then steps forward. Just as he reaches the edge of the porch, a low hiss breaks the silence. It swells very gradually into a long, hissing groan. Strangway stands motionless, his hand over his eyes, staring into the darkness. A girl's figure can be seen to break out of the darkness and rush away. When at last the groaning has died into sheer expectancy, Strangway drops his hand." [1]

Strangway's reaction - an apology to Jarland - is almost as unexpected to the audience as it is to the bystanders. It certainly is a case of turning the other cheek. While this is in keeping with the character of the curate, whose values are so entirely different from those of other people, I am not happy about the dramatic suitability. I feel Galsworthy has over-emphasised Michael's humility and forbearance, even to the point of sentimentality. The "queer strangled cheer with groans still threading it" which arises as the curtain falls is the final turn of the screw on our already over-taxed emotions.

The first scene of the third act goes straight on, with Mr. and Mrs. Burlacombe listening to the cheers and groans. The set, being the familiar hall sitting-room in their farm, does not distract us. We wait for Strangway's appearance. After Mrs. Burlacombe has gone out to make the latter a good, hot drink, the two men, curate and parishioner, talk together. Again one is struck by the complete contrast between Michael and the villagers. It is really impossible for them to understand each other; they hardly speak the same language. However in this scene the main interest is in the interview between Michael and Mrs. Bradmere. One's mind naturally goes back to the parallel conversation, in the first act, between Michael and Beatrice, and the contrast is

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1. A Bit o' Love, p.447 et seq.

poignant. The audience feels a quickening of interest. How can these two, whose ideals are poles apart, find any meeting ground? Mrs. Bradmere, the epitome of astringent, doctrinaire commonsense, and Michael the gentle unorthodox dreamer? She, particularly at first, is not unsympathetic even though she cannot understand him. AS she takes up the church position more firmly she becomes rather less sympathetic, asserting that he cannot, as a clergyman, allow his wife to sin against the church, urging him therefore to fight. With a hint of melodrama, Michael, "touching his heart" answers, "My fight is here." Then his words become increasingly emotional, increasingly convincing till they reach their climax: "Have you ever been in hell? For months and months - burned and longed; hoped against hope; killed a man in thought day by day? Never rested, for love and hate? I - condemn! I - judge! No! It's rest I have to find - somewhere - somehow - rest! And how - how can I find rest?" [1] One cannot doubt the terrible sincerity of his words, and after them with effective incongruity comes Mrs. Bradmere's reply: "You are a strange man! One of these days you'll go off your head if you don't take care." And a few moments later to his despairing cry, the nadir of his suffering, "Is there no God?" she can only return, "You must see a doctor." Commonsense cannot understand imagination. It is an episode of great power and sincerity, the gruff old woman doing what she can for this agonised, sensitive fellow human being, but her efforts are as futile as attempting to paint a miniature with a white-wash brush. Certainly after this the tension

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1. A Bit o' Love. p.453.

must ease, but whether it might not have been more fittingly eased by the fall of the curtain than by the incident which follows, in which Jim Bere comes to tell Michael his parishoners are laughing at him, is open to strong question. It is unfortunately sentimental and melodramatic, and the implied contrast between Michael as he is and Jim as he was is too obvious. However the intrusion of the sound of voices from outside recalls us to village-life, and the curtain falls as a mocking voice quotes a line from his poem. Thus the isolation of Michael's position is once more brought home to the audience.

The last scene opens charmingly, and with complete contrast. It is set in the Burlacombe's barn, dark except for "a slender track of moonlight", and here the youngsters are engrossed in their dancing. Tibby, sitting on a form with her back against the hay, is "sleepily beating on a tambourine"; the rest move in silence except for an occasional word of direction from Ivy. At last the dance ends, but "the drowsy Tibby goes on beating." It is a delightful beginning, and a complete change in mood from what has preceded it. There is, after the dance, a little very natural fooling, some interesting gossip, - and a cloying bit of dialogue about flowers and Heaven. However, soon the children start dancing again, although Tibby has fallen back into the hay, sound asleep. The dancers, surprised by sudden footsteps, scatter, leaving Tibby almost unseen and still asleep. It is Michael who enters - "like a man walking in his sleep." Again Galsworthy gives his audience a piece of silent acting. Strangway is meditating suicide; in fact he goes as far as actually to make a noose of rope and put it round his neck. I cannot myself feel that this is in character with so considerate and gentle a personality, though I realise that his mind was strained almost

beyond bearing. However, at this point Tibby awakes terrified, and though the fact of her waking at that precise moment is quite happy, the dialogue which follows is sugary and precious in the extreme. When Michael tries to express to the somewhat dubious Tibby a vision of Love walking and talking in the world, and even points out how everything comes out to listen - "All the little things with pointed ears, children, and birds, and flowers, and bunnies ....." - [1] one feels completely nauseated, and the situation is only saved by Tibby's sound commonsense when she says, "I can't hear - nor I can't see." A sensible child.

The final moments of the play are obscure. After Michael has sent Tibby running after the others, he meets Cremer, who is going to spend the night walking in the open. Suddenly Strangway makes up his mind. "Wait for me at the crossroads, Jack. I'll come with you. Will you have me, brother?" And after Cremer has left him, he lifts up his hands in a gesture of prayer. "God, of the moon and the sun, of joy and beauty, of loneliness and sorrow - Give me strength to go on, till I love every living thing." And with this last he makes his final exit. The curtain falls as "the full moon shines; the owl hoots; and someone is shaking Tibby's tambourine."

It is a weak ending, too confused to be effective. To leave the issue undecided is perfectly justifiable, but to leave it not so much undecided as obscure is inexcusable. Presumably the meeting, not at the garden gate nor the church porch but at the crossroads, has some significance. But surely Michael no longer stands at his moral cross-road; he has made his decision. The prayer too is ridiculously unrealistic; to pray for strength to love every living thing may be the prayer of an idealist - but it is also the prayer of a saint. Michael

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1. A Bit o' Love. p.459.

is no saint. We are aware in generalised terms of what he will do, but hovering over it all is a cloud of highly-irritating uncertainty.

What then would be one's feelings after the fall of the last curtain? So far as I can visualise the play, I think they would be mixed. It is an extremely uneven piece, having moments of great power, as for instance the dialogues between Michael and Beatrice, and Michael and Mrs. Bradmere. The characterisation is on the whole convincing. Michael is, except for the last points I have mentioned, thoroughly convincing - a dreamer and idealist too sensitive ever to find lasting happiness and too intellectual, one fears, ever to make much contact with the villagers. Others, too, are convincing - Mrs. Bradmere the forthright old authoritarian, not without kindness and astringent sympathy; Beatrice a more shadowy but still effective figure; Ivy and Tibby among the children. The plot is not for the most part spectacular, nor does it rely entirely on action for its excitement. It has something of the leisurely movement of the countryside, and character-revelation is more important than action. The exposition goes on unobtrusively throughout the first act, the necessary information being conveyed naturally through incident, gossip, odd remarks, gestures and so on.

There are however grave weaknesses. The plot is almost too well-arranged. In the first scene it certainly is perfectly natural for Tibby to come to look for the sixpence Mercy had refused to pick up. It is equally natural that Mercy should then come to look for Tibby, and that she should, in doing so, get caught behind the curtain in time to overhear the conversation between Michael and Beatrice. It is almost too natural and paradoxically too well-prepared. The plot also flags in interest at times: in fact, it becomes tedious, as for

instance in the Parish meeting. There are too many extra-territorial incursions into non-dramatic areas. Some of the characters also seem to have little justification for existence from the playwright's point of view - in particular, Jim Bere and Jack Cremer. The contrasts are too obvious here - between Strangway and Jim as he was before his illness; and between the death of Cremer's wife and the fact of Michael's loneliness when Beatrice has deserted him. The parallels positively thrust themselves upon our notice, as does the symbolism of the caged bird. There are several lapses, which have already been noted, into gross sentimentality, where the emotion is simply not justified by the situation. To-day its appeal would be even less than in its own day. Religion is to most people either an irrelevant side issue or a complete myth. Where it is neither - in Eliot or Greene for instance - the emphasis lies not on matters arising from the church doctrine but on the very doctrine itself. Thus a great deal of the force of the central figure is lost. Also, while divorce has not become as common in England as it is in America, it has lost much of its stigma, though the fact that Beatrice is married to a clergyman would doubtless arouse comment. That the main issue transcends minor issues and comes in fact to the essential nature of love is not sufficiently clearly brought out. We are not prepared adequately for Michael's last prayer. I fear the present day reaction to the closing curtain might be anything from incredulous disbelief to open derision.

It is understandable that this was one of the least successful of Galsworthy's plays, yet even so, with all its odd lapses, it has also its moments of power. There can be seen in it evidence of his skill in creating plot and character, which, apart from such blindness as I have noted, shows careful and yet unobtrusive integration through incident and dialogue.

Loyalties, unlike A Bit o' Love, was one of Galsworthy's most popular and successful plays. Most of the Press notices comment favourably both on the ideas and the detective element. It is perhaps the latter which gave it its appeal to less intellectual play-goers, and indeed it can be enjoyed at both levels. If one takes it in the same way as I have treated A Bit o' Love, as if it were actually taking place on the stage, the first glance at the programme would take in the unequivocal title which surely can give no offence. As the curtain rises, we see the first set, the "well-appointed bed-dressing-room" of the Winsors. In the first few short sentences the situation is mapped out. It is a country house-party, at which a certain gentleman De Levis appears to be making himself rather conspicuous, and we are given several leading clues about him, including the fact that he is a Jew. We are also told in a perfectly natural conversation something of the lay-out of the house - knowledge which is later to prove valuable. After this quiet yet interesting beginning comes a dramatic entry - that of De Levis himself, who comes straight to the point. He has had "rather a lot of money stolen." In a quick, brief piece of dialogue we are informed how much the sum is - £1,000 - and how he came to have it with him. More than that, the divergence in attitude between the two men is clearly revealed. De Levis makes no bones; the money has been stolen. He wants it back - and he wants the police. His is a completely different code from Winsor's, and one's dominant emotion is curiosity; curiosity, as it were, on two planes - first about the mere fact that the money has been stolen, but more about how the obvious "outsider" will fare with his country-house hosts. The gap widens during the interview with Treisure, the old butler whom Winsor trusts implicitly and De Levis obviously suspects. The next entrant to

arouse our curiosity is General Canynge, followed in a few moments by Margaret Orme and the Dancys. All these latter belong to the same class as the Winsors. Facts are rapidly established, personalities displayed, and the general attitude to De Levis is further clarified. By the end of the first scene the dramatic situation has been revealed and elucidated; the backgrounds of the characters have been established, and their characters sketched out for us with a rapidity and unobtrusiveness which compels interest.

The second scene takes place in De Levis's bedroom, the set being of importance solely from the detective angle. The first part is concerned with the reconstruction of the crime by the local Inspector. The dialogue is brief and to the point. We do not learn a great deal more about character. The aim here is detection. By present day standards the humour is a little heavy-handed, although country police are still represented as scarcely modified Dogberries. However it is not, as in the previous play, tedious. We do not feel, though, that we are getting anywhere, and that of course is quite deliberate. Galsworthy holds the suspense till De Levis and Canynge are alone. Then comes the shock. "General, I know who took them," and De Levis proceeds to make what at first sight is a monstrous charge, and as such the General interprets it. Emotional tension rises in a crescendo until De Levis brings out his bitter "Society! Do you think I don't know that I'm only tolerated for my money?" [1].

After that there is a slight slackening as he vows he will get his money. When Winsor returns and is told of the accusation we see the closing of the ranks, Gentile against Jew. Finally they ask Dancy -

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1. Loyalties, p.648.

for it is he whom De Levis has accused - to see if he can help them, but he can throw no light on the matter. After a brief visit from the Inspector, De Levis leaves Winsor and Canynge alone for a few seconds, long enough for the important revelation that Winsor has found Dancy's sleeve wet. Here is the first real clue the audience has been given. We have scarcely time to digest it before De Levis is back and we are witnessing a most blatant piece of social blackmail. Stated baldly it is that if De Levis does not keep his mouth shut, they will not back him for certain clubs to which he wishes to be elected. What will De Levis do? "Sullenly" he replies "I'll say nothing about it, unless I get more proof," to which Canynge returns, "We have implicit faith in Dancy." There is "a moment's encounter of eyes", then Canynge and Winsor leave. The curtain falls on De Levis's derisive "Rats!"[1].

What then would be the audience's reaction at this point? The most recent impression is of the social blackmail, and leaves an unpleasant taste. One's sympathies are more likely to be with De Levis than with Canynge and Winsor. Questions as to what they would have done if the positions of the two men had been reversed, how much they are in fact influenced by racial distinction are bound to occur. A present day audience would find the class situation intolerable. However, taking the first act as a whole, one finds that one's sympathies do not fall neatly into categories; they are slightly swayed towards De Levis certainly at the fall of the curtain, but others have also roused them. It is not, for instance, a pleasant situation for Charles Winsor. At the same time, curiosity has been excited. Who did really steal the money - how, when, why? Is the play merely a "thriller," or is it far more than that?

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1. Loyalties, p. 651.

The first scene of Act II further presses these points. Set in the card-room of a London club, it opens quietly, allowing the audience to settle down, lulled almost into a sense of false security, before the startling piece of information is revealed. De Levis has been blackballed. There is just time for us to hear that a story is circulating about De Levis having lost a great deal of money at a country house, before the dramatic entrance of Colford, who brings the news that De Levis has accused Darcy of the theft. Here indeed is a point of climax which is rapidly swept up in the growing tension after De Levis has been summoned to account for the charge. He is almost beside himself with rage, and defends himself fiercely, flinging at them the final taunt, "That's your Dancy - a common sharper." Dancy is sent for to reply to the charge, and as they wait for him one feels De Levis's emotion. The stage direction describes him as "smouldering". Possibly his speech is a trifle melodramatic: "I have a memory, and a sting too. Yes, my lord, since you are ~~pleased~~ good enough to call me venomous ... I quite understand - I'm marked for Coventry now, whatever happens. Well, I'll take Dancy with me." [1] Yet for all its melodrama it has the ring of real emotion.

The passage in which the two men confront one another is one of increasing tension. De Levis's reference to Dancy's wife evokes the latter's "Leave my wife alone, you damned Jew." De Levis, "white with rage" and "tremulous with anger" rounds on him. "You called me a damned Jew. My race was old when you were all savages. I am proud to be a Jew." What a moment is this, the greatest emotional climax of the play! [2]

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1. Loyalties, p.655.
2. Loyalties, p. 657.

The tension drops somewhat after his exit and the rest of the scene excites one's curiosity rather than one's emotions. Dancy's behaviour is odd in the extreme. It is by no means that of outraged innocence and increases our suspicions. After he has left, his friends discuss the developments, and their varying reactions are interesting. Winsor and Lord St. Erth are puzzled and somewhat disturbed, Borring is frankly intrigued, while Colford, blindly loyal to Dancy, is completely oblivious ~~to~~ of any possible moral implication. Here again is a scene which has by emotional crescendos held our interest, and by innuendo or outright accusation stimulated our curiosity.

The next scene begins with a contrast. Margaret Orme and Mabel Dancy are discussing the situation as it appears from the woman's angle. Dancy's character is further illuminated by the very fact that his own wife fundamentally knows so little about him. Mabel herself is in some respects not unlike Colford. Her loyalties are uncomplicated and governed by her emotions; her devotion to her husband self-evident. The feminine note continues in the ~~group~~ conversation between Margaret and Lady Adela, while Mabel is out of the room. There are hints at Dancy's past, and a reference also to the dampness of his coat on that fateful evening. The mood changes when Dancy returns, and husband and wife are left together. One's feelings are swayed first this way, then that - first wanting to believe with Mabel in Dancy's innocence, yet more and more convinced by his odd manner that he is indeed guilty. Hard on this harrowing conversation comes a complete contrast, when De Levis comes to see Dancy and has a few minutes alone with Mabel. He is courteous and sincere; the stage direction is absolutely explicit as to the tone in which this short section must be played. [1] An actor might without this direction

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1. Loyalties, p.663.

be tempted to assume a sneering cynical attitude, but clearly Galsworthy did not intend this. De Levis is sincere, but none the less his pride has been assaulted. There is dignity, however, as well as bitterness in his last remark to her, "Mrs. Dancy, I am not a gentleman, I am only a damned Jew. Yesterday I might possibly have withdrawn to spare you. But when my race is insulted I have nothing to say to your husband, but as he wishes to see me, I've come. Please let him know." He wastes no words, but there is no discourtesy.

His tone the next moment, with Dancy, is utterly different. The two men confront one another; one waits on tenterhooks for the outcome. The exit of De Levis is in keeping with his feeling towards his opponent, but it comes as a rather unpleasant surprise after his considerate behaviour to Mabel. He opens the door; then stands for a moment "with a smile on his face." [1] The dramatic purpose is evident. There is certainly a less pleasant side to his character, and it is well that the audience should at intervals be reminded of it. And a touch like this is a reminder which increases the conflict of loyalties in our minds. The final minute or so of this scene brings a slight lessening of emotional tension, but increases one's suspicions of Dancy. Here too the play is set on the inevitable last stage of its progress when he and Mabel take the irrevocable step of putting the matter into the hands of their lawyer.

So we have seen the first two acts, and we weigh our impressions. One realises that the play is building up to its final climax, but although the outcome is foreshadowed it is not absolutely clear.

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1. Loyalties, p.664.

Tantalising questions remain unanswered. But more than that, the rapid changes in mood, the contrasts and conflicts make us aware of other things - aware of the characters and their standards of conduct, of conflicting loyalties which almost defy resolution.

Thus when the third act opens, in the offices of Twisden and Graviter in Lincoln's Inn Fields, it is almost with a sense of relief that we realise that the case is actually in progress. We are brought straight to the point. A new character, Gilman, appears and it is obvious from the outset that he has important fresh evidence; we are not however allowed to hear it immediately, but are kept in a state of unsatisfied curiosity. Neatly and naturally information about the case is revealed by Winsor and Margaret Orme - the case appears to be going in Dancy's favour. Then to Twisden, and to Twisden alone, comes the revelation of the new evidence which is to break the whole case. It comes through Gilman - in dialogue completely natural in its hesitations and irrelevance, but it is absolutely damning. Dancy is the thief. Twisden sees no way out; he must reveal this new evidence to Dancy's counsel. Personal feelings are over-ruled by professional integrity. His younger partner, Graviter, may hesitate, but to Twisden there is no alternative.

The next scene shows the effect of the withdrawal on the different characters. First we see Twisden with Dancy. No words are wasted; no explanations given. The pace is rapid. Once Twisden has satisfied his professional consdience in telling Counsel of the evidence, he can allow his own feelings rein. One has not at this moment time to split hairs about the letter and the spirit. One's whole attention is on the two men. Twisden is intent on getting Dancy out of the country before he is arrested for theft. The latter however refuses to go without

seeing his wife. While he is in the next room thinking over his next move most of his friends collect in Twisden's room in a state of consternation. Their attitudes are most interesting. All want to help; all think him crazy, but not bad. No-one really condemns him. Colford rounds on Twisden for what he has done, and there is a sharp passage of arms between them. Suddenly as they stand round debating what they can do, Dancy himself returns. "Oh! clear out - I can't stand commiseration." A thoroughly convincing outburst and dramatically impeccable.

Unfortunately, particularly to a modern audience possibly partly composed of National Servicemen, Canynge's plea, "Dancy, for the honour of the Army, avoid further scandal if you can" might sound ludicrous. I am inclined to think that Galsworthy himself intended some satire here. The entrance of De Levis is a momentary distraction, and shows again the pleasanter side of his nature. He has come to warn Dancy of the warrant which has been issued for his arrest. He will take no suggestion of thanks. "Don't mistake me. I didn't come because I feel Christian. I am a Jew ....." [1] However, whatever his motive, his deed was kind, but we have little time to think of that. The play sweeps on to the last scene, where Dancy tells Mabel what has happened. There is the double sorrow of the revelation - both the fact that he stole the money and the reason for which he needed it. One's dominant emotion cannot but be pity for her, for by dramatic irony the audience knows everything she has to hear. She is horrified, amazed - and absolutely loyal. In vain she appeals to the inspector who has come to arrest her husband - appeals to him in the name of his humanity. Though her words have little weight with the inspector they have, unwittingly, given

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1. Loyalties, p.681.

Darcy the time he needed. The end is upon us before we realise it. The inspector moves towards the inner door. As Darcy's friends are heard at the outer door, his voice says "All right! You can come in now." There is a shot in the bedroom, and the rest is almost an epilogue. Had the play been merely a "thriller" what a curtain that shot would have made! But the play is more. Law confronts humanity; loyalty conflicts with loyalty. And what are we to make of Margaret's last cry "Keeps faith! We've all done that. It's not enough." As Colford makes his last vow of friendship to Darcy, "All right, old boy", the curtain falls for the last time, leaving us to think out our own conclusions.

What then are our reactions? Is Darcy a common sharper? Is that all? His death brings a sense of loss. He is not a villain, yet one cannot applaud theft, and to approve a rough-and-ready Robin Hood system of finance is to open the way to all kinds of moral entanglements. The play is far removed from a mere "who-dunnit". People, their actions and reactions, their behaviour in time of stress, their prejudices and their loyalties - are these the concern of a "thriller"? Do we find ourselves entangled with moral questions aroused by our reading when we close an Agatha Christie? But in Loyalties we watch, hypnotised, the destinies of its characters, and the final curtain, far from writing "finis", compels us to continue our thinking.

Technically Loyalties stands up to detailed study. The opening dramatic situation is caught exactly at the right moment; no time is wasted in unnecessary detail. A less skilled craftsman might have chosen as a beginning the card scene, described so vividly in retrospect by Lady Adela in the first scene, but the play would have lost greatly

in concentration. The preliminary investigation on the spot provides opportunity for the exposition of the story and elucidation of character. Subsequent episodes are chosen with care, as for instance the incident of the Club where, after news of De Levis's accusation of Dancy, the two are brought face to face. The dramatic tension is admirably handled. In the first act excitement is aroused by De Levis's firmly-stated opinion that Dancy stole the money. In the second act this suspense is maintained and comes to a head when De Levis makes his actual accusation. The third act provides a slight ironical relief, with Gilman's gossiping, though the audience's suspicions are ~~well~~ thoroughly alive. Then follows the revelation of the appearance of the stolen notes and from that point to Dancy's suicide the play thrusts forward irrevocably and rapidly. Character and plot are closely related. Events are shaped by personality; personalities are revealed by action, by intention and by conversation. The dialogue is extremely economical, yet convincingly natural. The general effect of the play is two-fold. First there is the interest roused by the rapid development of a good thriller; but more than this, there is a much deeper issue, that of conflicting loyalty to race, creed and profession. It is thought-provoking as a detective yarn is not.

Admittedly there are things at which a mid-twentieth century audience might cavil. Questions of class and race for instance present themselves in ways less clearly marked to us than to Galsworthy. A generation of conscripts might find the Army note amusing. Certainly one wonders, too, what a present day author would have made of the relationship between Dancy and Colford. Nevertheless the pull of conflicting loyalties, though they may be related to questions which are less prominent now

than in the 1920's, is a moral problem which must surely confront us in one form or another until we become mechanical robots in a nightmare civilisation.

After this examination of two plays as they might appear on the stage, I propose to pass on to a study of a longer passage than has so far been instanced, as one further example of Galsworthy's skill in dialogue. For ease of reference I give the quotation first. It is from the struggle between the Hillcrists and Hornblowers at the end of The Skin Game. (The Skin Game, p. 572, entrance of Hornblower, to p.573 his exit).

(The door is opened and Hornblower enters, pressing so on the heels of Fellows that the announcement of his name is lost).

Hornblower: Give me that deed! Ye got it out of me by false pretences and treachery. Ye swore that nothing should be heard of this. Why! me own servants know!

Mrs.Hillcrist: That has nothing to do with us. Your son came and wrenched the knowledge out of Mr. Dawker by abuse and threats; that is all. You will kindly behave yourself here, or I shall ask that you be shown out.

Hornblower: Give me that deed, I say ! (He suddenly turns on Dawker) Ye little ruffian, I see it in your pocket.

(The end indeed is projecting from Dawker's breast-pocket).

Dawker: (seeing red) Now, look 'ere, 'Ornblower, I stood a deal from your son, and I'll stand no more.

Hornblower: (To Mrs. Hillcrist) I'll ruin your place yet! (To Dawker) Ye give me that deed, or I'll throttle you.

(He closes on Dawker, and makes a snatch at the deed. Dawker

springs at him, and the two stand swaying, trying for a grip at each other's throats. Mrs. Hillcrist tries to cross and reach the bell, but is shut off by their swaying struggle. (Suddenly Rolf appears in the window, looks wildly at the struggle, and seizes Dawker's hands, which have reached Hornblower's throat. Jill, who is following, rushes up to him and clutches his arm.

Jill: Rolf! All of you! Stop! Look!

(Dawker's hand relaxes, and he is swung round. Hornblower staggers and recovers himself, gasping for breath. All turn to the window, outside which in the moonlight Hillcrist and Charles Hornblower have Chloe's motionless body in their arms).

In the gravel-pit. She's just breathing; that's all.

Mrs.H: Bring her in. The brandy, Jill!

Hornblower: No. Take her to the car. Stand back, young woman! I want no help from any of ye. Rolf - Chearlie - take her up.

(They lift and bear her away, Left. Jill follows).

Hillcrist, ye've got me beaten and disgraced hereabouts, ye've destroyed my son's married life, and ye've killed my grandchild. I'm not staying in this cursed spot, but if ever I can do you or y ours a hurt, I will.

Dawker: (Muttering) That's right. Squeal and threaten. You began it.

Hillcrist: Dawker, have the goodness! Hornblower, in the presence of what may be death, with all my heart I'm sorry.

Hornblower: Ye hypocrite!

(He passes them with a certain dignity, and goes out at the window, following to his car).

This is the culmination of the emotional tension of the whole play.

Hornblower bursts into the room without preamble, demanding "Give me that deed". Then - dangerously near the moral mark - "Ye got it out of me by false pretences and treachery." He does not mince his words; "treachery" he means, and "treachery" he says. Next, to him a crowning blow: "Why! me own servants know!" In that short speech we have all his anger, resentment, wounded pride-and without any loss of dramatic pace.

Mrs. Hillcrist's reply comes cold and hard. "That has nothing to do with us." At once she is the aristocrat, putting this upstart in his place. "You will kindly behave yourself here, or I shall ask that you be shown out." One can imagine the cutting quality of her voice from the plain forthrightness of her words, even the grammatical but unusual "be" where one would more naturally say "are".

It has however no effect on Hornblower, beside himself with rage and humiliation. His repetition of his own words, "Give me that deed, I say!" emphasises at once his burning anger and his singleness of purpose. He appears hardly to have heard Mrs. Hillcrist. Dawker's response is almost equally furious, and to the point. Hornblower's rejoinder is a prelude to his action - the two men close on one another. Precisely at that moment comes Jill's dramatic re-entry. "Rolf! All of you! Stop! Look!" The short exclamation brings them all to their senses. They turn to the window. Again all that is needed is a phrase. "In the gravel pit." Then quickly "she's just breathing; that's all." Mrs. Hillcrist's better nature reasserts itself; her calmness and economy of words could here have had its effect. "Bring her in. The brandy, Jill!" But no - Hornblower's pride, sorrow, resentment and human feelings are all reflected in his emotion-charged words. ...

"Stand back, young woman! I want no help from any of ye ..... Hillcrist, ye've got me beaten and disgraced hereabouts, ye've destroyed my son's married life, and ye've killed my grandchild...but if ever I can do you or yours a hurt, I will." Perhaps it might be argued that after the crescendo of emotion in the three clauses, "Ye've got me beaten and disgraced ...." "ye've destroyed ....." "ye've killed my grandchild" it is melodramatic to add the anticlimax of "if ever I can do you or yours a hurt I will," but it is surely in keeping with Hornblower's nature.

There is complete contrast between Dawker's mutterings - "That's right. Squeal and threaten. You began it" - and his master's words - "Dawker, have the goodness! Hornblower, in the presence of what may be death, with all my heart I am sorry." Here is a speech of dignity, having almost the cadence of liturgy; it is lost on Hornblower. One can visualise him as he looks at Hillcrist, and spits out "Ye hypocrite!" These are his last words in the play, and they give him victory. After his exit the pace slackens. The dialogue in this short extract has rapidity of pace, contrast in the emotion, and suitability to character. At this stage of the play exposition is of course unnecessary, but many examples can be found of Galsworthy's craftsmanship in this respect also. It may be that the economy and realism of the conversation has lost its appeal since the need for a reaction against unnatural dialogue - a need which was pressing in the early part of this century - has disappeared. In some plays of the more recent years, the prose dialogue show s a tendency to be deliberately more diffuse, usually as the purpose is different. One might cite as an instance Thornton Wilder's The Skin Of Our Teeth, an experimental play on the cosmic theme of the dilemma of

of man, with dialogue fitted to its unreal yet strangely convincing action. A short quotation from an early speech of Sabina, where she comes out of her stage character and addresses the audience directly, immediately reveals a completely different speech-rhythm, although the actual words are as unexceptional as Galsworthy's.

> "I can't invent any words for this play, and I'm glad I can't. I hate this play and every word ~~of~~ in it.
> As for me, I don't understand a single word of it, anyway ; all about the troubles the human race has gone through, there's a subject for you."

No conclusion can be drawn from one brief comparison, but the difference in tone is significant of a completely dissimilar approach.

Much has been written about the stage settings and directions in Galsworthy's plays. These are very much in the Shavian tradition, the settings being in most cases particularly meticulously detailed. The main criticism which is levelled against them is that the novelist has for the moment superseded the dramatist. This tendency, while greater in the later plays, can also be observed in some of those written earlier. The description of Maurice Lever in Joy (1907) "a man like a fencer's wrist, supple and steely," has the ring of the novelist, while the opening stage-direction of Windows (1922) might almost be an extract from a novel. "The March's dining-room opens through French windows on one of those gardens which seem infinite, till they ~~seem~~ are seen to be coterminous with the side walls of the house, and finite at the far end, because only the thick screen of acacias and sumachs prevents another house from being seen. The French and other windows form practically all the outer walls of that dining-room, and between them and the screen of trees lies the

difference between the characters of Mr. and Mrs. March, with dots and dashes of Mary and Johnny thrown in." In fact Galsworthy himself seems well aware that he has crossed from one domain to another, for part way through the passage he brings himself to order saying,"But all this is by the way, because except for a yard or two of gravel terrace outside the windows, it is all painted on the backcloth." He goes on, nevertheless, with that nice turn of phrase one associates with the author of The Man of Property - the Marches have been breakfasting; the table is "thick with remains, seven baskets full." The room is "gifted" with old oak furniture. These are terms which are appreciated by the reader, as are the descriptions of Mary and Johnny. Johnny is "a commonplace-looking young man, with a decided jaw, tall, neat, and soulful, who has been in the war." Mary is "less ordinary; you cannot tell exactly what is the matter with her." Admittedly it would be difficult to show, at Johnny's first appearance, that he had been in the war and wrote poetry. But stage-directions are not merely concerned with the "obvious-at-first-sight." They also give the actor insight into the way to interpret his part. Thus what pleases a reader's fancy can also help an actor's characterisation. The tendency as the century has progressed has been perhaps towards the less explicit stage-direction. The opening of The Family Reunion (1939) is this:

"Part I. The Drawing Room, after Tea. An afternoon in late March.

Scene 1. Amy, Ivy, Violet, Agatha, Gerald, Charles, Mary.

Denman enters to draw the curtains."

In the rest of the act there is only one brief direction.

Venus Observed (1950) begins:

"A room at the top of a mansion: once a bedroom, now an observatory. When the curtain rises the Duke of Altair is in argument with his son Edgar. Also present is Herbert Reedbeck, the Duke's agent."

Again, no hard and fast directions can be drawn from such slender evidence, but the implied contrasts are interesting.

Technically, Galsworthy is not on the whole an innovator. Time and place are for him time and place. He does not use the "flash-back" method in his plays, nor do we find in them the mixture of mental and physical action which is the dramatic parallel of the "stream-of-consciousness" technique in the novel. Such symbolism as he gives us is, with one exception, of a fairly obvious nature. His prose is terse, economical, artificially realistic. But every dramatist is not necessarily an innovator, and Galsworthy's technique admirably suits the kind of play which he was best equipped to write.

It is because I feel his reputation is best served by a study of what we usually termed his naturalistic plays - such as The Silver Box, Justice, Strife, The Skin Game, Loyalties - that I have said little about The Little Dream and the shorter plays.

The Little Dream is a highly personal allegory. Galsworthy wrote of it: "The deeper symbolism of The Little Dream is so personal to me, so intimate, that I rather despair of making it clear in prose.

It would help you to grasp it if you read the first poem A Dream, in my Moods, Songs and Doggerels (Heinemann). My view of the universe is that of a perpetual conflict between opposing principles, dark and light, life and death, ebb and flow .....

Between these conflicting principles in nature, there is a mysterious

and by us not to be appreciated point of reconciliation .....

The little soul in my play is passing through this world of conflict (typified by Lamond and Felsman as Town and Country: Civilisation and wild nature: adventure and peace) on her way to the unknowable, mysterious and everlasting reconcilement or Harmony." [1.]

It is mainly a dream-fantasy, with little action and a number of tableaux. The last paragraph of Galsworthy's letter explains what little story there is. It has beauty, both of language and scenic effect, which gives it a pretty charm which is unusual in his plays. The music and dancing apparently gave him great satisfaction, and his diary records that the performance, in Manchester, was "good and a great success." The symbolism is not on the whole insuperably difficult; the colour and lighting must have greatly enhanced the visual effect, while there is a certain emotional conflict in the dramatic situation. Nevertheless I do not feel the play is a success. The experience it seeks to convey is a highly personal one, having for Galsworthy many ramifications and subtleties which almost defy communication in this medium, with the result that for me the effect is either superficial, as in the struggle between the Cow Horn and the Winehorn to win Seelchen, or confused, as in the introduction of Death by Slumber and Death by Drowning. To convey mystical experiences successfully on the stage is to attempt the impossible.

Intermittent symbolism is to be found in many of his plays. In Windows for instance, the occupation of the philosopher Mr. Bly has obviously a significance. Not for nothing is he a window-cleaner rather than an odd-job man, plumber or candlestick-maker. The jungle, too, in

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters, p.330. To an unrecorded correspondent.

The Forest has a symbolic value. The dramatic situation could be worked out in other places - tropical Africa is not the only country with hostile natives - but the sense of menacing darkness and mystery grows as the expedition penetrates further into the dense jungle-forest. The very heart of darkness indeed! The Foundations bears a hint of symbolism, though the issue is never made very clear. The foundations of a house and the foundations of a good society have something in common. The bomb which is to blow up Sir William's home is also the bomb which is to destroy the community; and both are equally illusory. One could go on puzzling out parallels, but in fairness to Galsworthy I do not think he intended an elaborate unravelling of his symbolism. Technique to him is a means to an end, and not an end in itself.

In two of his later plays, Escape and The Roof he breaks from the tradition of the "well-made play" and employs instead an episodic construction. In Escape it is as though he is forming a dramatic circle, adding in each episode a segment, until the whole is completed, and the Matt Denant we have seen in the first episode fuses with the Matt Denant of the last, becoming at that moment of fusion a richer personality. It is moreover a method of construction suited to a play of escape, with the series of climaxes exciting in their own ways rather than as steps leading towards a culmination of intensity. The varied settings irresistibly suggest the technique of the film with its ranging cameras, and there are many moments of dramatic impact where a cinema "close-up" would be most effective - the moment in the episode with the shingled lady when Matt's image passes into her mirror is one. It is fascinating to speculate on what Cocteau would have made of this. The Roof is somewhat similar in construction. It is, however, a much less satisfactory play. In

Escape one sees Matt in different situations, and thus unity is preserved. The episodes in The Roof are built less round a central character than round a central idea - that of a number of lives all intersected at a given point in time by a particular happening. It is an interesting departure from the more traditional method, but would probably be better embodied in a novel, where the separate lives could be more fully developed, as in Thornton Wilder's The Bridge of San Luis Rey.

The shorter plays do not show Galsworthy's powers to advantage. The First and the Last has an ingeniously presented conclusion which for sheer theatricality makes one's blood run cold, but it is melodrama. In so short a play there is not time for the development of character necessary to lift it from this level. One cannot really believe that Keith Darrant would let an innocent man hAng. The Little Man has moments of amusement, and the national types are nicely indicated. One knows exactly how the two English people would try to "dissociate themselves" from the presence of the Little Man with their papers, while the American has a refreshingly unexpected turn of phrase. The "modern morality" issue is perhaps too heavily underlined, particularly at the end, though the American's closing remark furnishes an appropriate anti-climax. Hall-marked is wittily contrived, and the pace is well maintained. It is too slight a piece,however,to be taken very seriously. The other short plays - Defeat, The Sun, and Punch and Go - have the true Galsworthian flavour of controlled sadness, but add little to his reputation.

Theme and technique are,then, in Galsworthy's best plays so closely interwoven that it is almost impossible to separate the two. An analysis of the one overlaps and encroaches upon the other. It might be argued that this is true of any successful drama. I do not however think it is

always true to the same degree. For instance, in Christopher Fry's The Lady's Not For Burning the sheer quality of the words is an endless source of pleasure quite independent of one's interest in the theme. That this is never so with Galsworthy is the result of his dominating passion for character-creation. The situations in which he chooses to display the personalities of his people are powerful, sometimes bordering on the melodramatic, but even so they are, apart from one or two exceptions, credible, given the temperaments of the characters concerned. The two are fused into dramatic reality, and so one's analytic study ends in synthesis.

Weaknesses, of course, he has. Even the greatest dramatists are not entirely faultless, and Galsworthy is not among the greatest. He is not, as I have said before, primarily an innovator; nor is he highly original in his choice or treatment of theme, though compared with some of the playwrights of the early twentieth century he shows greater depth of thought and freshness of approach than is usually allowed him. By present-day standards some of his problems may seem over-simplified - breakdown in marriage being, for instance, nearly always due, in his plays, to one particular cause.

There is,too, a sense of bleakness about his work. If I were an abstract painter, I should record my impressions of the plays in shades of grey, with occasional flashes of white and strokes of black; beautiful in its sombreness but primarily intellectual in its appeal. One misses somehow in his plays the wholeness of experience which comes from the instanteous fusion of emotional, physical and intellectual response - one's response, for instance, to Cleopatra's magnificent "Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have Immortal longings in me." But it is

given to few artists to produce such an effect.

This 'bleakness', a quality almost of over-restraint, brings with it inevitably a somewhat detached and objective relationship between actor and audience. The latter are mainly observers, rather than participants. Their emotions tend to be canalised in the direction of one particular issue, though the issue may be complex in itself, rather than diffused among several conflicts of feeling. In The Skin Game one's emotions are concentrated on the struggle between Mr. and Mrs. Hillcrist on the one hand, and Hornblower on the other. Pity for Chloe, sympathy with Jill and Rolf, are part of this issue and not in opposition to it. It is a melodic rather than harmonic or contrapuntal development. On the other hand Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman buffets one's emotions this way and that, between Willy Loman, Biff, Happy and Linda, until one's state of mind becomes almost as baffled as Willy's own.

Some critics assert that this almost too objective treatment is at once the cause and result of too great a concentration on technique, though Galsworthy's own views on the latter subject would refute this. It is certainly true that Galsworthy is a most skilled craftsman. His plays are conceived - with the possible exceptions of Escape and The Roof - as rounded wholes, constructed and developed with minute attention to details of exposition, handling of tension, accumulation of climax. One of the difficulties of textual study of his plays is that one finds oneself quoting practically every line as having individual significance. This is most certainly preferable to the play that winds its slow length through pages of desultory dialogue, but the very concentration demands an intellectual effort which may rob the listener of his ability to respond

emotionally at the same time. Occasionally also one is irritated by a very deliberate laying of clues. Possibly Galsworthy felt at the time that his audience, not all as accustomed to the thought-provoking play as subsequent generations have become, needed dramatic sign-posts, but over-emphasised directions can be most annoying.

Another charge which is often directed at his work is that it is sentimental. At a recent reading of Strife - which was otherwise appreciated - the part between Enid Underwood and Annie Roberts was unhesitatingly and almost unanimously labelled 'sob-stuff'. Ruth Honeywill, in Justice, cannot simply be a widow faced with poverty, as in those days she well might have been; she must be married to a brute whom she loathes, and our emotions are harrowed by her suffering and subsequent 'escape'.

There are, too, some extraordinary lapses of taste in the plays. In the middle of a serious discussion on life, death and the world in The Little Dream (scene 1) comes this piece of dialogue:

"Seelchen: You have all the world; and I have nothing.
Lamond: Except Felsman and the mountains.
Seelchen: It is not good to eat only bread.
Lamond: (looking at her hard). I would like to eat you.

It is impossible to defend such bathos, with its obvious implication.

In fact Galsworthy's attitude to sex is one of the more questionable aspects of his work. The mature young women in his plays are all physically desirable and desired - the latter being in many cases the cause of much of the tragedy. One agrees - though possibly for a different reason - with Michael Strangway when he demands of his wife

Beatrice, "Why, in the name of mercy, come here to tell me that?" after her revelation that she has "fallen". It is sufficient that she no longer loves him. Must we also be made so conscious of her "fall"? Even the younger girls are in the most obvious sense marriageable; this is no fault in itself but suggests a concentration, which could become monotonous, on one aspect of the relationship between men and women.

His sense of the comic is not always above reproach. His peculiar gift is for irony, the grim irony which borders on tragedy and is illustrated in his attitude to the blind, smug complacency of Mrs. Barthwick. More gentle yet still ironical is his tone towards Colonel Hope. And there are many more examples of the kind of humour in which he excels, be it grim or gentle. Unfortunately the same cannot be said of his adventures into the purely comic. The cook in Windows is a caricature of the faithful family retainer with an inveterate weakness for the only boy in the house. The parish council in A Bit o' Love may be amusing to town-dwellers who consider every countryman is a brainless yokel but it is highly irritating to those who think otherwise, besides being extremely tedious. The horse-play with the dead rat in Old English is incredible. The Foundations, Galsworthy's only purely comic play, is presumably in the tradition of intellectual comedy, but it is too heavy-handed to have the bite which Shaw can impart. In another of Galsworthy's comic devices one detects snobbery - that is, in the persistence with which he makes his humbler characters misuse and mispronounce words.

Yet, when all these have been considered, do they outweigh his positive contribution to drama?

First, briefly to sum up what has already been mentioned of his excellence as a craftsman. He has, apart from those occasional lapses,

a real sense of fitness and a power of selection which is necessary not merely to a skilled technician, but also to an artist. The situations which he chooses and the forms into which he moulds them are admirably suited to bring out those aspects of his characters which he wishes to emphasise. These characters, though perhaps they do not, as Hamlet for instance does, linger in our minds to disturb us with ananswered questions, yet live within the play and convince us of their credibility; the issues and conflicts which they by their very temperaments have produced remain with us. All this is presented through dialogue which is economical yet not, as I have sometimes found in other plays, so obtrusively heavy with meaning as to distract attention.

Nevertheless it is not solely by reason of his competence as a dramatic draughtsman that Galsworthy deserves attention. His thought, while not abnormally profound, is serious, consistent, and positive in comparison with some of his successors. Fundamentally his standards are founded on centuries of western civilisation; ethically they are Christian. He has the western emphasis on the importance of the individual allied with the Pauline belief in the interdependence of one member of the community with another. Our behaviour as it affects others or is affected by them is a constant source of his inspiration. He returns constantly to the theme of man in society - man oppressed by society, in opposition to society, but always man in relation to his fellows, not an individual isolated within the agonies of his own mind.

His values spring mainly from his insistence on fundamental charity, the unselfish love for one's fellow men towards which Michael Strangway strives. It is love which, to use a modern colloqualism, has no strings attached. From this ideal of absolute consideration for others comes

naturally the innate decency of behaviour which we know Hillcrist is capable of, which Matt Denant also possesses as do many other of the characters. Fairness of mind is allied to this - that fairness which gives the devil his due, even though one is not of the devil's persuasion. Winsor and Canynge, though not naturally sympathetic to De. Levis, have the integrity to admit the weight of his evidence. Loyalty, too, even when misplaced, has the element of selfless thought which is inherent in real charity, and loyalty to one's ideals transcends personal feeling. Stephen More's absolute integrity is all the more powerful because of the apparent futility. Courage such as this may serve the most exalted ends, or as in the case of John Anthony be directed towards a practical issue. Both, as Galsworthy intended, arouse our admiration. Strength of character is a pre-requisite in his heroic figures. But this, he implies, is not always enough. For all his sympathy with old Anthony and his counterpart David Roberts he does not wholeheartedly approve of either of them. Neither have the sensitivity and imagination which would allow them to recognise, beyond their own personal conflict, the sufferings in which they are involving others. Sensitivity is a quality Galsworthy rates high.

Conversely the characteristics which he hates most are, as it were, the reverse side of the coin. Insensitivity excites his ardent anger - the insensitivity of George Dedmond, Adrian Bastaple, the Barthwicks, the prison chaplain (Justice) and many others. He hates the lack of charity which creates blindness to the needs of others, complacent belief in one's own standards, facilely-accepted standards which are based on self-seeking. Money wrongly used as a source of power and as a means of getting one's own way at the expense of others infuriates him. The hard, inhuman aspect of much "organised" benevolence comes under fire -

in The Pigeon for instance - as does organised religion. The representatives of this form of "charity" have little insight into the feelings of the people they supposedly would relieve and guide. It is another form of insincerity and self-deception, two qualities most alien to Galsworthy. Nearly all these originate in lack of essential charity.

Since that last quality, on earth, is a rare occurence there are few out-and-out heroes in his plays. Those who are nearest this category - Matt Denant, Stephen More, Michael Strangway - are distinguished for their real thought for others, their courage and determination, their sensitivity and integrity. Hillcrist in a moment of weakness allows his own sense of what is right to be over-ruled, and has the self-knowledge to realise that the moral harm is irrevocable. Although Galsworthy has great tolerance with the shortcomings of the characters with whom he sympathises his standard of judgment is none-the-less clear; pity is not allowed to blur the moral issue.

Indeed, objective as they are, his plays reveal much of his own personality. It is a restrained, aloof character, yet with unexpected reserves of emotion. Idiosyncrasies undoubtedly he had. Certainly too, he had many of the qualities often regarded as "typically English" - reserve; a strong moral sense; a nostalgia for the vanished days when England was an agricultural community, which manifests itself in his personal life in his love of animals and in his plays in a hatred of industrialisation. He had a very sincere belief in the traditional culture and values of England which have been built up over centuries and are being swept away by the irresistible force of technology. Many of the evils which he indicates are in some way connected with big business.

Above all things he was himself charitable, sincere and pitiful for the struggles of humanity. When asked about his philosophy of life he replied that as far as he had one, it could be summed up in Adam Lindsay Gordon's words, "Life is mostly froth and bubble." To a generation versed in the complications of self-analysis this may seem an over-simplified view. Nevertheless as practical guidance for conduct there are many worse things than

"Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own."

A playwright who combines competence in technique with seriousness of purpose and a genuine artistic and personal integrity has a right to be treated with some attention and not dismissed cavalierly as negligible because changing conditions have brought changed audiences. What Galsworthy attempted for the most part he achieved, and the achievement is by no means negligible. There is room in art both for the glorious failure and the limited success. I was once privileged to hear the late Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's lecture on Aristotle. One of the images he used has been a constant source of illumination. To him, the difference between Classicism and Romanticism was symbolised by the difference between a Greek temple and Salisbury Cathedral. The perfection of balanced proportion in the former gives it a permanence which nothing short of catastrophe can destroy. The spires of Salisbury Cathedral taper towards the sky, containing in their complicated structure of strain and stress the ultimate seeds of their own destruction, yet reaching out to the unattainable. Each has its own greatness. I do not suggest that Galsworthy's artistry can stand comparison with a Greek work of art, but merely that each kind of achievement has its own place. Comparative evaluation is not the sole criterion.

It would be useless to pretend that Galsworthy's reputation did not undergo an almost complete eclipse, but there seem to be signs that it was an eclipse and not an extinction. I do not think that the usual whirligig of time can entirely account for the fluctuations, and the second part of this thesis is an attempt to examine how the changes in life and thought during the century have reflected themselves in the changes in his reputation.

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PART II

An examination of Galsworthy's reputation as an index of changes in life and thought of the time.

(a) Some of the changes to which his reputation may serve as an index.

Every author suffers to some degree from the passage of time. Sometimes it is a temporary eclipse; sometimes an almost permanent extinction. Nevertheless I contend that this passage of time is not in itself sufficient to explain the fluctuations in Galsworthy's reputation, and that the cause for these variations must be sought in more profound issues; that in fact they are reflections of a society and civilisation in the throes of astounding revolutions in thought and life.

To try to pretend that these fluctuations do not exist would of course be foolish. They reveal themselves even to the most cursory glance. He who at the end of the first decade of the century was counted a leading writer was, by the mid 1920's, the subject of by no means inconsiderable attacks. R. A. Scott-James sums up the situation:

"And so it happened, in the period between the wars, that critics who in their youth had drawn upon the ideas of the younger Galsworthy and assimilated them, became impatient with the older Galsworthy, now a pillar, it seemed, of just that constitution which he himself had laboured to undermine. More than any other then living man of letters he himself had become an English Institution; and as such was respected by the multitude, praised by the correct and derided by young originals." [1]

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1. Scott-James, R.A. Fifty Years of English Literature 1900-50. p 46 [1951]

Literary fashion,too,has had its effect. Antony Quinton writing in the Observer on January 18, 1959, begins his review of the new novels of the week with:

"Time has not been kind to the old-style professional novelist. Thirty years ago the production of ample, straightforward narratives, of a technical sophistication well this side of Trollope's, was a respected and often profitable craft. Writers like Galsworthy, Hugh Walpole and Somerset Maugham could count on a loyal and continuing audience, whose appetite for a new book would only be sharpened by the likeness between it and its predecessors from the same hand. In those times comfortable middle class persons would contentedly settle down in front of a blazing coal fire that somebody else would have to clean out the next morning, with a heavy volume on their laps and float gently away on the smooth and somewhat sluggish stream of conventional imaginings that it contained."

Admittedly this is directly applicable to Galsworthy's novels,but it needs little mental effort to translate it into dramatic terms. Interesting, too, is the tone of the criticism - benignly condescending towards the old-fashioned straightforward narratives. Doubtless one might add here, the plays which begin at the beginning, and go on to the end.

However, I reiterate that neither literary fashion nor the passage of time explains adequately the wide variations in Galsworthy's reputation over a period of thirty to forty years. He never completely lost his following during that period, but particularly in the later 1920's and early 1930's he met with some extraordinarily venomous criticism. It is my theory that he reached literary maturity at a most unfortunate time -

that is, at a time when some of the most far-reaching revolutions in the life and thought of civilisation as we know it were in progress. Had they come more gradually, or separately, his reputation would have suffered less, but coming as they did in one great tidal wave of change they submerged - temporarily at all events - much of what he had achieved. Galsworthy himself was something of a reformer but, despite what Scott-James calls his efforts to undermine the constitution, I see his reforms taking place within the framework of traditional values. The violence which shows itself in so many aspects of modern life is utterly alien to him. Thus it is that the sweeping changes of the half-century have, by their very intensity, been more unfair to Galsworthy than either literary fashion or the mere passage of time. It is therefore impossible to see the reflection of the age in the fluctuations in his reputation, and their effect upon his popularity, without a preliminary examination of those changes in life and thought which are the hallmark of the twentieth century. After this examination I shall come to a more explicit assessment of the vicissitudes which Galsworthy has undergone at the hands of his critics, and attempt to relate these to the intellectual, social and aesthetic movements to which they may be said to provide an index.

We tend to look back upon the first fourteen years of the century - years in which Galsworthy made his name, and which must have played a decisive part in the shaping of his ideas - as halcyon days of peace and prosperity. It is a mistaken view. They were years of rousing political controversy and cumulative social changes. They see the growth of British socialism as a political force, (the British Labour Party was formed in 1900) the eclipse of the Liberal Party and the struggle by the more radical ~~ements~~ elements of the House of Commons to break the power of the

House of Lords. The Parliament Act of 1911, which limited the Lords' power of veto, was a milestone in the struggle. The foundations of present-day social security were laid in that period, with such measures as the 1902 Education Act and the National Insurance Act of 1911. Moreover these are years of industrial upheavals, which brought with them strikes and other disputes. Yet another source of dissension was the movement for the further emancipation of women, for to this period belong the deeds of the militant suffragettes. Against this background Galsworthy wrote The Silver Box, Joy, Strife, The Eldest Son, The Little Dream, Justice, The Pigeon, and The Mob. It is possible to see the struggles of the period reflected in such plays in particular as The Silver Box, Justice, Strife, and The Eldest Son. Among thoughtful people of the time there was a movement towards greater freedom and more practical humanitarianism. Galsworthy's liberal and humane spirit spoke for many. Such a play as Strife immediately made its mark, expressing as it did something of the temper of the time.

The 1914-18 war brought a natural unity to the country and many of the changes which were imperceptibly in progress were given added impetus by war-time exigences. It was a period which destroyed many of the old standards of values, but attention was inevitably distracted from these intangible happenings by the physical destruction caused by war. Perhaps by mere coincidence, perhaps because he was concentrating on other things, Galsworthy produced only two plays, A Bit o' Love and The Foundations, neither of which ~~are~~ is outstanding.

The years 1919-1939 have been described as "a twenty-years' crisis" [1].

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1. Carter and Mears History of Britain, section 4, p.990.

And it is with regard to these years that I find the fluctuations in Galsworthy's reputation most significant. The boom which followed the war was short-lived and the trade decline set in, in England, about 1920. There followed financial chaos, unemployment, strikes, and finally the world slump, all of which brought great hardship to millions of people. Abroad - though only the far-seeing noticed it - were further signs of trouble, with the rise of dictatorships and Totalitarian regimes. The memories of those years bring with them a feeling of instability and unrest; the 1920's are particularly marked by a craving in many of the younger generation for sensation and freedom which bordered on licence. The first ten years of this period show marked variations in Galsworthy's reputation. He appears, about 1920 or so, to be at the zenith of his career, but in the space of about ten years things are beginning to alter. In Marrot's words, by 1930, "the reaction against Galsworthy's enormous reputation and popularity all over the world had already set in in some quarters, where his name alone was sufficient to ensure a 'slating.'" [1].

The 1939-45 war is described by some historians as a "religious war." "Thus a new set of political and perverted moral values were developed, in which truth, liberty, and much else that our democratic institutions have stood for, were disregarded. The morals and standards of Christendom - and the Anglo-Saxon way of life which is based upon them - were at stake when this country entered upon the Second World War. And that war ended with the eclipse of Europe and the retreat of Europeans from Asia, perhaps the two greatest events of our time." [2]. There appear now to be two major

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.541-2.

2. Carter and Mears: History of Britain. p.~~1040~~.1081.

ideologies at war - the western view in which respect for individual personality is paramount, and the eastern conception which takes little heed of the individual life. The effect on the pattern of our civilisation of the rise of Communist China has yet to be estimated.

Since 1945, at home the seal has been set upon the early Liberal efforts towards social security by the implementation of the 1944 Education Act and the 1947 National Insurance Act - the latter the most far-reaching measure of its kind in our history. To-day there is no need for anyone in this country to lack the basic necessities of life. In fact for many sections of the community the standard of living is higher than it has ever been - and television keeps at bay the disturbing murmurs of "Where do we go from here?"

Abroad, crisis has followed crisis until we have become so hardened to the word that it has no significance. Governments fall, rulers are "liquidated", weapons multiplied - and the mind, battered from all sides by spiritual assaults of every description, withdraws within itself in self-defence.

Indeed, Galsworthy looking at the world to-day might well ask where we have come since his day. Superficially the issues which were part of his world - social justice, the position of women and so on - have been dwarfed by mightier problems, though a more profound examination will reveal the fallacy of this view. Nevertheless it would be foolish to disregard the revolutionary changes which have taken place in the past forty of fifty years, and their impact on literature. After this brief historic outline,then, it is necessary to look more closely at the less tangible factors which have contributed to Galsworthy's decline.

This is indeed an age of technology, and its effects on every aspect of life - commerce, communications, industry, agriculture, warfare and a hundred others - cannot be over-estimated. To attempt anything more than the briefest allusion to man's triumphs in this field would be irrelevant and impossible. The astounding increase in ease and speed of communications is perhaps one of the distinguishing features of the period, particularly since the end of the Second World War. Countries have ceased to be isolated units and we have learnt - often with fear and anxiety - that we are in very fact, willy-nilly, members one with another. What happens to-day in Iraq or Cuba will ultimately have its effect on us. The exploration of outer space, exciting though it may be, is terrifying to anyone who dares to think soberly of the possible repercussions. Everywhere the universe is expanding at a rate which makes the imagination totter. Distance hardly exists; time itself is half-conquered. And paradoxically the world is by the same term contracting. Man's mind remains the measure of the "wondrous architecture of the world." Science has not as yet - and for this, we thank with brief thanksgiving whatever gods may be - found a means of fusing two minds, so that the experiences of one are added directly to the other. As the universe becomes incomprehensibly bigger and bigger, the individual turns in desperation back upon himself, to the security of what is known and at all events partially understood. Art becomes concerned, not as it for the most part was in Galsworthy's case with the relationship of a man to the society around him, but with the inner tensions which torment the individual. In one respect this is a reflection of what is happening in the outside world, for rapidly increasing communications have caused a

disintegration of the smaller units of the community which were capable of absorbing a man's loyalties. The amorphous mass which we now label "Society" is actually completely unreal. The kind of village entity which, for instance, we see in The Skin Game has vanished. The trend of the mental climate of the age shows itself in the paradox of a widening world and an introspective narrowing of individual view-points.

The whole age is one of dichotomies. Man's control of his environment extends almost to life and death themselves - new drugs, new processes realise almost inconceivable miracles. Yet over those very issues which mean life or death to civilisation itself we all seem powerless. Art and science, at a time when it is more and more necessary that knowledge and imagination should unite, are fundamentally divided. The problem of the individual and society, far from being solved, presents itself in different guises, being concerned often now with the struggle of the individual, not to make terms with Society, but, in industrial phraseology, to "contract out," a procedure which Galsworthy would hardly recognise. In the last resort the dichotomy, driven to its furthest extreme, is between the materialists and those who believe, however diversely, that the physical world cannot account for everything. We are rapidly coming to the position when it will be necessary for thinking people to commit themselves to some form of belief - not in the sense of a religious creed but in the sense of an acknowledged standard of values - for the vitriolic wine of the new era will not be contained in the old patched-up bottles. As Field-Marshal Smuts said in 1947, "We are facing one of the great revolutions - perhaps the greatest revolution in all human history. The people are seeking once more for a cause and a code. This searching spirit is once more trying to blaze new tracks and paths to the future." One

can hardly blame Galsworthy, or any other writer of his period, if the problems he presents seem, to us, now, less pressing than our own. It is, as I have said before, not merely the passage of time, but the amazing confluence of revolutionary ideas which has produced unprecedented changes.

The pattern of thought, then, which the half-century presents is so infinitely complex that some artificial separation is inevitable if we are to see its effects upon Galsworthy's reputation. Arbitrary though the divisions may be the developments will be examined under four heads - social and political, intellectual, scientific, and aesthetic. Each is manifestly bound up with the others, but I consider the complexities of the age to have had such bearing upon Galsworthy's literary standing that some kind of order must be forced upon them in order that the importance of each aspect may be apparent.

The social and political elements, however, are too involved with one another to be separated, and the changes which have taken place in these two fields during the period in which Galsworthy was writing are almost incalculable. When I was a child we used to sing the hymn "All things bright and beautiful", in which the following lines occurred:

"The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them, high ~~and~~ or lowly,
And ordered their estate."

In modern versions of the hymn they are omitted, and in their omission lies a whole social revolution. They express a philosophy which young people of to-day would not understand, but one which Galsworthy would have recognised. Universal suffrage, becoming finally a fact in 1919, the spread of education, particularly with the 1902 Act which made secondary education theoretically available to all, are factors which aided the

disintegration of social barriers. Increased trade and mechanisation, together with social legislation, begin to neutralise some of the worst effects of the Industrial Revolution. The processes, slow and gradual at first, are speeded up by the Second World War which sweeps the old world away with astonishing rapidity. The emergence of the Welfare State, extending old benefits and introducing new, has created a generation to whom the poverty of Ruth Honeywill or the anxiety of the Jackmans over their cottage mean little. I have myself seen this in the reaction of a usually intelligent, sensitive student of twenty-three to Leonard Best's predicament when, in Howard's End, he lost his job. "I haven't any patience with Leonard Best," she said. "Why didn't he go and get himself another job?" With unemployment benefit, family allowances and public assistance, material well-being is reasonably assured; the anxiety in the modern world shifts to other things.

Class distinction, too, has declined considerably. Galsworthy himself was highly conscious of class-barriers and of the possible evils of such a system, though he condemns rather the abuses inherent in it than the system itself. A classless society is probably an impossibility, but even within my memory the structure of society has changed almost beyond recognition; one may see Galsworthy's awareness of this in the Forsyte Saga. The solid middle class, with a community of interest and a solidarity of tradition, has almost disappeared. In its place are the second generation of Hornblowers, the son David and Annie Roberts should have had, even one of the Jones children grown up, a class which has yet to forge its unity. The old recognisable loyalties are breaking down; the family unit means infinitely less than it did fifty years ago; the churches, though they claim a greater number of communicants, touch

perhaps one in a hundred. The standards which ~~had~~ have had validity over centuries are questioned. The world expands bewilderingly. The fragmentation of society continues. All these manifold changes cannot but affect the force of the argument of such a play as The Silver Box. The swing is rather now away from the Jack Barthwicks. One feels that many magistrates would indeed be prejudiced against him. The plight of the unfortunate Mrs. Jones would be far less serious. The issues in Loyalties would be less telling. Chloe Hornblower's past would not cause many eyebrows even to flicker to-day. The present-day social and political world seems hardly to be the offspring of yesterday.

Not less vital, but less obvious, are the intellectual currents which have helped, consciously or unconsciously, to form the prevailing attitudes of mind to-day, and thence to influence art. Chief among these I would rate the great upheaval caused by the psychological explorations of Freud. The nineteenth century had had its psychologists and neurologists, but Freud's great contribution lies in his insistence on the importance of the unconscious mind in determining the behaviour of the individual. The contents of this unconscious mind are partly crude instincts, partly emotional tensions, and the conscious mind controls these desires by repressing and inhibiting them till they come into some kind of accordance with what it considers is fitting behaviour. At once the implications as to mental health and moral responsibility are obvious; one feels Galsworthy would go a little of the way with Freud in this respect. We cannot write off the Falders of our society as James How does, by saying that if a man is predisposed to crime he will go that way irrespective of what we do. The irony of the Chaplain's remark after Cokeson's departure - "Our friend seems to think that prison is a ~~kind of~~ hospital" - is obvious.

A recognition of the power of the unconscious mind must bring with it a recognition of diminished responsibility, and a profound alteration in values and moral attitude. So far, I am sure, Galsworthy would go, but the restrained dignity of his own personality would find the excessive moral "freedom" which is usually associated - wrongly - with the name of Freud abhorrent. A generation steeped in "self expression" finds his code of behaviour irksome, or in their own phrase,"stuffy."

Freud, and,more particularly,his one-time disciple Adler were also much concerned with the problems of heredity and environment; both laid great stress on the importance of family life, and in particular on events and influences of childhood in the formation of adult character. From this springs one of the most distinctive features of the latter part of this half century - that is, the tremendous interest in childhood, which has brought with it a complete reversal in the attitude to the young. Now, far from being a necessary though somewhat irritating stage of development on the road to maturity, childhood has become a subject of value in its own right. Children are no longer unimportant beings to be ignored, or at most patted on the head by adults preoccupied with an adult world. They are central characters, with a claim to the best acting-areas on the stage of life. Moreover the complexes which wrong handling in childhood can apparently produce are legion; most of the troubles of our less prepossessing adults result from parental mistakes and injustices. It is an argument again which in its initial stages Galsworthy might have recognised - Joy, in the play of that name, is treated with considerable sympathy. I cannot think, however, that in its extreme expression it would have found much favour with him. His plays are not usually plays of youth; they are mainly concerned with people in middle life, who have

attained a certain emotional maturity. Even Falder seems more than his twenty-three years. A youth-centred world turns perhaps rather to Winterset, Epitaph for George Dillon, and the like, where the protagonists are themselves young, than to Justice.

These two developments in psychological thought - the theory of the power of the unconscious mind and the emphasis on the importance of childhood - have particularly influenced opinion in this century. The first brings with it, if one accepts it, the need for a complete readjustment of one's moral values. Heredity and environment assume new proportions; the doctrine of original sin and salvation by grace becomes practically untenable. The problem of responsibility for one's actions defies solution. "Weakness of character" can no longer explain conveniently all those lapses - on the part of other people - from the standards we value. Galsworthy questions the conventional code of behaviour, but questions it objectively rather than subjectively. The latter method has become so popular in the course of the century that his questionings are overlooked. In an age as self-conscious as this, more weight is given to subjective analysis than to objective assessment.

Nor is it on subject-matter and theme alone that psychology has exerted an influence. Technique also shows evidence of an interchange of ideas between literature and "the new science". That the mind does not proceed by an ordered sequence of logical thought but more often by a series of only partially connected ideas is not of course the discovery of the twentieth century, but it is the twentieth century which sees such a wide application in all the arts of the principles involved in this discovery. Proust and James Joyce developed in the novel a technique which has much in common with Freud's theory of the workings of the unconscious

mind - the technique which has been labelled "the stream of consciousness," and which also owes something to Adler's theory of the racial unconscious. Much of the experimental drama of the last twenty years draws on the same sources, and uses similar techniques, a notable example being Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman (1949). Nowhere in Galsworthy's plays does one meet anything of this kind. The Little Dream is a fantasy, but it is a conscious fantasy presented in terms which though not naturalistic are relatively recognisable without a dictionary of psychology.

Philosophy has not had quite such revolutionary effects on literature as psychology, possibly because superficially the latter appears easier for the lay mind to assimilate. I should say, however, that indirectly two philosophers of this century have influenced literature particularly - Bergson and Sartre. Of the former Alexander says, "To him in large measure the contemporary world owes its sense of the complexities of the human condition and of what..may be called the ambiguity of existence .... The individual can no longer make that clear-cut distinction between a human nature or essence and human existence." [1] One may not understand much of Bergson's philosophy, but one is made aware of new ways of thinking. Existentialism according to Jean Paul Sartre is of course the popular philosophy of the moment, the happy hunting-ground of the young intellectual. Again I cannot pretend to understand it, but I have gained from reading Sartre's lecture on Existentialism and Humanism that same impression of the complexity of life; that things are not what they seem and certainly not what we have thought them to be. It is understandable that minds which have been stimulated by ideas such as these find the clearer,

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1. Alexander I.W, Bergson, p.105.

more comprehensible views of Galsworthy dull. It is not that one wishes drama to be a vehicle for philosophy, but that one becomes accustomed to a certain climate of thought.

Mention has already been made of the technological advances of the century and their effect upon life and thought, an effect which was further emphasised by advances in more purely scientific matters. Lawrence Durrell instances Einstein's theory of relativity as one of the most revolutionary forces in modern poetry, and what he says of poetry is equally true of drama. "...in order to obtain a coherent view of the bewildering world of science Einstein," says Durrell, "formulated a theory which everybody has heard about and very few people understand.." (I personally should be the last to quarrel with that latter statement). "It showed us that the picture which each observer makes of the world is in some degree subjective. Even if different observers all take their pictures at the same moment of time, and from the same point in space, these pictures will not ~~all~~ be alike - unless the observers happen to be ~~travelling~~ moving at the same speed .... Time, then, was given a new role to play - it was not the old extended time of the materialists but a new time-space hybrid. Time and space, fixed together in this manner, gave one a completely new idea of what reality might be." [1] This new idea is in most cases, I believe, a somewhat hazy one; nevertheless it has its significance. The lay mind, though unable to grasp the specialised line of mathematical thought, does at least realise that the conventional notions of time, space and matter which most of us have accepted without much heart-searching are of questionable validity. Once again, the universe takes on strange and

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1. Durrell, L. Key to Modern Poetry. p.28.

bewildering outlines. What is time? What is space? What is life? Of such questions are born experiments like Thornton Wilder's The Skin of Our Teeth or Pirandello's Six Characters In Search of An Author. Moreover they are questions which Galsworthy does not ask - not, I think because he did not ask them himself, but because he knew the type of drama which was most appropriate to him. Nevertheless one cannot deny the stimulation of these experiments, and the intolerant who must always be praising one type of play at the expense of another would reject the traditional out of hand.

Other scientific factors which have contributed to the turmoil of the century might be described as Victorian legacies. Geology, which so disturbed our grandfathers' theories of the creation of the earth, continues to talk in terms of billions of years. Archaeology continues the discoveries, started in the previous century, of ancient civilisations which make our own seem in its infancy. Biology, with the shadow of the Origin of Species in the background, moves on to a description of life, in terms of genes and chromosomes, which assaults our cherished philosophy of free-will. These, it is true, are not entirely the phenomena of the twentieth century, but their permeation into the thought of non-specialists belongs mainly to the period since the 1914 war.

And indeed the term "non-specialist" leads to another real difficulty. The bounds of knowledge have widened to such an extent that it is impossible for one mind to take in all the multifarious aspects which present themselves. The constant pressure for more and more technical knowledge ordains, too, that specialisation become an inescapable factor in modern life. Even schoolchildren often concentrate on a few allied

subjects, to the exclusion of others. This inevitably adds to the fragmentation of life which is so distinguishing a mark in the latter part of the period - a fragmentation which cannot but militate against totality of experience.

It may seem at first sight that these are factors which have little relevance in the matter of Galsworthy's reputation, and that his is merely the case of a writer of little importance whose works have dated because they dealt merely with topical issues. I am convinced that this is a completely mistaken view, and that only by an understanding, however cursory, of the astounding revolutions we have lived through since the beginning of the century can we account for the varying respect and disrespect in which he has been held.

And most important of all, in this attempt to see in those variations an index to the changes in life and thought, is the consideration of the aesthetic developments, which took place over the period during which he was writing. Art which has vitality sustains itself, not in the ivory tower of "Art for Art's sake", but from the life-giving contacts with the currents of informed opinion and emotion which constitute the thought of its time. These contacts may produce revolution and counter-revolution - all to the good. It is apathy which kills, not controversy. Galsworthy felt himself something of an innovator. In fact it was his hatred of "the artificial nature of the English play of the period" [1] which prompted his first play. He was however a gentle revolutionary, and his adventures into novelty have been obscured by other, more violent spirits. Let us look for a moment at some of the trends in the arts.

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters, p.793. To Dr. Sadasiva Aiyar.

Music, painting, sculpture, literature all show at this time, alongside the traditional forms, the most extraordinary reactions against the hitherto accepted conventions,and the parallels between the various branches of creative activity are obvious. Speaking of music Dr. Percy Scholes writes that the twentieth century "looks like being the most violently revolutionary that has been experienced for a thousand years, and the most rapidly revolutionary in the whole of human history." That surely is true of the arts in general, and is one of the most important contributory causes of the partial eclipse which Galsworthy has suffered.

To return to the question of music - here indeed in many instances tradition is set aside. The rhythms to which our ears have over the last three or so centuries become accustomed are affronted by mixed successions of measures; nineteenth century harmonies have been almost completely submerged; the familiar keys and scales based on the octave are in part supplanted by other intervals of which Debussy's "whole-tone scale" is one. Combinations of sounds. and experiments both with traditional and with newly-devised instruments fall oddly on ears which have learned to enjoy "old-fashioned" music. Dissonance, we are told, is however largely a matter of degree and of what one is accustomed to, and much of what at first seemed inexecrable cacophony is now accepted, and even liked. The same is true of literature, where the reaction against tradition takes many forms.

Many parallel movements can be seen in the visual arts - attempts to break away from conventionally-accepted ideas. The very fact of the names which jostle one another in any art history of the period has its

significance - Realism, Expressionism, Vorticism, Surrealism, Cubism. It is a restless, dissatisfied age, pushing on from one form to another. Herbert Read distinguishes four main phases of modern art - realism, expressionism, cubism and super-realism (known to most of us as surrealism). Of these he considers that realism has contributed little - interesting in view of Galsworthy's plays. Nevertheless, whatever one may think of Read's verdict, one cannot ignore the fact that in art, as in other forms of creative activity, the division here is between realism and abstract ideas. Cubism, for instance, aimed at a revelation of an aesthetic aspect of the natural world and of the essential nature of the objects "by reducing their appearance to their significant form." Expressionism gives first place to the artist's emotional reaction to experience. It is concerned with "the subjective reality which objects and events arouse in the artist's psyche." Much of the work of Chagall and Rouault comes into this category. Surrealism seems more directly Freudian in its inspiration. The work of art derives power from the unconscious mind, harmony and proportion being incidental. The specialist would draw far more, and more subtle distinctions, but to the interested amateur the obvious division, as I have said, lies between realism on one hand and abstract art on the other. The tendency is away from photographic realism towards something much more subjective, much more personal. What better authority for this could be quoted than Picasso himself, greatest of all these "revolutionaries"? "How can you expect an onlooker to live a picture of mine as I have lived it? A picture comes to me from miles away: who is to say from how far away I sensed it, saw it, painted it, and yet the next day I ~~can't~~ can't see what I've done myself. How can anyone else

enter into my dream, my instincts, my thoughts which have taken a long time to mature and come out into the daylight, and above all grasp from them what I have been about - perhaps against my own will?" [1] There indeed speaks the voice of the rebel twentieth century. When one compares this with what Galsworthy has to say of his own work, much of which was quoted in the first part of the thesis, one can see a great difference of approach. When one estimates the tremendous influence on younger minds of Picasso and all that he stands for, one realises the effect such theories are likely to have on the reputations of the traditionalists.

I have given some prominence to the experiments which are going on in the branches of art other than literature because I consider that the parallels cannot be emphasised too often, as they are so clearly indicative of the general climate of opinion which has been gathering during the century. As in other spheres of life, the unprecedented rapidity of the changes in attitude both to theme and form has been responsible in large measure for the unpopularity which from time to time has descended upon Galsworthy's work. In literature itself, of course, the case is even clearer. I propose, then, to continue with a study of some of the specifically literary developments of the period, before going on to the examination of a few individual plays which provide notable contrasts with those of Galsworthy. For the sake of convenience I have taken the century in decades - an arbitrary and not always accurate division, but without some form of organisation there tends to be confusion. I shall deal in greater detail with drama at the end of this brief literary survey, since of course, it concerns my subject more nearly than anything else.

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1. Conversation with Christian Zervos, 1935.

The first decade of the century seems to me to be reasonably optimistic, with perhaps an underlying note of irony and fatalism in Hardy and Housman. Chesterton, Wells Belloc and Kipling however have a steady faith in values which have their roots in the accepted standards of Christendom. The novel is still recognisably a story, with characters one can identify and language one can understand. It is largely the Victorian novel, altered somewhat in attitude, but revealing no startling innovations. In drama the old-fashioned "society" plays can still command a following, though the more serious realist movement is appearing, Shaw is beginning to make a name, and the Irish dramatists are welcomed by far-seeing critics. It is not, however, a decade of great change.

During the second decade many of the same names remain. The group of poets subsequently known as the Georgians emerges with the publication of the Georgian anthologies. It has been said of them that "nearly all they wrote came from the conscious levels of their own well-regulated minds." The Imagists, with their insistence on clarity and exactness and their hatred of vague terms like "infinity" and "eternity" show that new forces of thought and feeling are at work. But for novelty the decade is noteworthy for two facts - firstly the publication in 1917 of T.S. Eliot's first volume of poetry, and secondly, the appearance of a number of novels showing an affinity with those of Proust. In 1915 Dorothy Richardson published Pointed Roofs, the earliest in her series of novels in what has come to be called "the stream of consciousness" technique. Virginia Woolf began publishing her work about the same time and 1916 sees the appearance of James Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Unconventional in theme rather than technique are the novels of D.H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers appearing in 1913 and The Rainbow in 1915.

The period does not bring great changes to the theatre, probably because the Great War produced a very natural desire for amusement rather than tense emotional or intellectual stimulation. However the developments in poetry and the novel show the trend towards experiment, particularly in the exploration of the less conscious levels of the mind. The influences which are to militate against Galsworthy are very definitely at work.

The nineteen-twenties present a picture of great complexity. Something of the spirit of the age, which reflects itself so faithfully in the literature of the period, is to be seen in Ursula Bloom's Trilogy, not perhaps very profound but giving a hint of what it was like to live through these years. Old and new are side by side; established writers - Galsworthy, Shaw, Bennett, Forster - continue with their work; Lawrence and Virginia Woolf are still writing. 1922 sees the publication of The Waste Land and Ulysses, two works of immense importance in the development away from realism. The younger writers now emerging are in many cases distinguished by their cynicism and satiric wit. Aldous Huxley produces Crome Yellow in 1921, and Antic Hay two years later. Evelyn Waugh follows with Decline and Fall and Vile Bodies (1925 and 1930 respectively). A rising young dramatist with a light satiric touch is Noel Coward. The latter years of the decade hint at the emergence of a new school of poetry, led by a young man called Auden. Ten years of gaiety and despair, disillusionment and idealism, of youth against age have passed - ten years which saw Galsworthy reach two peaks in his career as a dramatist, with the production of The Skin Game, and Loyalties, and which yet see the tide turn against him.

Most people, if asked for their literary associations with the 1930's, would undoubtedly reply without hesitation "modern poets", for Auden

and his followers were consciously 'modern', consciously in revolt against what had gone before. One cannot conceive of their approving either of the two recently named plays, The Skin Game and Loyalties. They were influenced greatly by Eliot, though they repudiated some of his ideas. They were most conscious of the evils of society, most determined to do what they could to set them right - but not in Galsworthy's tradition. They looked for cure to the Left Wing, to what they imagined Communism to be. They were intensely serious - though not without humour. They set themselves to find new language, new imagery, new rhythms to suit their modern world. Man in society was important to them, but not in the way of Justice or Strife. In the novel, too, other names besides the established begin to become more familiar - Graham Greene, Elizabeth Bowen, Rex Warner, Joyce Cary, Ivy Compton-Burnett, C.P. Snow among them. Most of these in some form or other show a preoccupation with the nature of evil, often in its ugliest manifestations. Themes and treatment are broadening with the general trend. In this respect English drama of the period lags at first somewhat behind the Continental and American theatre of the time. There are experiments, such as Priestley's Johnson Over Jordan, but both the 1920's and early 1930's are not periods of such activity as is shown in poetry and the novel. Shaw, Priestley, Bridie, Coward, Maugham however keep the theatre alive. About the middle of the decade comes the movement towards the revival of poetic drama - Auden's Dog Beneath The Skin (1935) is followed by The Ascent of F.6. in which he collaborated with Isherwood. Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral was produced in 1935, and The Family Reunion in 1939. How far the revival of verse as a dramatic medium is successful is not at the moment relevant, but its use shows a definite urge to go beyond the limits of prose.

The Second World War, with its shortages of all kinds, made publication difficult, and the post-war scene is barely settling down. Indeed it is almost incredible that it is fourteen years since the so-called 'end' of hostilities. The uncertainties of the 'peace' are shown in the explorations of literature. To attempt a brief history of the period would result merely in a string of names. It is interesting to note in the established writers the gravitation towards an orthodox religious position. - Greene to the Roman, Eliot and Auden to the Anglican communion. Whether one regards the Four Quartets as Eliot's greatest or most pretentious work is largely a matter of temperament, and the same might be said of The Power and The Glory, but the fact remains that they have sought a definitely religious solution to the problem of the significance of life. The younger writers - poets, novelists and dramatists - present a bewildering diversity, as bewildering to us, one suspects, as the 1920's must have been to Galsworthy and his generation. Technically there seems little territory which has not already been explored, though Beckett's Waiting for Godot took several techniques and fused them into one extraordinary play. The rapid growth of television might just possibly evoke further efforts, as it is a medium for which stage-plays are not all fitted. It seems difficult however to imagine any further great revolutions in method - though probably the somewhat startled audience streaming out of the first performance of Justice, with its silent scene, said very much the same. There are, however, interesting developments in themes - more and more, abnormality is taken as a subject and treated seriously, with obvious intelligence and sincerity. George Dillon could hardly be called a "normal" young man, and many of Angus

Wilson's characters are even further from that standard. The reaction of the group who earned for themselves the title "Angry Young Men" was certainly not an abnormal one; youth is seldom grateful to, or tolerant of, age - but it was pressed home with extraordinary vigour and virulence. Apart from these, Christopher Fry deserves individual mention, as he fits into no category, and it seems a great pity that the stage should be deprived of the felicity of his wit and fancy. The energy of the period cannot be questioned - Kingsley Amis, John Wain, John Osborne alone would prove this - and at this point the question of approval or disapproval is irrelevant. It is an age very naturally concerned with its own problems, which by all standards are immense, and, again not unnaturally, it has little time for the difficulties of a previous generation.

Thus it is apparent that in poetry and in the novel as well as in drama the century, particularly since about 1910, has been remarkable for innovations and experiments in subject and technique. These arising from, and adding to, the ferment which exists in everyday life, have combined to produce a tenour of opinion antipathetical in most respects to realism and naturalism - a factor which has much to do with Galsworthy's loss of favour as a dramatist in the 1920's and 1930's. A study of a few experimental plays produced after 1920 will indicate something of the extent of the reaction against the naturalistic tradition.

Before, however, passing to a particular examination of individual plays, which form contrasts with the dramatic conceptions of Galsworthy, it is necessary to draw together the scattered references to the theatre which have been included in the previous brief history, in order to see

something of the prevailing tendencies. I take 1920 here, not as an arbitrary line, but as a date which may be taken as showing a break between two worlds. In the first twenty years or so of the century serious drama is predominantly naturalistic and realistic. There are exceptions of course; there are verse plays, fantasies, symbolic works. The Irish theatre produces much which certainly cannot be labelled naturalistic. Some productions of Shakespeare - notably those of Granville-Barker in 1912 which Lynton Hudson describes as "almost futuristic" [1] - echo the same ideas. But in general the tone is still naturalistic. Sutro, Pinero, H.A. Jones are still writing; St. John Hankin, Galsworthy, Granville-Barker, St.John Ervine are prominent names. Masefield, Binyon, Stephen Phillips, Abercrombie, Barrie, Maugham are others. Shaw and the Irish dramatists pursue their own several ways.

The 1914-1918 War had an adverse effect on the theatre, worse, it seems, than the Second World War, when in spite of - or in fact because of - a certain paralysis of West End theatres, drama flourished in other centres, particularly the provinces. But during the first World War very little of serious importance was seen. Galsworthy wrote no plays of any great value, as indeed few playwrights did.

Nor is the period following the war particularly inspiring. Lynton Hudson mentions a meeting in 1919 of the intelligentsia which included Shaw and H.A. Jones to discuss "the predicament of the theatre", and most historians agree that the English stage lagged behind the Continental and American stage at this time. Galsworthy, it is true, had two notable successes, The Skin Game and Loyalties., produced within

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1. Hudson.L. The English Stage 1850-1950. p.159. [1951]

this period, as was his Escape, also popular though not, in my opinion, quite such a good play. But they are not excessively different in character from the dramas of the earlier years. O'Casey, while he cannot be classed as an English playwright, brings new richness to the theatre first in his naturalistic plays, and later with his more symbolic drama, The Silver ~~Tassle~~ Tassie being produced in 1928. Yet there are no very encouraging signs in serious drama other than these. Lynton Hudson has a neat phrase to describe much of the work of this period - he names it "the drama of insignificance". Professor Reynolds, speaking particularly of the period between 1930 and 1940 says "modern 'social' drama has been for many years now concerned with groups of ordinary men and women talking on an everyday level in a single everyday room which the audience must look at for three acts, whether it likes it nor not." [1]. It is as if naturalism had for the moment exhausted itself, and needs some form of external inspiration. Playwrights seem to have abdicated from the position of responsibility and gravity, and poets have taken their place. Noel Coward's brilliant but superficial comedies usurp the attention which more serious drama might have had.

Abroad the position is rather different, though Eric Bentley is adamant that the years from 1920 to 1940 are not the years of achievement for American drama which most critics believe them to be. However there is much of interest to be found in Continental and American plays. The changes which are taking place, and the experiments which are being made are symptomatic of an age whose values are not those of the author of The Skin Game and the Forsyte Saga. They are mainly non-naturalistic,

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1. Reynolds. Modern English Drama. p.54. [1949]

and many of them set up standards of judgment which few Galsworthian characters would have recognised.

Expressionism, mainly to be found in Germany, really began to emerge in the decade 1910 to 1920, but does not become a dominant force until after the latter date. It is, like expressionism in painting, subjective, an expression of the inner world, often ~~it is~~ lyrical in tone. It seems to catch something of the quality of Freudian psychology. Obviously it is not entirely new, but the extent to which it became almost a "school" is rather more unusual. Eric Bentley doubts, however, whether it would ever have become "a large dramatic movement at all but for the intellectual wooziness of the war generation...but for the New Staging with which the name of Reinhardt is identified." [1] Kaiser, Capek and Toller are names often associated with the movement, and I shall examine an individual play of this kind a little further on in this study.

In France also the anti-naturalists are at work. One of Cocteau's best-known plays Orphee (1926) is conceived with a nightmare quality which is Kafkaesque in its intensity. Jean Paul Sartre is to follow and while with him one is conscious of social and political ramifications, the inner life is of primary importance. Pirandello belongs also to this movement against photographic realism, and towards freedom of experiment in the theatre. In America O'Neill is to propound ideas which by no means fit the "well-made" play. They are all concerned in some way with the expression of the most intense experiences of that inward consciousness which is for the imaginative often a greater reality than our so-called "reality" itself.

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1. Eric Bentley. The Modern Theatre, p.63. [1948]

The 1930's show in England not a phenomenal awakening nor a radiant dawn of unreality, but signs of a new impetus. Priestley's time-plays become something of a vogue, while Bridie's fantasies, such as Tobias and The Angel and The Sleeping Clergyman, show that at least there is some indication of change. One may not think particularly highly of either Priestley or Bridie - that is a matter open to considerable question - but it cannot be denied that they helped to put before the public some ideas which might break through the usually accepted theatrical conventions. O'Casey's use of symbolism has already been noted, and finally in this period one must not forget the revival of interest in poetic drama. The Dog Beneath The Skin, The Ascent of F.6, even Murder in the Cathedral are not highly dramatic in the usual sense, but they are extremely important in that they open up possibilities for the verse-play which had long been neglected.

The Second World War obviously had a stultifying effect on drama, though not to such an extent as the First World War. Naturally new young playwrights were at the time almost non-existent, but for many people the actual opportunity of seeing a good play well-acted was much increased by the fact that the London companies toured the provinces. After the war a new generation of theatre-goers emerged, more serious-minded than those of the 1920's, demanding stimulation of a less sensational kind; not, of course, that they represented the majority, but they represented a minority which was not afraid of speaking its mind. Those whom J.C. Trewin describes as the "senior dramatists" - Eliot, Priestley, Bridie, Noel Coward, O'Casey - are still writing. In 1948 a new name appears, that of Christopher Fry, whose verse play The Lady's Not For Burning held a

commercial stage for nine months. No doubt the presence of John Gielgud and Pamela Brown in the cast had something to do with its success, but even that would not alone have ensured its popularity. This to me seems one of the significant clues to the dramatic feeling of the time. Presumably the leading young playwrights of the latest decade would be Samuel Beckett and John Osborne, though it is difficult at the moment to see their work in perspective. Nevertheless the very vigour of the conflict which has been waged round them is to my mind a sign of health in the theatre, though some will call it decadence.

Most plays from abroad in these last two decades or so have been accorded reasonably warm welcomes - the stricter the censor, the warmer the welcome. O'Neill, Anderson, Steinbeck, Arthur Miller, Tennesse Williams, Sartre, Anouilh, Betti, Ionescu, Brecht are a few of the names. Certainly our theatre could hardly be called insular.

In such a brief survey it is impossible to do anything but indicate general trends, and mention a few of the people who either from the intrinsic merit of their writing or from the discussion which it provoked appear to have influenced the theatre in some way. The same is true of the innumerable currents - social, political, psychological, philosophical, aesthetic and so on - which, though indefinite and uncharted, nevertheless form the intellectual background of the age. It may be argued that only an almost infinitesimal percentage of the population is aware of these currents. That I would acknowledge, but this apparently negligible minority is often the spearhead of new ideas, and certainly makes an impression out of all proportion to its numbers because of its outspokenness - one could instance here D.H. Lawrence's criticism of Galsworthy.

The ~~latter~~ He has indeed suffered at the hands of these younger critics who in order to establish their new ideas and techniques must sweep away the old. The plays which I have chosen to examine next are then mainly examples of some of the changing ideas in the theatre which have gained the applause of more radically minded young critics of their day - those who, like Ashley Dukes, were loud against Galsworthy.

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b) An examination of some outstanding plays produced between 1920 and the present day.

The plays I have selected for discussion are mainly experimental, as I have chosen them to indicate some of the lines along which the attack developed on the naturalistic and realistic type of drama. To suggest that every play written during the period was anti-naturalistic would be ludicrous. The new forms co-exist with the old, and the fact that those I have picked out show in many cases innovation in theme or technique by no means implies that traditional methods have been abandoned or are necessarily inferior to these newer types. The significance of the latter lies in the hints they give of changing temper in the theatre.

From the 1920's I have chosen Six Characters in Search of An Author, Masses and Men and The Emperor Jones. The fact that none of these is by an English author reflects something of the state of our theatre at that time. A Sleeping Clergyman, The Family Reunion, and Johnson Over Jordan represent the 1930's; while from the post-war decade I shall examine The Glass Menagerie, Death of a Salesman, The Lady's Not For Burning, Waiting for Godot and Epitaph for George Dillon. The list could have been twice as long; in the last resort personal preference decided my choice, when two or more plays seemed of equal significance.

It is impossible to tell the story of Six Characters in Search of An Author by Luigi Pirandello; Scribe would hardly recognise it as a play. It is an irritating, stimulating and completely absorbing mixture of Freud, Einstein and drama. Irritating, because deliberately the author

brings us within breathing distance of a climax and snatches it away; stimulating because of the questions we are forced to ask; completely absorbing not only for its strangeness of technique but for its power in characterisation. It is as unlike the traditional realistic play as chalk ~~from~~ and cheese.

The opening stage direction gives the first clue: "When the audience enters the auditorium the curtain is up and the stage is just as it would be during the daytime. There is no set and there are no wings; it is empty and in almost total darkness. This is in order that right from the very beginning the audience shall receive the impression of being present, not at a performance of a carefully rehearsed play but at a performance of a play that suddenly happens." [1] Gradually the stage-manager, producer and some actors arrive. They are obviously about to begin a rehearsal.

By this time the audience is aware that this is not a "fourth wall" type of play. If they need any further proof, that is provided by the entrance of the Six Characters - the Father, the Mother, the Son, the Step-daughter, the Boy and the Little Girl. Pirandello is most emphatic about these characters; everything possible must be done to prevent confusion between them and the actors; they may even wear masks. However, "the Characters should not in fact appear as phantasms, but as created realities, unchangeable creations of the imagination, and, therefore, more real and more consistent than the ever-changing naturalness of the actors." Small wonder the producer and the actors think they are mad, and cannot understand them

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1. Six Characters in Search of An Author; Drama Library edition, 1954, Heinemann, p.1.

at all. But slowly, interwoven with explanations and recriminations the story begins to emerge, a story which grips the audience as it grips the producer. These characters are the half-realised creations of an author's brain, fixed in immutable eternity by his fancy. The story which they persuade the producer to let them act is sordid, melodramatic. We never see it in its entirety, without interruption - the seduction of the step-daughter by the father, the mother's passive suffering, the son's despairing contempt, the strange deaths of the young children are all told in an unsavoury hotch-potch which yet compels sympathy. Threaded in and out of this are the efforts, mainly on the part of the father and the step-daughter, to force an awareness of reality upon the producer and the actors. What, for instance, is personality? "My drama," says the father, "lies entirely in this one thing ... in my ~~concern~~ being conscious that each one of us believes himself to be a ~~certain~~ single person. But it's not true ... Each one of us is many persons ... many persons .. according to all the possibilities of being that are within us. With some ~~persons~~ people we are one person .. With others we are somebody quite different .. And all the time we are under the illusion of [being] always one and the same person for everybody.." The truth of this is amazing - ~~and~~ so obvious, and yet so intricate, and above all, dramatically right. It is absolutely in character with the Father that he should, with all his vices, yet suffer agonisingly from his ability to see "into the very heart of things." That is perhaps why we follow him so intently in his dialogue with the producer about the nature of reality, an argument which culminates thus:

The Father: I only wanted to make you see that if we (pointing again to

himself and the other Characters) have no reality outside the world of illusion, it would be as well if you mistrusted your own reality .... The reality ~~which~~ that you breathe and touch to-day ... Because, like the reality of yesterday it is fated to reveal itself as a mere illusion to-morrow." [1] What indeed is reality? Which of them is most real? We forget - as Pirandello doubtless intended us to - that we are concerned with dramatic reality; in fact, are we concerned solely with that? There, in the middle of what purports to be a play rehearsal of some kind, we are facing questions which go to the very roots of existence. What is illusion? What is reality? We can certainly sympathise with the producer when practically at the end of the play, driven almost to distraction by these strange beings he suddenly shouts "Pretence! Reality! Go to hell, the whole lot of you! Lights! Lights! Lights!" But even light does not bring a solution. After the terrified producer has leapt down from the stage, the audience must watch the final curtain. The stage is lit in blue. Slowly the Characters - Father, Mother and Son - come in and advance to the front of the stage ..... "They stop half-way down the stage and stand there like people in a trance. Last of all the Step-daughter comes in from the left and runs towards the steps which lead down into the auditorium. With her foot on the top step she stops for a moment to look at the other three and bursts into strident laughter. Then she hurls herself down the steps and runs up the aisle. She stops at the back of the auditorium and turns to look at the three figures standing on the stage. She bursts out laughing again. And when she has disappeared from the auditorium you can still hear her terrible laughter coming from the foyer beyond. A short pause and then,

CURTAIN."

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1. Six Characters in Search of An Author, p.57.

It is a grimly effective curtain to a strangely arresting play. One's impressions of it are vivid yet kaleidoscopic. Three planes of "reality" impinge on one another - the reality of the stage with the producer and actors waiting to rehearse their fairly ordinary play, the reality of the characters whose lives and personalities are somehow much more three-dimensional to us, and finally, perhaps more actual still, the apprehended reality of a world outside, beyond, unlike either of the other two; a world in fact which sets at variance all our accepted notions of here and now. We are first on one plane, then on another, and when finally we look back to sort out "the story", what remains is not a convenient narrative proceeding decorously from point to point but an impression of tortured personalities involved in emotional situations more real than life itself.

It is quite unlike, though not necessarily inferior to, any play which Galsworthy wrote. There is no exposition, no development of action, no characterisation - in the usually accepted sense. It is indeed a play that"suddenly happens," though of course behind that apparent casualness of construction is much artifice. The retrospective excursions into the Character's past lives are contrived so as to say exactly enough and not too much; their personalities permeate their arguments and self-explanations. The whole is built up, not from a series of minor climaxes to a final culmination, but in convolutions which lead from one another and back upon one another. One can imagine its impact when it was produced in London on February 26, 1922. Ashley Dukes in The Youngest Drama (1923) speaks well of it. [1] St.John Ervine rates Pirandello high, and speaks of him in the same sentence as Shakespeare, Molière,

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1. Dukes, A. The Youngest Drama, p.125 et seq. (1923)

Ibsen, Pinero and others.[1] Change, experiment, difference - they are all being demanded in the theatre. /

Another play I have selected from the 1920's is Ernest Toller's Masses and Men which is often taken as an example of Expressionism in drama. Certainly in technique and to a great extent in aim, it is very different from anything Galsworthy wrote. Before, however, turning to the play itself, I should like to quote from the Preface to the Seven Plays, published in England in 1935 by John Lane at The Bodley Head. "The plays collected in this volume," says Toller, "are social dramas and tragedies. They bear witness to human suffering, and to fine yet vain struggles to vanquish this suffering. For only ~~necessary~~ unnecessary suffering can be vanquished, the suffering which arises out of the unreason of humanity, out of an inadequate social system. There must always remain a residue of suffering, the lonely suffering imposed upon mankind by life and death. And only this residue is necessary and inevitable, is the tragic element of life, and of life's symbolizer, art." With this, I think, Galsworthy in part would agree, although he would not express it as strongly or in as political an idiom as Toller. However, one feels the tragic force of his work more in such plays as The Skin Game, where the issue is particularly personal, than in Justice where it has also its social implications.

Passing now to Masses and Men one finds it political to an extent that Galsworthy would never permit, though it transcends merely political questions. It is also a mixture of "realism" and vision which Galsworthy would not have allowed - though one must take note of Toller's own preface, The Author to The Producer, October 1921. Here he says

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1. Ervine St.John. The Theatre in my Time. p.203.[1933]

"Certain critics have deplored the fact that your production of this play weakens its contrasting elements of reality and dream by wrapping the picture of "reality" in the same visionary atmosphere as that which rightly surrounds the "dream pictures." I want to tell you myself that you have carried out my meaning. These pictures of "reality" are not realism, are not local colour; the protagonists (except for Sonia) are not individual characters. Such a play can only have a spiritual, never a concrete reality." [1.]

On the title page Toller says "The second, fourth and sixth scenes are dream pictures; the first, third, fifth and seventh are visionary abstracts of reality." The story, so far as one can relate it, is that of a woman, Sonia (the wife of a State Official), whose sympathies are with the working classes and who wishes to lead them in a strike. She is against violence, but is persuaded, really against her conscience, that revolution rather than strike is the only course open to the masses. The revolution is, however, abortive; she is captured and sentenced to death. Her husband would save her on account of his own good name; the masses would save her by means of further bloodshed. Both she refuses, and is shot. But to reduce the play thus to a narrative is to try to force upon it that concrete reality which Toller denied it could ever have. "Dream pictures" alternate with "visionary abstracts of reality", the latter telling what little story there is while the former surely represent the journey of the woman through spiritual experience. The core of that experience lies in her belief in the goodness of man, a faith which is torn equally by the forces of capital and by the masses. In the last "abstract" she realises that only through spiritual agony can

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1. Masses and Men. Bodley Head edition 1935. p.111.

her faith ultimately triumph :

"The last road leads across the snow fields.
The last road knows no guide,
The last road is motherless
The last road is loneliness." [1]

And so, after a momentary human weakness, she takes that road. She is led away; "the harsh rattle of a volley" is heard. And the last words are those of one woman prisoner to another:

"Sister, why do we do such things?"

The main lines of the argument are clear enough - the conflict of the working-classes and Capitalism (here Toller's sympathy is obviously with the former), the conflict of peaceful methods with those of violence (and again there is little doubt which Toller supports) and finally the conflict of the individual and the masses. The issue is not quite so clear here, though I do not think there is any real confusion. Toller himself, in his preface to the Producer, writes:

"In my political capacity, I proceed upon the assumption that units, groups, representatives of various social forces, various economic functions, have a real existence; that certain relations between human beings are objective realities. As an artist, I recognize that the validity of ~~the~~ these "facts" is highly questionable."

That surely disposes of any questions in the matter of where his sympathies lie.

Masses and Men is, to me then, a play "with a platform" - a far more definite "platform" than Galsworthy would have allowed. I have seen the names of Toller and Galsworthy linked together, mainly, I gathered, because of this very quality of didacticism. Certainly both are concerned

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1. Masses and Men. p.149.

with man in society and also with man as an individual, but where Galsworthy sets out his argument in a realistic dramatic situation leaving the reader or spectator to draw his own conclusions, Toller in Masses and Men has definite conclusions he wishes to be drawn. It is possible that to a generation emerging from the First World War, disillusioned by the old forms of government, seeking social cures in new and diverse political allegiances, this spiritual "direction" would be welcome. The Left-wing movements which are seen so clearly a little later in Auden and his group would find much to approve - more than in the quieter, more liberal plays of Galsworthy.

Technically, too, as in Six Characters in Search of An Author, one finds in Masses and Men a very strongly anti-naturalistic flavour. The characters are not individualised; they are mainly the voices of external forces such as capital, labour, religion. Even the central figure, the Woman, is hardly a character in the sense that Mrs. Hillcrist or Clare Dedmond are characters. She is rather an embodied belief; (the play is in that respect unlike Six Characters in Search of An Author where the Father, the Mother, the Step-daughter and the Son have their own intensely vivid personalities). Plot is practically non-existent; certainly what there is does not proceed according to any conventional idea of development. Played as it was in England for the first time in the early 1920's it would certainly strike a note very different from that of The Skin Game or Loyalties. One can understand its impact on young minds.

Another play of the 1920's, which shows an exploration of new fields both of theme and technique is Eugene O'Neill's The Emperor Jones. It takes place "on an island in the West Indies as yet not self-determined

by White Mariners;" the first scene is set in "the audience chamber in the palace of the Emperor." Thus the opening, though unusual, is not completely unrealistic. From this there develops a certain plot. We learn that the Emperor Jones "a tall, powerfully-built full-blooded negro of middle-age" has, after what seems to have been a somewhat unorthodox career in the States, established himself by bluff as the ruler of this small native community. One gathers his rule has been neither particularly high-principled nor benevolent. At the point where the play opens, the natives have all slipped away from his palace, presumably to gather together sufficient courage to return and murder him. Jones decides it is time he went. In this first scene there is a grim comedy which one does not meet again. The end is inevitable; he loses himself in the jungle-forest, and is finally shot by the natives. But between his departure from the palace - he "saunters out of the doorway," "with studied carelessness" - and his death, comes a series of scenes set tangibly in the forest but peopled with nightmare phantasms from his past life which return to haunt him, each one relentlessly taking him one step further along the road which leads from "the Emperor Jones" to the primitive, terrified being which he finally becomes - or possibly it would be truer to say "to which he returns."

O'Neill's method is most original. Except for the first and last scenes there is no dialogue; only Jones's monologue going on and on, with a background of pulsating tom-toms. Certainly Galsworthy's dictum that a human being is the best plot of all could almost apply here. Jones's character fills the whole dramatic canvas. Pullman porter, murderer, convict, emperor, terrified negro - he stands out, his

personality as vivid as any in more conventional plays. One cannot say he is revealed by what others may feel about him, how they react to him or he to them; one hardly ever sees him in contact with other people. Admittedly one learns a certain amount from his conversation with Smithers - a certain amount, that is, of the superficial man. But it is his own mutterings and his own reactions to the visions which haunt him, to the situation in which he finds himself, which are the real revelation. There is something terrifyingly pathetic about this big, bluffing, blustering negro and the progressive sapping of his acquired confidence. Ethically one cannot approve of him; yet how can one's sympathies be withheld as he mutters "What - what is I doin'? What is - dis place? Seems like - seems like I know dat tree - an' dem stones - an' de river. I remember - seems like I been heah befo' (Tremblingly) Oh, Gorry, I'se skeered in dis place! I'se skeered! Oh, Lawd, pertect dis sinner!" [1].

Jones is no symbol, no type. He is an individual. Relentlessly, yet not without pity, O'Neill lays bare his soul before us - not for us to judge or condemn; still less for us to sentimentalise over it. Again it is a subjective presentation; one might compare it with Old English, which similarly has one central character, but in this latter case Heythorp is shown in relation to other people; there is a logical sequence in the development of the situations which are actually seen during the play. The emphasis is comparatively objective. The Emperor Jones is praised by Ashley Dukes [2] and, played in London in 1925, is an example again of the type which is to find favour with the younger critics.

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1. The Emperor Jones, p.188. Cape. 1955.
2. Dukes A. The Youngest Drama. p. 73. (1923)

A Sleeping Clergyman, by James Bridie, produced in 1933 at the Malvern Festival is superficially more like the plays of Galsworthy than those I have just mentioned. Technically it is mainly in the naturalistic tradition, though there are one or two departures. The play opens in the present day with a conversation in a Glasgow club between two doctors, one of whom has just attended the funeral of a much older man, Dr. Marshall, and who is anxious to tell his friend something of his late colleague's family history. At this point Bridie uses what in the novel is called "the flash-back" technique and the scene fades out, to reappear some sixty years earlier in a Glasgow lodging house. Here Charles Cameron, a young doctor convinced of his own genius, is dying of T.B. He has been befriended by Marshall, with whose sister Harriet he has been having an affair. Harriet reveals that she is pregnant, and after an unpleasant quarrel he agrees to marry her, but dies before this is possible. Harriet also dies,at the birth of a daughter, Wilhelmina, who is cared for by Marshall, her uncle. The story continues in a series of episodes, mainly chronological, until history repeats itself and Wilhelmina leaves her illegitimate twin son and daughter to the care of her uncle. Charles Cameron the second inherits his grandfather's brilliance and ruthlessness. Eventually the former quality is proved by his discovery of a drug which miraculously stamps out an epidemic. The last scene ends with Marshall, then a man of over ninety rejoicing that his faith in the first Charles and in the second has been vindicated.

Produced at a time when Galsworthy's reputation as a playwright was on the decline, A Sleeping Clergyman yet does not show the same rebellion against the naturalistic tradition which many plays evidence. The theme of the play is no startling innovation; we have met illegitimacy and

brilliance before. Galsworthy himself had used the episodic structure - and used it a great deal more effectively. Such mild tinkering with time as there is hardly puts it among the great experiments. It was, however, apparently well-received, and dramatic historians praise it. For instance Audrey Williamson speaks thus of it: "It is a bold play on a bold theme .... His Charles Cameron the First ... is a superbly-drawn character ..." [1]. Harold Hobson also speaks well of the revival in 1948. [2]. One can only surmise that it held the audience's attention by its characterisation and comprehensible story. I have included it in this survey because it was well received at a time when Galsworthy's plays were becoming less popular, and is therefore some indication of what was being demanded which the latter's work did not supply.

I have chosen T.S. Eliot's The Family Reunion to represent the verse drama of the 1930's for two main reasons; first, I think it is a better play than The Ascent of F.6 which was another possible choice, and second, because it is not merely an example of verse drama, but also of the renewed interest in Greek literature. This latter appears in different ways - in O'Neill and Anouilh, for instance - and the dramatist's handling of his material may, by contrast and analogy, be enriched by parallels, implicit or explicit, with the Greek.

The Family Reunion shows a mixture of realism and non-realism. For that reason it is possible to talk of it on many levels. The superficial story is that of Amy, dowager Lady Monchensey and her somewhat unsatisfactory family. At the opening of the play Amy, together with her

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1. Williamson A. Theatre of Two Decades. 1951. p.79.
2. Hobson, H. Theatre. p.98. 1948.

sisters, Ivy, Violet and Agatha, her late husband's brothers, Gerald and Charles, and her niece Mary, is awaiting the arrival of her three sons, Harry, John and Arthur, to celebrate her birthday. John and Arthur fail to arrive. Harry comes, and after behaving very oddly, leaves on the same night. The shock kills Amy, whose heart has been weak for some time. That is the story on a straightforward, naturalistic and extremely superficial level. Lying, so to speak, below this are other, less simple issues. By digressions, explanations and the like, other details emerge. Amy and her husband were so unhappy together that the latter planned to murder her, and was only prevented by Agatha who loved him, and also passionately loved Amy's unborn child - Harry - who, she felt, should have been hers. This is parallelled by Harry's unhappy marriage. His wife was finally "lost overboard" from the liner on which they were travelling, and Harry is convinced that he pushed her overboard. Even so far, without knowing the play, one might think from this account that it was the sordid story which is repeated ad nauseam in the popular press. But read the opening speech:

Amy: (as Denman enters to draw the curtains) -

Not yet! I will ring for you. It is still quite light.
I have nothing to do but watch the days draw out,
Now that I sit in the house from October to June,
And the swallow comes too soon and the spring will be over
And the cuckoo will be gone before I am out again.
O Sun, that was once so warm, O Light that was taken for granted
When I was young and strong, and sun and light unsought for
And the night unfeared and the day expected
And clocks could be trusted, tomorrow assured

And time would not stop in the dark!

Put on the lights. But leave the curtains undrawn.

Make up the fire. Will the spring never come? I am cold."

This is not the accent of realism, nor is the play realistic in any but the most superficial sense. It is fundamentally an attempt to dramatise, by means of a modern version of the Orestia, a philosophy of sin and expiation, and, throughout, there exists beneath the surface of reality the deeper levels of spiritual experiences which force themselves at crucial moments upwards into the tenour of everyday life. Eliot is concerned with inward conflict, with realms of the mind which are only half conscious, but this is not a psychological play in the sense that The Glass Menagerie could be so called. Harry is not merely suffering from intense emotional disturbance; his is a real spiritual dilemma, soluble only in terms of some force outside himself which acts upon his own will. Just as there are different levels of interpretation in the plots, so in the characterisation one is aware of different perspectives. Ivy, Violet, Gerald and Charles are types, excellently drawn and vividly alive. They play their own small individual parts or come together as the chorus to comment, explain, foretell, as the occasion demands. Amy, the mother, stands out from them, clearly and firmly characterised as a human being. Agatha and Mary, Harry's aunt and cousin, are nearer to him in personality. They are both rebels, imaginative and sensitive, portrayed with sympathy so that the audience is aware of the depth of their feeling. Harry himself is the central figure, drawn with great perception and understanding - not as a neurotic, or one merely in the throes of conscience. His difficulties are infinitely greater, and at

the end of the play he has something of the grandeur of a classical hero, a quality not often met with on the modern stage. The inner tensions of his mind are peculiarly his own, yet they transcend the purely personal and emerge as the quintessence of agony suffered by sensitive minds in the half-conscious realms between intention and act. This portrayal of a spirit thus tortured is something which Galsworthy never attempted; it is not his kind of play. It is the kind of play likely to appeal only to a few, but probably that ~~few~~ body constitutes a vocal minority capable of voicing ideas which are becoming more and more current as the theories of Freud, Einstein and so on penetrate into the everyday life of the century.

In technique also The Family Reunion is interesting ; the use of verse and of Greek ideas is not of course new, but it indicates once more the exploration of different methods as a means of enlarging the confines of drama. Speaking of the use of poetry in drama Eliot himself says that "there is a fringe of indefinite extent, of feeling which we can only detect, so to speak, out of the corner of the eye and can never completely focus; of feeling of which we are only aware in a kind of temporary detachment from action .... This peculiar range of sensibility can be expressed by dramatic poetry, at its moments of greatest intensity." [1] The kind of experience which Eliot presumably has in mind is not that produced by watching such plays as Strife or Escape; verse in either of these two latter would be absurd. Nevertheless the ideal of poetic drama, as Eliot puts it, "provides an incentive towards further experiment and exploration," [2] and the temper of the time, restless and dissatisfied, provides an audience for these experiments.

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1. Poetry and Drama from Selected Prose, Penguin edition 1953. p.85.
2. ~~ditto~~. ibid p.85.

Johnson over Jordan was produced at the New Theatre in 1939, with "all the resources of the Theatre, including music and ballet." [1.] It is a strange play, in the expressionist tradition, and the fact that Priestley chose to make what he obviously considered a serious attempt at drama in this particular medium has its significance in the dramatic developments of the inter-war period. It is not the first time he has departed from the naturalistic method; his first play Dangerous Corner, while realistic up to a point, juggles with time in a manner with which Galsworthy would hardly sympathise. Nevertheless, Johnson over Jordan sets out to be, in colloquial terms, "highbrow," as such things as Dangerous Corner do not. It must not, says Priestley, "be regarded as a play about life after death; it is really a biographical morality play in which the usual chronological treatment is abandoned for a timeless-dream examination of a man's life." [2.]

The play is a mixture of reality and fantasy. It opens with the funeral service of Robert Johnson in his home, and shows the devastating effect of grief on his wife. Thence it passes into fantasy. Robert is shown in a kind of nightmare of hospital, Insurance Office, and form-filling all interspersed with distracting ballet movements of companies of clerks and secretaries. A figure appears, with masked face. Johnson is afraid - has always been afraid - of Death. But with tremendous effort he plucks the mask away and finds "the face of a calm, wise-looking person." [3.] The next act opens again in the home

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1. The Plays of J.B. Priestley: Heinemann 1948. Preface p.X.
2. ~~ditto~~. ibid. Preface p.X.
3. Johnson over Jordan, p.297.

of the Johnsons, which on the day after the funeral is not "quite so dreary." The fantasy which follows sees Robert involved with unpleasant people in an unpleasant cocktail bar. Drinking and women seem to be the two main diversions. His wife Jill comes to seek him, but he rejects her. Nevertheless in spite of most unsavoury incidents he comes to greater humility and self-knowledge, finally begging the Figure to blot him out, as that is all he is fit for. The Figure then sends him on to an Inn. The third act again opens with reality, and here Mrs. Johnson suddenly emerges from her grief, seeing quite clearly that "everything's all right - really all right - now." The fantasy also treats of happiness - people Johnson has liked, situations where he has been happy. And when at last these visions fade Johnson breaks into poetry:

"I have been a foolish, greedy and ignorant man;
Yet I have had my time beneath the sun and stars.
.....
Farewell, all good things!
You will not remember me,
But I shall remember you." [1.]

So the Figure sets him off on his journey. "Is it - a long way?" asks Johnson. "I don't know," replies the Figure "smiling like an angel." "No ... well .. goodbye," says Johnson "awkwardly", and the Figure fades. Johnson is left alone on an empty stage, "very small and forlorn." Then "as the brass blares out triumphantly, and the drums roll and the cymbals crash," he slowly, wearing his bowler hat and carrying his bag, "turns and walks towards that blue space and the shining constellations, and the curtain comes down and the play is done."

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1. Johnson over Jordan. p.335 et seq.

How, I wonder, would this play have fitted Galsworthy's prophecy about the two streams of drama which he foresaw would emerge? It is a mixture of forms, there being at the beginning of each of the three acts a few minutes of complete realism. The emphasis however is on the non-realistic element, and it is here that I find the issue confused. Priestley specifically states that the play is not about life after death, but is a "biographical morality play." It is possible to work out the implications of the latter in the fantasy, but the allied realism - the parts taking place in the Johnson's home - seems to point to life after death. Presumably within the "biographical morality" itself, the cocktail bar and the Inn represent the debit and credit side of Robert Johnson's moral account, the latter in the end being the stronger, because on the whole he has been a decent, upright, well-respected person - in fact, one suspects the "ordinary man" who appears so frequently in certain authors. The end is sentimental. Fear of death is perfectly rational and understandable; only a fool or a saint would deny it. But Johnson's "solution" is no solution, but merely an evasion of the issue, a piece of precious wishful thinking. How much more convincing is the treatment of St. Antony's fear in Ronald Duncan's This Way to the Tomb! In the latter play, though one may disagree with St. Antony's attitude one can at all events respect it. However, whatever one's feelings about Johnson over Jordan one cannot deny that though it was a commercial failure it is indicative again of that movement against naturalism which is such a factor in the attitude of the period towards Galsworthy. The problems it presents are such as never appear in the latter's plays; one feels indeed that upon these matters Galsworthy would maintain a well-bred silence, thinking them unfit for dramatic representation. After Johnson Over Jordan

one suspects he may be right.

My next example, a play of the 1940's, is as delicate and as beautifully conceived as the little collection of animals from which it takes its name - The Glass Menagerie, by Tennessee Williams. Eric Bentley scathingly alludes to it as 'sentimental'; I can see no marks of this quality in the sense in which he uses the term; I see only a ruthless gentleness which probes to the core of an insoluble problem. The author writes in the production notes: "When a play employs unconventional techniques, it is not, or certainly shouldn't be, trying to escape its responsibility of dealing with reality, or interpreting experience, but is actually or should be attempting to find a closer approach, a more penetrating and vivid expression of things as they are." I feel the play amply justifies his contention; its unconventionality admirably suits both theme and interpretation. However, let the opening speak for itself. Tom, one of the characters, enters. He addresses the audience:

Tom: Yes, I have tricks in my pocket, I have things up my sleeve. But I am the opposite of a stage magician. He gives you illusion that has the appearance of truth. I give you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion .....

The play is memory.

Being a memory play, it is dimly lighted, it is sentimental, it is not realistic .....

I am the narrator of the play, and also a character in it. The other characters are my mother, Amanda, my sister, Laura, and a gentleman caller who appears in the final scenes ....." [1]

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1. The Glass Menagerie. p.2. Secker and Warburg, 1956

Thus, sometimes in a remembered reality of events, sometimes through memories related by the narrator, the story of the Wingfield family emrges. Amanda's husband has deserted her, leaving her with Laura, now a slight cripple as a result of a childhood illness, and Tom, an imaginative boy chained to a dreary office job because of his feeling of responsibility to his mother and sister. Amanda, "a little woman of great but confused vitality," terrified by what may happen in the future to Laura, tries to ignore the girl's physical defect and to make her take a secretarial training. Laura, shy and sensitive, is increasingly withdrawn, becoming "like a piece of her own glass collection, too exquisitely fragile to move from the shelf." Tom battles his way through his mother's hopes, fears and recriminations and at last brings a young colleague home to dinner, as Amanda, with an eye to Laura's future, has besought him. Jim, "a nice, ordinary young man" succeeds in drawing Laura out of herself, but he is carried away by his feelings and his innate kindness soon tells him that he must clear up the position. He is "going steady" with another girl. "There is a look of almost infinite desolation"on Laura's face, and in a few moments he leaves. Amanda is furious that Tom had not found out more about Jim's affairs, and after a terrible quarrel, Tom flings out of the house, never to return. The last few moments of the scene are played "as though viewed through sound-proof glass." As Amanda comforts Laura, Tom's voice is heard in a kind of epilogue telling how he left Saint Louis and wandered over the earth, yet could never quite forget his sister,

"Oh, Laura, Laura, I tried to leave you behind me, but I am more faithful than I intended to be!....."

The time of the play is "Now and The Past". Past and present

intertwine themselves as they do in memory, yet the thread remains clear - a thread that is concerned with the insoluble problems of human relationships. In that, and in the subtlety of its characterisation, lies the abiding value of the play. Neither Amanda nor Tom is intentionally cruel yet Laura is crushed between them, as her glass animals - a symbol of her own fragility - are broken in one of their quarrels. Tom breaks out of the trap in which he is caught only to find that there is no solution to the problem of human responsibility and human conscience. It is one of the most poignant plays I have encountered in the non-realistic tradition and its unconventionality is amply justified.

Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller, a play of the late 1940's, is equally unconventional in technique, as indeed is indicated by the opening set. "An air of the dream clings to the place, a dream rising out of reality ... The entire setting is wholly or, in some places, partially transparent .... Whenever the action is in the present the actors observe the imaginary wall-lines, entering the house only through its door .... But in the scenes of the past these boundaries are broken ....." So, with the present and the past, the real and the imagined, lying as it were side by side, in the space of a couple of days according to the time of clocks, the audience sees the whole span of Willy Loman's adult life. At the point at which the play begins he is an ageing salesman, once successful, now past his usefulness and cast aside by his firm. One son, Happy, lives at home; the other, Biff, has returned after a period of wandering. They are neither of them particularly admirable characters, nor have they the understanding to realise the state of their father's mind. It is left for Linda, their mother, to show them how

near suicide he is. The events of the present are vividly shown - Willy's attempts to get another job, the dinner to which his sons 'treat' him and the subsequent fiasco, his tremendous quarrel with Biff, and the last fatal car-drive. Yet more vivid, and far more important are the wanderings of his mind back into the past which reveal a hum-drum life distinguished mainly for its pathetic pipe-dreams of success and its somewhat unsavoury weaknesses. Surrounding it all is Linda's undemanding love for her husband, yet despite her care he commits suicide though rather in elation than despair, believing that the "accident" will help his family.

The actual events, as in The Glass Menagerie, are of importance only in so far as they affect the characters, and in particular the mind of Willy Loman, for here the interest centres. His whole personality is revealed in his dreams and imaginings; his re-living of the past alternates with the present with the apparent inconsequence of a nightmare. Yet the inconsequence is only apparent. Relentlessly the events which have stemmed from Willy's original weaknesses and which create the whole tragedy play themselves out again in his unconscious mind as vividly and as searchingly as if they had happened in the chronology of conventional drama. Distraught and almost completely unbalanced, he is torn between wild, unfounded optimism and blank despair. Death of a Salesman is a distressingly powerful story of a weak yet sensitive character subjected to the fiendish pressures of modern American business life. He is no hero certainly; he has ever but slenderly known himself. Linda is not so blind that she cannot say of him "He's not the finest character that ever lived. But he's a human being, and a terrible thing is happening to him."[1]

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[1] Miller A. Death of a Salesman. p.44. Cresset Press pocket book ed. 1952

Yet in spite of her love she cannot break Willy's fundamental isolation. This picture of that greatest conflict of all - the conflict in a mind which looks into the abyss of madness - is drawn with such skill and sympathy that it becomes completely unforgettable.

It is something of a relief to turn from two such intense plays to The Lady's Not For Burning, played in London in 1948. Ostensibly it is a comedy, but there is an underlying element of serious thought. It is partly on this account that I have chosen it, since I believe that it is not merely an example of exuberant wit and vitality, but of the renewed interest in allegory.

The story is too well-known for much detail to be necessary. Thomas Mendip, the man who hates life so much that he wishes to be hanged, and Jennet Jourdemayne, the girl who is in danger of being burnt as a witch, find themselves together in the house of the Mayor. At last, and only just in time, the man whom Jennet was accused of spiriting away returns. The doors are discreetly unlocked, and the two are left to disappear quietly into the dawn, together.

Here then is a plot with a beginning, a middle and an end/developed to its culminating point through a series of climaxes. The characters are revealed in ways to which we have for centuries been accustomed. Admittedly though it is set in the past, it is hardly the historical, realistic past, and moreover it is written in verse. In other respects it is naturalistic. Yet beneath the surface there lies an element almost of allegory. The story of Jennet may be regarded merely as that of a young woman of unusual character and sensibility. That indeed it is. But surely, underlying this, is the idea that the strange, the unknown,

is always suspect in the eyes of the insensitive, unthinking masses, is often in fact hounded by them to extinction. Other plays of Fry - and indeed much recent literature - also reveal the allegorical quality, and, as here, its use can be most effective.

Nevertheless, the play is best remembered for its completely fascinating use of verse. Serious, gay, witty, tender, exuberant, matter-of-fact, and delightfully unexpected in its imagery, it is totally unlike Eliot's or Auden's use of the same medium. Critics have questioned whether it is dramatically justified, whether the poetry does not become an end in itself rather than a means to an end. While I acknowledge that this may be true of some of Fry's other plays, it is not so here. The verse is part of the dramatic texture, part indeed of the very conception itself. On the practical issue, too, I fail to see how a play with fundamentally undramatic dialogue could hold London audiences as it did, even given Gielgud and Pamela Brown.

It may seem a far cry from The Lady's Not For Burning to The Fugitive, yet Clare is not unlike Jennet. She has the fineness of character, the unusual sensitivity; she too is hounded. But Galsworthy's stern realism has little in common with Fry's treatment of the subject, and the latter, by his very strangeness, makes a more definite appeal to a generation by now demanding new dramatic experiences.

What of that extraordinary play, described by its author as a tragi-comedy, Waiting for Godot [1] produced for the first time in England in 1953? I cannot imagine what Galsworthy would have thought of it. It

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1. Beckett, S. Waiting for Godot. Faber & Faber 1956 ed.
(All my own conclusions are from reading; I regret I did not see it.)

has no plot to speak of; no characterisation in any obvious sense. It certainly has no beauty, and it is a complete mixture of techniques. In fact I doubt whether he would have recognised it as drama.

The dust-jacket notice says of it that "it aroused more excitement and more discussion than any play presented in the West End for years." And for once, the dust-jacket is right. Some critics raved about it, hailing it as a new dawn of drama; others made nothing of it. Among one's own acquaintances there were those who emerged from the theatre claiming they had undergone a spiritual experience such as comes once in a lifetime - and others who walked out in disgust at the end of the first act. Seldom have I encountered such diversity of opinion among those whose judgments I valued.

Really to attempt to tell the story is farcical. Either one says simply that two tramps are waiting for Mr. Godot, who never appears, or one gets lost in a maze of seemingly irrelevant detail, for it is a play almost completely without dramatic perspective - or at all events, traditional dramatic perspective. Apart from one or two focal points the action and dialogue form detached patterns which seem of approximately equal significance. There seems little way of telling which one should remark and which ignore. However - to return to an attempt to say something about the story.

The curtain rises on Estragon, who is sitting on a low mound trying to take his boots off. Vladimir enters. They appear to be two "down-and-outs" who have spent most of their lives together, and they have an appointment here to meet a certain Mr. Godot. Suddenly there is a terrible cry off stage, and Pozzo and Lucky appear. "Pozzo drives

Lucky by means of a rope passed round his neck" [1]. There is no indication of who they are. Pozzo appears to be well-fed and self-assured; he ill-treats the unfortunate and abject Lucky abominably. At length Pozzo decides that something is owing to Estragon and Vladimir for their civility. Lucky shall entertain them, first by dancing and then by "thinking." His 'thoughts' are emitted - one can hardly say he 'speaks' - rather in the manner of a chaotic yet half-coherent ticker-tape message recorded by a machine which, having something radically wrong inside, jams, repeats and generally mutilates its original. Nevertheless occasional phrases have powerful significance, the most obvious being that man "wastes and pines wastes and pines." [2] The other three, unable to bear his "text," fall upon him and stop him. Eventually Vladimir and Estragon are left alone until a boy comes to say that Mr. Godot will not arrive that night, but will come the next evening without fail. The second act repeats the first, with some significant variations. The two tramps meet at the beginning, Pozzo and Lucky appear again, but Pozzo is blind and practically helpless. When he falls, Estragon and Vladimir eventually go to his assistance, falling themselves in the process. There is a general confusion of bodies on the stage, and after kicking and cursing Pozzo a bit they manage to haul themselves and him up. Again they are left alone; again a boy appears with the same message from Godot. The second act ends exactly as the first.

Vladimir: Well? Shall we go?

Estragon: Yes, let's go?

(They do not move)

CURTAIN.

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1. Waiting for Godot. page 21.
2. " " " page 43.

One feels that had there been a third, a fourth, a fifth act - they would all have ended in the same way, in a kind of endless futility.

After several readings of the play I amassed a few ideas about it - all equally preposterous in cold daylight. My first thought, following the allusions to the Crucifixion, was that the tramps were an earthly vision of the Trinity, their repeated reconciliations being the reunion of the Son and the Spirit, while awaiting the consummation with Godot, the Father. However I dismissed this as the lunatic fringe of criticism. Next, still with the Biblical references in mind, I toyed with the idea of reincarnation. Could Estragon and Vladimir be the thieves crucified on either side of Christ? Or Cain and Abel? Or even Adam and Eve cast out of Paradise? All very wide shots. Possibly the tramps represent body and soul, neither of any value without the other, and not of much use together? Or is it a grim Mad-hatter's Tea party? Or are they - two tramps?

There must surely be some significance behind the play, some commentary on human existence with all its cruelty, futility, madness, aimlessness and its~~very~~occasional flashes of meaning - for one is aware throughout of the hopelessness of expecting any divine intervention. Technically it is amazing; in some respects, brilliant. Its fusion of completely different elements shows great wit and originality. The quick, slick, music-hall cross-talk blends with the physical slap-stick humour in a comedy which is a little reminiscent - particularly with the boots and hats - of the early Chaplin films, but the pathos of the latter has been replaced by grim horror. There are occasional hints of poetry and much teasing symbolism - the tree, the boots, the hat, what do they all mean ?

One returns then to the question of meaning and significance. If one reads (or sees) it simply as it stands - and possibly Beckett did not intend it to have a complex, rationalised explanation, but rather an immediate impact - it seems to me tedious and tasteless. Surely one does not need to sit three hours in a theatre, listening to apparent inanities and brutal comedy in order to be told that life is after all meaningless. One is left with the alternative that there is more to it - but what? And moreover, ought a play to become an intellectual treasure hunt with all the participants arriving at different goals because they have misinterpreted the clues? I am much handicapped by not having seen the play, which, I am told, acts much better than it reads. My greatest quarrel with it is that in trying to see its significance I find emotional response impossible - completely crowded out by cerebral effort - and I should feel happier, too, if I felt there was definitely some significance to see. I should dearly like to dismiss it as an intellectual leg-pull. The vision of so much blood, tears, toil and sweat spent in the elucidation of a hoax is irresistible. Yet in spite of its apparent lunacy and one's irritated desire to write "balderdash" after the final curtain, there lurks a nagging suspicion. It <u>might</u> mean something after all.

Perhaps it may seem irrelevant to devote so much attention to a play which one can treat only half-seriously. On the contrary, it is more than relevant. The fact that audiences were prepared to sit through it and to attempt to make something of it indicates a great change in attitude over a period of fity or so years. It also indicates that "meaning" has acquired in some circles a different connotation, that it can be sensed as well as explained in terms of reason. 'Meaning' and 'significance' take on forms here which have more in common with Proust,

Virginia Woolf, Pirandello than with Galsworthy. They have also the added sophiscation of a generation thoroughly accustomed to talking in terms of neurosis, space - time continuum, existentialism and the like. The "intellectuals" find Galsworthy's ideas too "simple", they miss the undertones they are used to finding; the rest, taking their cue from the avant-garde, think it is not quite done to admire him. It would be ridiculous to suppose that Waiting for Godot is typical of the plays which have superseded Galsworthy's. Nevertheless it gathers into itself many of the forces which have had such adverse effects on his reputation.

Epitaph for George Dillon [1]. presented in 1958 at the Royal Court is, in my opinion, one of the most striking new plays of recent years. An example of contemporary realism, it has no tricks nor eccentricities to startle an audience into attention. Apart from one or two minor details of set and dialogue it is as naturalistic as a Galsworthy play.

It concerns a lower middle-class family, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Elliot, their daughters Nora and Josie, and Ruth, Mrs. Elliot's sister. Apart from Ruth, they are the essence of ordinariness - ordinary people leading ordinary lives, thinking ordinary thoughts (if one could dignify their mental processes with the name of 'thoughts'). Into their ordinary home, with the everlasting flowers, the biscuit barrel and silver-plated fruit dish, the ornate cock-tail cabinet Nora won in a raffle, comes George Dillon, talented author, Bohemian actor, ne'er-do-well loafer - what you will - introduced into the family because, for some obscure reason, he reminds Mrs. Elliot of her dead son, Raymond. He proceeds,

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1. Osborne and Creighton. Epitaph for George Dillon. Faber, 1958.

while trying either to emulate Laurence Olivier or write a masterpiece, to live on the family. He and Ruth - though neither cares to admit it - are attracted to one another. That, however, does not prevent his playing around with Josie; later he develops T.B. and in the general consternation which follows Josie lets out the fact that she is pregnant by him. An interval elapses. George returns, presumably cured, with news that his play is to be produced at Llandrindod Wells, and "edited" for commercial success by the business manager of the concern. Mr. Elliot who detests George has meantime discovered that the latter is already married. However George promises to ask his wife for a divorce, and to marry Josie. As T.S. Eliot says, "This is the way the world ends, Not with a bang, but a whimper."

The story is slight. Told ~~badly~~ baldly it might appear to have most of the stock elements of melodrama. Here is the innocent young girl, beloved by her ageing parents, betrayed by the bold, bad, villain. Anything further from melodrama in actuality one could not find.

The characterisation is masterly. Josie, "about twenty, pretty in a hard, frilly way and nobody's fool" [1.] betrays her empty-headed sensuality in the first few minutes of the play. Mrs. Elliot, "a sincere, emotionally restrained little woman in her early fifties, who firmly believes that every cloud has a silver lining" [2.] is typical of millions of "Mums". All the Elliot family except Ruth - how does George see them? "They don't merely act and talk like caricatures, they are caricatures! That's what's so terrifying. Put any one of them on a stage, and no one would take them seriously for one minute! They

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1. Epitaph for George Dillon. p.12. Faber and Faber, 1958.
2. ibid. p.17.

think in clichés, they talk in them, they even feel in them - and brother, that's an achievement! Their existence is one great cliché that they carry about with them like a snail in his little house - and they live in it and die in it!" [1]. It is true, yet only half the truth - one facet of truth, as it appears to one person.

That one person is himself the pivot of the play. There is a stroke of genius in the stage direction which describes him: "He displays at different times a mercurial, ironic passion, lethargy, offensiveness, blatant sincerity and a mentally picaresque dishonesty - sometimes almost all of these at the same time. A walking confliction in fact." [2]. "A walking confliction" - there is no other way of describing him. He is beset at all times by his own personality, ruthless, ego-centric, amoral, yet with a twisted integrity which for all its perversity is finer that the 'ordinary' goodness of those around him. One hates and admires, loathes and loves him. His is not the stature of great tragedy, yet he dominates the play by the sheer force of his mental contradictions.

More brilliant perhaps than the characterisation is the appalling exposure of a way of life - the way of life of millions of 'civilised' people. It is not vicious - A Street-Car Named Desire or Cat on a Hot Tin Roof give a far more sordid picture. It is synthetic, soul-sapping. The 'telly', the dance-hall, the coach-trips fill the vacuum where vitality and awareness might have been. Most terrifying of all is its effect on George. At first he battens upon the kind-hearted sentimentality of Mrs. Elliot; little by little, with complete consciousness of what is happening, he is sucked into the bog of their unthinking materialism -

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1. Epitaph for George Dillon, p.58.
2. ibid. p.29.

a living death. Well is the play named Epitaph for George Dillon.

It is not great tragedy. Superficially the issues are topical; or rather, one hopes without much conviction that they are topical and that the phenomenon of a synthetic civilisation will pass. But, beneath, there is that fundamental problem of the nonconformist, the "outsider", the individual with more imagination than his fellows, yet with weaknesses which counteract much of his greatness - the character who, like Clare Dedmond, is too fine, yet not fine enough. It is a problem of perennial interest.

I have chosen to finish this survey of a selection of plays with Epitaph for George Dillon because, while it is a realistic play with most of the traditional elements of plot, characterisation and dialogue, it nevertheless shows that, even within the convention in which Galsworthy wrote, there have been great changes in direction and attitude, chief among these being the psychological bias in characterisation.

Apart from developments within the naturalistic school, the period since 1920 has seen a rapid exploration of other dramatic areas - allegory, symbolism, "streams of consciousness" among them. I have not, however, intended to suggest that these experiments were in the majority. The object of my selection of plays was not to represent the entire field of drama, but merely to show something of that part of it which was in complete contrast to the works of Galsworthy. By so doing I have hoped to demonstrate the power of the forces which have militated against his reputation as a playwright, for it is useless to pretend that in this respect he has not suffered great vicissitudes. With these fluctuations, then, the next part of my study is concerned.

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c) An account of some fluctuations in his reputation.

Changes in life and thought are intangible. It is impossible to draw hard and fast lines, and to say, "Here ends this and begins that." There are, however, certain approximations which may be made, and in the twentieth century when these are set against the outstanding dates in Galsworthy's dramatic career and in the fluctuations of his reputation their implications are at once apparent. The vicissitudes which he has in this respect suffered are a faithful reflection of the revolutions in attitudes of mind.

First it is convenient to pick out from the general points I have made a few of the salient events and dates while bearing always in mind the fact that these are in most cases only approximations. The spread of universal education begins to show its effect during this century, and one can calculate that the influence of the 1902 Secondary Education Act on theatre audiences and the reading public would be felt in full during the second decade. The Great War accelerated the changes already imperceptibly under way. Freud's work was published in English at intervals during the years between 1912 and 1936, and its influence had been in places felt even earlier. The bulk of Einstein's work on relativity was done between 1905 and 1915, and its impact on thought then would reach lay minds in ten or so years. In literature also the second decade of the century produces strange phenomena which are symptomatic of the forces at work in the world at large. One may note here the publication of Sons and Lovers in 1913, Pointed Roofs in 1915, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916) and T.S. Eliot's first volume of poems in 1917.

From these few dates it is obvious that the convergence of forces which radically transforms English life and literature even before the Second World War is at its most powerful roughly between 1918 and 1930; it is no mere coincidence the the crucial decade in Galsworthy's popularity with the intelligentsia is that of the 1920's. There were of course murmurs against his reputation before this - he would indeed be a strange author who pleased everyone - but they are a minority. It is however during the third decade that such virulent voices are raised against him, and in the words of H.V. Marrot, by 1929 "the reaction against Galsworthy's enormous reputation and popularity all over the world had already set in in some quarters, where his name alone was ~~sufficient enough~~ sufficient to ensure a 'slating'." [1] Sydney Carroll's protest against the strictures made by "these young critical Bolsheviks" about The Roof (1929) reveals that the animosity against Galsworthy had reached considerable proportions. " ... surely it is time," he writes, "that the critical fraternity as a whole protested against the ill-considered, immature and rash impertinences made at the expense of the really great men of the theatre - men whose achievements and records entitle them to the most sympathetic, thorough and well-digested verdicts of criticism. We must not bring our calling into the gutter." [2] In the later years of the 1930's the story in the circles Carroll probably had in mind is one of indifference to Galsworthy's work rather than active hostility. Again and again one looks at the criticism of the period only to find that Galsworthy simply is not mentioned. More recently, since the last war,

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1. H.V. Marrot. Life and Letters, p.541.
2. H.V. Marrot. Life and Letters, p.626.

something of the immediacy of the revolutionary ideas has disappeared; the theories of Freud, Einstein, Sartre and so on have become - in forms which their originators would hardly recognise - almost clichés to those who regard themselves as "the thinking public." Revolt against tradition is confined mainly to that section of the community dubbed in recent years The Angry Young Men. In fact there is singularly little tradition left against which to revolt. Thus there have been signs of a better understanding and a fairer appreciation of Galsworthy's achievement than was prevalent twenty-five or so years ago.

That then is the general trend of opinion regarding his work during the period. A little amplification will bear out the generalisations which are implicit in that brief outline. Though I am mainly concerned with Galsworthy the dramatist it is of course impossible to omit occasional references to his novels, since patently each bears upon the other. The arrangement of the material is mainly chronological, with particular emphasis on the decade 1920-1930, as these are crucial years.

On his early career Galsworthy may best speak for himself. "In 1906, therefore, before The Man of Property had appeared, I had been writing nearly eleven years without making a penny, or any name to speak of. The Man of Property had taken me nearly three years, but it was 'written'. My name was made; my literary independence assured; and my income steadily swollen." The same year brought the production of his first play, The Silver Box, which caused "a strong and immediate sensation" [1]. Not all the press notices were quite unqualified in approval, though the Times Literary Supplement (September 28, 1906) says, "In short, we have nothing - or

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.196.

nothing that we chose - to say but praise for this play." The Daily Telegraph (September 26, 1906) for instance writes, "The Silver Box may not be a play of the most cheerful description, but that it is interesting and instructive to a quite unusual degree none will deny." However Marrot records that out of sixty notices only a handful were unfavourable. [1] Mario Borsa writing in 1908 states that it was the best play produced at the Court under the Vedrenne-Barker management, and praises its "lucidity of expression," and sense of proportion in "dialogue and delineation of character." Galsworthy, he feels, is "an artist of great originality and individuality." [2] Thus, with his first play, he became a leading dramatist.

Joy, produced in 1907, adds little to his reputation; it was not condemned out of hand, but the general feeling was one of disappointment. Carson, reviewing the plays of 1907, voices the general opinion: "Mr. John Galsworthy unfortunately did not sustain in Joy the great promise of The Silver Box." [3]

1909, however, marks another milestone in his dramatic career. So successful was Strife that although originally it was billed for six matinees at the Duke of York's it was transferred to the Haymarket for an evening run. H.V. Marrot quotes the dramatic critic of the Globe: "Not often have we witnessed more genuine enthusiasm in a theatre than was accorded to Mr. Galsworthy's play Strife," and most of the press notices sound an equally laudatory note. J.T. Grein, assessing in the Stage Year Book the plays of 1909 as "a handful of good strong grain, with one single particle

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.198.
2. Borsa,M. The English Stage of To-day. 1908. p.117
3. Stage Year Book, 1908. p.17

of superior excellence," comes finally to his enthusiastic acclamation of that one particle - "Last, but not least, I refer to the work which put the 'Finis coronat opus' upon the year 1909, namely, John Galsworthy's Strife." After a critical appreciation of some length, he comes to his conclusion - "It would be churlish to hunt for flaws in a work of so mighty a conception, so sincere in execution. It is such drama that we want, such drama that will lift our stage as well as our national reputation."

Completing this early period of dramatic success comes Justice (1910). The fact that it was the opening play at Charles Frohmann's season at the Duke of York's gives an indication of Galsworthy's standing. According to Marrot, "The London first night was quite sensational"..[1] Moreover, not only the gallery but also the critics were impressed. Max Beerbohm has nothing to say against it; "the reality of the play is so true that in the first act" we do not feel that we are seeing an accurate presentment of the hum-drum of a lawyer's office: we are in a lawyer's office"[2] And so throughout ..... Not all the critics are as unqualified in praise. E.A. Baugham feels that "Mr. Galsworthy descended to special pleading and its attendant exaggeration marred his drama ..... Mr. Galsworthy has been too didactic in Justice, whereas in Strife and The Silver Box the dramatist stood aside from his creations and let them work out their fate inevitably." But his conclusion is favourable. "Still with all its faults of special pleading and unrelieved gloom, Justice is a strong play and one of which we may be proud."

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1. H.V. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.255.

2. Beerbohm, M. Around Theatres. Entry for March, 1910. p. 565.

The tone both of the press and the more formal dramatic criticism in connection with Galsworthy's work at this time is pre-eminently serious and respectful. He and Granville-Barker are usually bracketed with Shaw and Ibsen as the leading dramatists of the realistic school. His work is analysed with serious attention; his faults not ignored but weighed with discrimination. There is no doubt in the minds of his critics but that he belongs to the intellectual avant-garde of drama. He expresses the ideas and sentiments of an advanced minority, ideas which are in keeping with the mildly revolutionary feeling of the earlier years of the century. The great cataclysm of war has yet to come. His reputation is at this point unassailed.

Naturally as he becomes more established, his name is found increasingly in the formal works of criticism. In the second decade of the century such references are mainly favourable. William Archer constantly instances his plays with obvious approval, and comments particularly on Galsworthy's abhorrence of the theatrical. "He would sooner die," says Archer, "than drop his curtain on a particularly effective line." [1] The first scene of The Silver Box is "one of the best of recent openings" and he instances Strife as among those plays whose themes do not force upon their authors "either a sanguinary or a tame last act," but enable them "to sustain and increase the tension up to the very close." [2]

Archibald Henderson, speaking of leading contemporary dramatists, places Galsworthy among these, and patently admires him. [3] F.W. Chandler while not always praising his work regards him as a notable figure, frequently instancing his plays in Aspects of Modern Drama (1914). Moderwell asserts

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1. Archer W. Playmaking. p.~~43~~.250.1913.
2. " " p.276. 1913.
3. Henderson A. The Changing Drama. p.170. 1914.

"John Galsworthy makes the well-made play as well as any Englishman now living. But he is too big a man to be bound by it. His keen sense of ~~perception~~ proportion and fitness comes from the artist in him, which is always detached and critical, but always sympathetic." [1] Lewisohn, writing in 1915, is even more enthusiastic. He begins by saying that he cannot do better than sum up Galsworthy's dramatic principles "in the faultless dignity and wisdom of Mr. Galsworthy's phrasing," [2] and quotes at some length from Some Platitudes Concerning ~~the~~ Drama. He is not absolutely happy about Joy and The Little Dream but "Mr. Galsworthy's remaining six plays are all masterpieces." [3]

Much of the criticism of the period is similar in tone; nevertheless there are murmurs in a different key. Ashley Dukes begins his criticism with the apparent approval of the fact that "Mr. Galsworthy has reaffirmed the existence of the common man, an individual long ignored by the English stage," but goes on, after some attention to The Silver Box, Joy, and Strife, to a somewhat damning examination of Justice. "It arouses anger and pity, not inspiration, And inspiration is the test of tragedy .... The characters of Justice are grey at heart .... The play has many extraordinarily moving passages ... but it is not a tragedy, and it is not great drama." [4] Dukes does not here stigmatise Galsworthy to the extent which he is to do later, but the praise he gives is, to say the least, temperate. John Palmer's The Future of the Theatre (1913) has a similar tone, damning with faint praise, "Mr. Galsworthy's plays are of extremely little value as positive achievements. They are immensely valuable as

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1. Moderwell, H.K. The Theatre of To-day. 1915. p. 218
2. Lewisohn: The Modern Drama, p.207. 1915.
3. " " " " p.209. "
4. Dukes A. Modern Dramatists, p.148 et.seq. 1911.

proving that the plays of his contemporaries are imperfect exercises in a method they do not fully understand." [1] Speaking of the theatre in general in 1918 Alexander Bakshy deplores the low state of the English stage [2] and asserts that the need of the moment "is the experimental - or the workshop-theatre." The three opinions are, however, far from typical. Most critics of this time would agree with Archer that Galsworthy was a playwright whose very presence in the world of drama ensured its vitality.

The same general tendency is to be found in the less formal dramatic writings of the decade - praise or where praise is impossible informed and constructive criticism, on the one hand; mutters of very definite disapproval on the other. None of the plays by which Galsworthy is usually remembered belongs to the 1910-1919 period and it is unnecessary to pay as much attention to their receptions as to those of the plays which influenced his reputation more violently one way or the other. The press notices of The Eldest Son, produced in 1912, pleased Galsworthy, though Baugham, while acknowledging that it was a "powerful play" thought that it suffered "from a rigid determination on the part of the author to illustrate his thesis." [3] Nor incidentally does Baugham wax wildly enthusiastic over The Pigeon, produced in the same year. He finds it "an interesting play" but "too samely throughout." Many critics found Galsworthy's intention in the latter play frankly puzzling. The Fugitive (1913) had a somewhat mixed reception, and two instances must suffice. The critic of The Nation (September 20,1913) though mentioning its weaknesses, sums up "But indeed Mr. Galsworthy's genius is of the rare quality which readily draws you by

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1. Palmer J. The Future of the Theatre. p.150. 1913.
2. Bakshy, A. The Theatre Unbound. p.55 et seq. 1923.
3. Stage Year Book, 1913. p. 9.

its fineness." Baugham admits The Fugitive "like all Mr. Galsworthy's work" is "sincere and dramatic without being theatrical." "If only he had humour and allowed his characters to stumble without his leading strings, Mr. Galsworthy would do work of which the English Stage would be proud for many a generation." [1] A piece of more outspoken general criticism is to be found in an article published in 1913 in The Outlook, where, in reviewing Hauptmann's plays, the critic writes: "We do not think that any reader who comes fresh to the plays in this volume (Die Weber) will be in any doubt as to the source from which Mr. Galsworthy as dramatist has derived his careful inspiration, nor as to the superior sympathy, comprehension, and poignancy of his original." To this Galsworthy replied that while not wishing to counter the last part of the sentence, he had seen none of Hauptmann's plays and had read only two, of which Die Weber was not one.

Galsworthy's position then at about the turn of the second decade of the century is still well assured. Admittedly there have been adverse criticisms of his dramatic work, but they are, as yet, rumbles in the distance. The effects of the anti-naturalistic movements have not yet converged with other intellectual and social currents to the extent which they do in the next decade. Virginia Woolf certainly hits at the realistic novel of the day when she writes in her essay on Modern Fiction that "So much of the enormous labour of proving the solidity, the likeness to life, of the story is not merely labour thrown away but labour misplaced to the extent of obscuring and blotting out the light of the conception." But few of the established critics of the time would subscribe to this view.

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1. Stage Year Book. 1914. p 3.

It is, like the opinion of Ashley Dukes, a murmur in the distance.

Thence we arrive at the most crucial years - the 1920's. To this period belong The Skin Game and Loyalties, Galsworthy's greatest dramatic commercial successes. 1922 sees the Grein - Lion cycle, which included revivals of Justice and The Silver Box, and much can be inferred about the state of his reputation from comparisons of the original notices with those of the revival. The latter years of the decade bring the much inferior plays, Exiled and The Roof, which his detractors are quick to seize upon.

During this period several books were published which have direct application to any investigation of the esteem in which Galsworthy was held. The divergence already noted between the critics who may be described as traditionalists and the younger men interested in the new experimental drama is at once apparent. On the one hand is William Archer, who in his The Old Drama and The New (1923) speaks of Galsworthy with the same approval as in his earlier Playmaking. Agate, too, though qualifying his praise a little at times - he makes the delightfully unequivocal comment on the end of Escape that it is bosh, "Galsworthian bosh, of course, but bosh," yet remains an admirer of Mr. Galsworthy who, "in spite of that fund of human sympathy which he can turn on like a bathroom tap, is still a great playwright." [1]. One must admit that he goes on to say it is a pity that Galsworthy "should end with a piece like Escape," and then to suggest that he should make a final effort "and make his bow with something worthy to rank with those masterpieces, The Silver Box, Strife and Justice." There is no doubt however that he remains "an admirer."

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1. Agate J. Contemporary Theatre, 1926. p.221. 1926.

A. E. Morgan, writing in 1924, devotes a chapter of seventeen pages in a book of three hundred [1.] to Galsworthy and produces a balanced, serious and fair estimate of his work. He does not gloss over weaknesses; chief among these he rates his tendency to didacticism, and to the choice of characters who are "essentially small." "He will need to tear himself ~~away~~ from those problems of little human ~~beings~~ creatures and concentrate his whole art once again not mainly on the social problem but primarily on the soul of man." [2.] Nevertheless he says of Galsworthy that "his work is always good. His artistic ideals are always maintained at a high level, and his purpose is ever noble." [3.]

That other forces are at work, however, is evident from an article by Gerald Bullett on Galsworthy in the New Statesman (June 10,1922). "In certain fastidious literary circles, where 'those who cannot, teach,' the artistic reputation of Mr. Galsworthy is under a cloud of disapproval." Four years later, Richard Jennings is to ask, in the Spectator (August 21, 1926), "Why will not people get out of Mr. Galsworthy, what, with lapses ....., he is nearly always able to give - a dramatic tale swiftly narrated, in little incidents selected for the illustration of social types and conventions? Why must we always be scenting a moral purpose?" These two questions indicate that undermining forces are at work.

The works which most clearly demonstrate this rising feeling against Galsworthy are by two influential young critics, St. John Ervine and Ashley Dukes. Ervine's Some Impressions of My Elders (1922) is a strange mixture of praise and blame. "Mr. John Galsworthy is the most sensitive figure in the ranks of modern men of letters, but his ~~sensitivity~~ sensitiveness is of

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1. Morgan A.E. Tendencies in Modern Drama. 1924.
2. ibid. p.137.
3. ibid. p.137.

a peculiar nature, for it is almost totally impersonal."[1] What is one to make of that? What Ervine gives with one hand he takes away with the other. Obviously he thinks more highly of Galsworthy's earlier than his later plays. He even mentions a severe letter which he wrote to a critic, who had unfairly censured the original performance of Justice; "an insult offered to a man of letters for whom I had a respect was an insult offered to me." Yet his concluding sentence runs: "I imagine that when Mr. Galsworthy goes into a garden, his delight in it is dashed by the thought that somewhere near at hand a thrush is killing a snail !....." This latter, to my mind, gives the whole criticism that twist which one is to see so often - that hint of sneering mockery. One might also note in passing that Ervine praises Galsworthy for his technique - another note which is to sound again and again.

Another article with the same bias is that of Ashley Dukes in his book The Youngest Drama (1923). He names Galsworthy among the fore-runners of modern drama - I presume it is something of a compliment that he even includes him - and devotes two-thirds of his article to "criticism" in the popularly accepted sense. "The outward versimilitude of Mr. Galsworthy's plays sometimes masks, and sometimes exposes, their inward falsity .... Where the realistic veil effectively conceals the moral perversion of reality, as in Loyalties or The Silver Box, we call the play good Galsworthy or even good drama; and where this cloak of decency is plucked away, as in The Mob or The Fugitive we blush for the author as much as for ourselves."[2] He deigns at the end to hand out one paragraph of back-handed praise. "Yet the dramatist's one over-mastering emotion, that of pity, counts for much. It rises with a certain dignity above the plane

1. Some Impressions of My Elders, p.119. New York 1922.
2. Dukes, Ashley. The Youngest Drama, p.21. 1923.

of banal expression..... We listen perhaps without belief, but we listen... It is better to be sincerely mistaken ~~about~~ in emotions than to feel no emotions at all." [1] And so Mr. Dukes continues, blandly condescending, till he concludes with as qualified a compliment as one could hope to meet. "But for the discipline imposed by these borrowings" (i.e. from the spirit of the times) "he would be a blameless author of humane novelettes, instead of a dramatist who reminds us with patient regularity that there are two sides to every question."

The shorter articles of the decade and the press notices of actual plays present a similar pattern, with the two strands of opinion running side by side, rather as in the earlier period - but in the 1920's the dissentient voices become louder, more self-assured, until by the end of the decade the predominant attitude among the young intellectuals is that of Ervine and Dukes. The plays which have most significance in a study of his reputation are The Skin Game (1920), and Loyalties (1922), the revivals of The Silver Box and Justice (1922), Escape (1926) and The Roof (1929). I shall therefore concentrate mainly on these.

Marrot says of The Skin Game that "the general tone of the Press was laudatory" [2] and certainly the play was a commercial success. Desmond McCarthy, however, writing in the New Statesman on May 8, 1920, although he concludes with praise, has a few hard knocks to give en route. "The predominant characteristics of Mr. Galsworthy as a dramatist are clarity and a certain flat evenness of statement....The result is that though the

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1. Dukes, Ashley. The Youngest Drama, p.23. 1923.
2. Marrot. Life and Letters, p.493.

power to rouse indignation and pity is within his scope, tragic feeling and free comedy are not. He is an artist with a preoccupation, a very honourable one, but still with a preoccupation." He does manage to end on a different note: "Mr. Galsworthy has worked out his theme admirably, clearly, justly, and the play, as I have said, holds our attention all through throughout." Yet this final tribute - somewhat meagre - cannot remove the impression of his earlier remarks.

A.B. Walkley's attitude also is ambivalent. He contrasts The Skin Game with Harwood's A Grain of Mustard Seed, which he had also just seen. The former he calls a play of action; the latter a play of 'talk'. He does not wish to decry Galsworthy's piece; he does in fact accord it some praise. "The will-conflict ... has an intense reality and is fought tooth and nail ..... Artistic work of any kind gives pleasure, and it is as possible to be as delighted with Mr. Galsworthy's kind as with Mr. Harwood's." Yet his first sentence runs, "I should be sorry to call Mr. Galsworthy's Skin Game a mechanical piece of work." It is hardly an opening calculated to give an impression of unqualified approval. Many of the Press notices were, as Marrot points out, laudatory, but one also hears other undertones.

Loyalties, produced in March, 1922, certainly seems to have been a success with public and critics alike. J.T. Grein for instance comments that the London audiences are not as stupid as they are taken to be, since they applauded The Skin Game and Loyalties, two plays "of depth and serious trend." The Spectator[1] critic has seen both the revived The Silver Box and Loyalties. "In The Silver Box" he writes, "we have Mr. Galsworthy at his crudest; he is almost continuously directly didactic ..... But in Loyalties he has laid at our feet all kinds of little subtleties

[1] Spectator : April 1, 1922.

of characterisation, of turns of phrase, of observations of manners." More enlightening for the illumination they throw on the state of Galsworthy's reputation are some of the notices about the revival of Justice. It is true that the original production had been censured in some quarters particularly on the score of its "photographic drabness", but two notices of the 1922 production are of special interest in that they reveal the attitude of the rising critics. Desmond McCarthy finds elements to praise in Justice, but also makes some sharp strictures, as when he refers to "Mr. Galsworthy's undemonstrative, yet sentimental handling of tragic themes," or insists that "vitality . .... is the quality he must look out for in casting his women's parts; that is the quality which he most often fails to impart to them himself." [1] W.J. Turner is even more outspoken. "In every real work of art there are things that the author cannot explain, things which, perhaps, defy reason or explanation and which men will interpret in different ways, but which future generations will delight in. There is absolutely nothing of this quality in Justice .... Instead of revelation we find the most conventional outlook conceivable ..... It is my complaint against Mr. Galsworthy as a propagandist .... (that he) simply tries to harrow our humanitarian feelings." [2] We have travelled a long way since the first criticisms of the play.

Thus by 1925 Galsworthy's position has been seriously questioned. He has his supporters - in fact he never completely loses his popularity - but at the same time the array of names against him is becoming formidable. Moreover changes are apparent in the theatre itself. Six Characters In

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1. New Statesman. February 25, 1922.
2. The Spectator, February 18, 1922.

Search of An Author, Masses and Men, The Emperor Jones are examples of this. Psychological, scientific and sociological theories are thrusting their way into the climate of the age and thence into drama. The return of the men from the Great War brings a complexity and chaos to life which it had not known before. Only five years of the decade have passed, but they are five momentous years, five years which are cutting at the roots of Galsworthy's reputation.

It would of course be nonsense to suggest that by 1925 he had, as a living force in the theatre, ceased to exist. As I have shown by reference to Archer and similar critics his reputation was still enormous. Equally in the next five years, much is said in his defence, and not merely by "the old fogies" of dramatic criticism. Ivor Brown in a lengthy article entitled John Galsworthy, Dramatist, [1] has a sincere and fair-minded appreciation. He admits Galsworthy's weaknesses - for instance A Bit o' Love and A Family Man are unworthy of him, while The Foundations and Windows are little better. But for "quiet sincerity" and "sober veracity" he cannot be beaten. Brown is aware of the hostility towards his author. "By this time the radicals of the theatre are apt to patronise Galsworthy .... His quiet and natural art is far removed from the rackets of Expressionism and from the hustling, noisy methods of the new stage-emphasis....The stale charge of 'photography' is easily levelled at a great craftsman ... by those who are incapable of craftsmanship..... I claim without hesitation that Galsworthy's skill as a playwright has helped many an actor to his honours and rewards." George Warrington writing on Shaw and Galsworthy in Country Life (December 7, 1929) says of The Silver Box "I do not think it could be left out of any list of the

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1. The Bookman. December, 1928.

twelve best English plays." Marriot includes Strife in his selection of plays by authors who "are standard-bearers in the modern ~~English~~ British dramatic movement." [1.]

But against this one must set other less flattering comments, particularly those relating to Galsworthy's three last plays, Escape, Exiled and The Roof. Escape was "a brilliant and immediate success .... The Press were on the whole cordial." [2.] And certainly there is ample evidence of the cordiality. However there were notable exceptions. St. John Ervine's notice in The Observer provoked Galsworthy to a reply, and their correspondence on the matter takes up a good part of the Observer's dramatic space for a month, beginning September ~~16~~ 19, (1926). The gist of Ervine's objection was that Galsworthy loaded the dice against Matt. Galsworthy justified himself in a letter to which Ervine replied, and the correspondence finally closed with Galsworthy saying that he was rebutting what appeared to him "an imputation of conscious dishonesty of thought." The letters are interesting as regards their actual content and - more relevant to this study - as regards the position still held by Galsworthy. He is sufficiently important for his correspondence to be welcomed, yet he might be publicly attacked with considerable severity.

Another more blatant example of this trend in criticism is in a press notice of Exiled in The New Statesman (July 6, 1929). It is headed "Mr. Galsworthy's Worst," and begins, with polite patronage, "Mr. John Galsworthy is a prolific dramatist, and that is something in his favour, for it shows a persistence of effort which our traditions lead us to

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1. Marriot. Great British Plays, 1929.

2. Marrot. Life and Letters, p.576.

consider admirable." The writer is so busy putting contemporary dramatists in their place that it takes him half a column to get to Exiled. "Nobody who is acquainted with the drama of the last twenty five years," he asserts with tremendous confidence, "will deny that the dramatis personae are a crew of thin-blooded, one-dimensional, flat-faced economic phantoms compared with the flesh and blood creations of Shakespeare, or even of Wycherley and Vanbrugh." However our friend at length arrives at Exiled and in a brief account introduces us to "the paste-board figures" of Sir John and Sir Charles and the "smarmy righteousness" of Mr. East. "These people" he goes on to say, "are not human beings, they are 'ideas' of human beings, and the sort of 'ideas' which one might encounter in a leading article in a seemingly fair-minded but actually vague and woolly-brained newspaper." He does however allow that Galsworthy is "genuinely perturbed by social problems," and even admits, a trifle ambiguously, that the play "made some impression" on an audience. While holding no great brief for Exiled, I feel little inclined to trust the judgment of one who puts Wycherley and Vanbrugh before all the dramatists of his own period.

The Roof is hardly an improvement on Exiled, and according to Marrot the notices were mainly unfavourable. One cannot use this as evidence that the decline in Galsworthy's reputation was due to changes in life and thought - quite frankly in my opinion it is a poor play, and unevitably, on its own merits, had a cool reputation. What is important, however, is the tone of the criticisms. Richard Jennings gives a racy account of the play, concluding with "In sum, it would be quite a Palais-Royal-farce hotel if we were not in Mr. Galsworthy's restraining company. He sobers

incipient
our hilarity by reminding us that in the midst of larks we are in tragedy." [1] Ervine, in the Observer, is equally scathing. After a summary extremely wittingly expressed at the expense of the play, he comes to more serious criticism: "Mr. Galsworthy has spun his stuff so finely that it is almost invisible. The thought is so vague and its expression so sentimental that it is difficult to detect, and when it seems to be detected, is irritating. The final impression is of something so muzzy-minded and feckless and remote from reality that an immense impatience fills the spectator." In both these last criticisms, though Ervine is of the two more serious, one detects the sneering, mocking note which is typical of a great deal of the animosity against Galsworthy. Whereas he had met, naturally, with adverse comments much earlier in his career, those of the 1920-30 decade are the first strongly to reveal that condescending patronage one associates with the later criticism.

For sheer virulence in this decade, I have reserved Lawrence's essay, published in Scrutiny in 1928, till last. Strictly it is concerned with the novels, and particularly with The Man of Property. One of the least offensive sentences concerns Irene, whom Lawrence sees as "a sneaking, creeping, spiteful sort of bitch .... absolutely living off the Forsytes ... and trying to do them dirt." [2] The language and imagery is typical of the whole essay. It concludes by pointing out that the world is in a sticky mess, "but if the sticky mess gets much deeper, even the little Forsytes won't be able to bob up any more. They'll be smothered in their own slime along with everything else. Which is a comfort." [3]

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1. Spectator. November 16, 1929.
2. Scrutinies by Various ~~Authors~~ Writers, collected by Edgell Rickword, 1928 Vol.1. p.62.
3. ibid. p.72.

It is perhaps irrelevant to quote Lawrence; he himself is such an odd character that he can hardly represent any "school of thought." Moreover the public which this article reached would probably be small, yet I have found myself, in other contexts, that young minds are fascinated by Lawrence and his influence could be considerable. Whether this is an unwarrantable generalisation or not, any survey of Galsworthy's standing at this time is incomplete without Lawrence's denunciation.

So the decade has moved on, from the effects of a war to the effects of its aftermath, through rapid social progress, through intellectual and scientific change, and at the same time Galsworthy's reputation as a playwright has declined, partly, one must in honesty admit, because the plays of the later years are inferior to some of his earlier ones, but more because the forces of revolt, experiment and innovation find in the disruptions of this decade a fertile soil. The old order changes - and the new snatches its place. The violence dislodges many besides Galsworthy.

After 1930 the tumult and the shouting tends to die. Galsworthy wrote no further plays, so that his drama becomes rather the province of the literary critics than of the dramatic press correspondents, apart from obituary notices which indicate little which we do not already know. Before the Second World War, except for those who might be described as the right wing of criticism, not a great deal is to be found about him. Malcolm Cowley quotes Dr. Stanley Pargellis of the Newberry Library as saying that "when first editions of an author's work appear in auction rooms, the bidding by dealers also reflects the quotations, or opinions, prevailing on the ~~literary~~ critical stock exchange." As instances Dr. Pargellis notes "the steep decline in Galsworthy and Stevenson first editions

after 1930. There are signs of a partial recovery in Stevensons but Galsworthys are still inactive, at a depressed level." [1.]

One might note Ervine's judgment that "the nadir of this neo-democracy was reached, in England, in John Galsworthy's depressing dramas of depressing people, such as Falder in Justice." [2.] That is almost all the attention he pays to Galsworthy in Theatre in My Time. Not of course that one expects anything else of him; there is a delightful and completely irrelevant extract in Agate's Ego, which tells how, after Ervine had returned from New York, the Americans felt lost without him: "they missed their morning dose of bile." Incidentally Agate himself, though an admirer of Galsworthy, is not above saying of Sheppey that it contained a lot of "Galsworthian sentimentality ....." Verschoyle, writing of Justice in the Spectator of April 19 (1935), is somewhat fairer. He comments on the fact that Justice and a few other dramas have played an actual part in redressing wrong, saying that this "tends to weaken their dramatic effect to-day ...." Galsworthy was not "concerned with an analysis of cosmic defects; he was a critic of a particular social organism." But Justice "has many admirable qualities ....." and "twenty-five years after its first production is still decidedly a play worth seeing." Eric Gillett on the other hand is - unintentionally, I think - more equivocal. In an article on Galsworthy's place in the theatre [3.], half of which is given over to a discussion of the Victorian theatre and a further quarter to Galsworthy's life-history, he pays Galsworthy a somewhat left-handed compliment - "In ~~his~~ the plays the defects are sometimes

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1. Cowley, M. The Literary Situation. 1947. footnote to p.125.
2. Ervine. Theatre in My Time, p.159. 1933.
3. The Listener, January 15, 1936.

obvious, but I do not think that their ~~severest~~ most severe critics could criticise the sincerity of Galsworthy's intention."

It becomes increasingly difficult as the century progresses, and the scope of the dramatic field widens, to do more than collect scattered references to Galsworthy's work. However it does appear - and I do not think it is merely a case of seeing what one wants to see - that in the 1940's and 1950's there has been a resurgence of interest. This is partly due to the fact that time has given us a certain perspective but is also because we have become accustomed to living with the problems which faced the world after the Great War, and the ideas which were at that time new and stimulating are accepted currency now. We do not then demand of Galsworthy what it would be incongruous for him to give, but take from him what he offers. There are of course still those who decry him. Eric Bentley shows considerable surprise that Lewisohn in "one of the better books on modern drama" names Galsworthy in 1915 as the leading English dramatist.[1.] Edmund Wilson alludes to certain books "reminiscent of the full-dress adulteries of the period in the early nineteen-hundreds when Galsworthy and other writers were making people throb and weep over such fiction as The Dark Flower."[2.] Professor Leavis implies censure when he speaks of "the genuineness of the element in Mr. Forster's ~~works~~ early novels that sets them apart by themselves in the period of Arnold Bennett, Wells and Galsworthy."[3.] I was amazed to find that a character in Angus Wilson's Hemlock and After had actually read Justice, "that stupid play of Galsworthy's." Lastly on this debit side of the account is an extraordinary article by Robert Hamilton in Contemporary

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1. Bentley, E. The Modern Theatre. 1948. p. 229.
2. Wilson, E. Classics and Commercials. p.299. 1951.
3. Leavis. The Common Pursuit, p.263. 1952.

Review (October, 1952). His chronology is inaccurate in the first place - he gives A Family Man as following Strife, with Loyalties a year later. After this, one is a little wary of his judgments. The article asserts, "His plays are good by average standards, and yet they reveal his weaknesses more surely than even his poorest fiction ... With one or two exceptions, they hover unsatisfactorily between a good story and a tract ... Nevertheless, Galsworthy's plays are technically admirable and still hold the interest." I am a little puzzled as to how anything which hovers unsatisfactorily between a good story and a tract manages to hold interest. For missed points Mr. Hamilton scores full marks. Galsworthy's "most serious defect as a dramatist is in the realm of ideas. The plays raise problems which they do not attempt to solve." The end of Escape is most unsatisfactory. In it Galsworthy had "'escaped' from his own dilemma." However one must admit that there is a grain of truth in his conclusion that Galsworthy "certainly set out to stir us, and in many cases succeeded; yet his art does not always ring absolutely true. This was not because of any insincerity, but because his kind of humanitarianism no longer convinces in the face of the cosmological and religious issues of our time."

On the other hand such writers as Macqueen Pope,[1] Ernest Short,[2] Lynton Hudson,[3] George S. Fraser,[4] and George Rowell [5] speak with fairness and appreciation of Galsworthy's contribution to drama. They do not pretend that his work is faultless, or that all of it is of an equally high level, but once again he is treated seriously and objectively.

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1. Pope M. Carriages at Eleven. 1947.
2. Short E. Sixty Years of Theatre, 1951.
3. Hudson, L. The English Stage 1850 - 1950. 1951.
4. Fraser, G.S. The Modern Writer and his World. 1953.
5. Rowell, G. The Victorian Theatre. 1956.

Most of them feel, in spite of Galsworthy's own reiterations that he was not a reformer, that his social purpose shows too clearly in his plays, and that his "lack of passion" alienates modern audiences. But they praise his "honest observation," His "cool, investigating spirit," and of course his craftsmanship. One feels, in fact, that the excellence of this latter quality has tended to blind some critics to his other virtues. But it is a happy sign that many now take his work seriously and when disapproving of it do so without condescension.

One other aspect of his career throws light on the high esteem in which he was held - that is, the honours which were bestowed upon him. Here it is impossible to isolate his dramatic work from his novels, and to say that one more than the other brought him his well-deserved rewards. He was, moreover, a man of such wide activities that one feels the honours offered him were not merely on the score of his literary achievements, and are therefore in those cases only partially relevant to his literary reputation. However they are obviously to a great extent a reflection of his standing and ought therefore to be quoted.

In 1918 he was offered a knighthood by Lloyd George, but refused it because he had "long held and expressed the conviction that men who strive to be artists in Letters, especially those who attempt criticism of life and philosophy, should not accept titles."[1]. He was, in the next year, invited by Dr. Nicholas Butler and the American Academy of Arts and Letters to represent English Literature at the Lowell Centenary celebrations. An honour which has little to do with his literary reputation but which nevertheless shows something of the scope of his activities is

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters, p.437.

that bestowed on him in 1920 by the King of the Belgians - the Palmes en Or de l'Ordre de la Couronne "in recognition of the valuable services which he rendered to the Belgians' cause during the war." Marrot also records that earlier in the year he had been "elected a member of the Athenaeum Club honoris causa, under a special rule, as a person distinguished in literature." [1] In 1922 the degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred upon him by St. Andrew's; in 1924 he was elected President of the Birmingham University Dramatic Society, was offered an honorary Litt.D. by Yale (which he could not accept as he could not go to America to receive it), and was elected President of the English Association. The same year sees the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge writing to offer him the appointment of Rede Lecturer for the following year, an honour which he declined. Manchester University bestowed an honorary D.Litt. upon him in 1927, and Princetown University offered him a degree which was later conferred upon him when he was able to go to America to receive it. A crowning reward came in 1929 when the King honoured him with the Order of Merit. At very much the same time he received a D.Litt. at Dublin, and in 1930 Cambridge also bestowed an LL.D. upon him. In 1931 he was elected a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, delivered the Romanes Lecture, and was given an Oxford D.Litt. 1932 brings the greatest honour of all - the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature.

That these honours appear to differ radically from the course which I have mapped out as representing the vicissitudes of his reputation is only to be expected. Rewards of this kind by their very nature look back

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.491.

rather than forward and also reflect more complex issues than those which are represented by individual critics, though the latter reveal more accurately the temper of the time.

Two sources of information which I have deliberately not touched on are the individual full-length studies, and what one might term "the standard references." The former, I think, give little indication of the respect or disrespect in which an author is held; they are largely a matter of personal preference. The latter in some ways fall into the same category as literary and civil honours; they tend to illuminate an established reputation rather than indicate rising trends of thought. Since some form of selection was necessary, I have reluctantly omitted them.

I shall continue this assessment of Galsworthy's reputation first by an examination of the frequency with which his plays have been produced, and then by an account of some personal investigations which I have made. While these are necessarily of limited scope they nevertheless provide something of a cross-section of the kind of opinion which does not find its way into the usual books of reference.

From Parker's Who's Who in the Theatre one may see that between 1906 and 1934, there were only nine years in which Galsworthy had not a play running in London. In addition to the new plays, for which, in spite of the fact that they were not in the main commercial successes, there was no lack of managers, there are also several revivals which testify to the esteem in which he was held. For instance, both Strife and The Silver Box were revived in 1913; Justice, The Pigeon and The Silver Box in 1922; The Silver Box, Justice, The Eldest Son, The Pigeon, and

Loyalties in 1928; The Skin Game in 1929; The Silver Box in 1931 and 1932; in 1932 also Justice, Loyalties and Escape; in 1933 Strife and in 1934 The Roof. It is very noticeable that there is an abrupt cessation in 1934. [1.]

I have also written to some of the better known provincial theatres, who have been most kind in helping my investigations where possible. Liverpool Playhouse produced nineteen of Galsworthy's plays between 1911 and 1934, [2.] but since then they have presented very few of his works; Birmingham Repertory Theatre produced The Pigeon and The Silver Box in 1913; Strife and The Eldest Son in 1914; The Silver Box again in 1915, 1916, 1918 and 1927; and The Foundations in 1922. Manchester Opera House says that "it is certainly some considerable time" since a play of his was produced there, and no mention of any production is made in Who's Who in The Theatre. Bradford Civic Theatre produced Windows in 1932, while The Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow ~~have~~ has not produced any of the plays. The evidence here again is fragmentary, but the years round 1930 are significant in that they show a distinct decline in the production of the plays.

The records of the B.B.C. productions, which I was kindly allowed to see, are not quite complete, as those for the years 1938 - 45 are not available. Before 1938 there is only one year - 1932 - in which a Galsworthy play was not given in some form, either complete or in extracts. After 1945, no play of his was heard in 1953, 1957 or 1958.[3.] This is a most revealing list. The plays were in the main given on the Home Service, and as the B.B.C. has means of telling the number of listeners

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1. A full list of the years in which plays were produced will be found in Appendix 1a.
2. A full list will be found in Appendix 1b
3. A full list will be found in Appendix 11.

they must obviously have had considerable popularity with the Home Service audiences. One judges that the latter probably are drawn rather from the older than the younger generation, and probably also not from those who deem themselves radical intellectuals. Patently Galsworthy has never lost his appeal to a certain section of the community.

The hey-day of his popularity on television seems to have been in the late 1940's and early 1950's. Between 1948 - 1951, six of his plays were shown, with three repeat performances in addition. In 1957 the Midland Home Service presented The First and The Last, and in 1959 The Skin Game was produced. The criticisms of the latter varied somewhat. The Manchester Guardian praised it seriously and sensibly: "The problems treated by John Galsworthy in his plays look superficially as if they arise from the social conventions of the period, but always come to a point - and generally sooner rather than later - where the conflict is seen to be a fundamental one, which could be dramatised to-day with few differences." The Observer, on the other hand, treated it rather more lightly: "Some of the characterisations creaked like bailiffs' bowler hats .... Galsworthy was always one for strong plots, but there is, if you look for it, a speck of balance and equivocation, especially in the undeveloped liaison between the younger generations." However, it did go so far as to mention the play.

Lastly, I come to the conclusions which my own observations have led me to in this matter of Galsworthy's reputation. Within the last twelve months I have had the opportunity of reading a play with two very different groups. Unfortunately I had to choose different plays - The Silver Box and Strife - as the circumstances dictated, but the

experience was illuminating. The first group - with whom I read Strife - was a voluntary drama club at a full-time residential college for women whose education for one reason or another had been, they felt, inadequate. Their ages ranged from nineteen to fifty-three. Most of them had not had grammar school education, and several had left school at fourteen. They had come to the college from different jobs; many had been office-workers of some kind; there were one or two housewives, a Civil servant, a factory worker. They represented a cross-section of the community, and their age-range was fairly evenly distributed. Of the twenty-five composing the group twelve have subsequently been accepted for teacher-training, social science departments and the like. They were, then, a mature, reasonably intelligent set of people, such as might well be found in the gallery of any serious theatre. Their only essential qualification for joining the group was interest in drama.

The other group with whom I took The Silver Box was allegedly recruited on the same principle. It was, however, a voluntary recreational class from the VIth. form of a co-educational grammar-school and possibly in some cases the choice was influenced by factors other than pure dramatic interest. The age range was much narrower, from sixteen to nineteen, as the group was composed of first, second and third year sixth-formers. One of the latter had gained a distinction in English at Advanced level, and has since been accepted at a Cambridge college; several had one or two Advanced subjects, from which it will be plain that the level of intelligence was high. I should like to deal with their reactions first, though before doing so I must make some qualifications. I cannot regard the experiment as having a great deal of validity (though it has considerable interest)

because extraneous circumstances impinged upon it more perhaps than they would normally do. I did not know the group well, having only taken them once before. They were, therefore, somewhat reserved, and possibly even unconsciously a little resentful, as they had previously been taught by a master. They were all also extremely influenced by C - , the boy who has been accepted at Cambridge. He had, it turned out, a preconceived and quite staggering hatred of Galsworthy. All these factors helped to prevent a completely unbiased reaction, though I was able through personal observation as the reading progressed to get some idea of their feelings. It was obvious quite soon that they did not like the play. Parts of it certainly gripped them, for instance, Jack's interview with the Unknown Lady; Mr. and Mrs. Barthwick's concern at the crying of Mrs. Jones's small son; the very end where the magistrate gives his judgment. But their total response was nothing like that they were to give the next week to The Plough and the Stars. At the end, C - said firmly that it was a very poor play. Galsworthy created a situation, put a character into it and made practically no comment. What comment there was was far too obvious. On that latter point they all agreed. The issues, they felt, lacked subtlety. Of the "money-and-Justice" idea C - said airily, "It just means the rich can get Counsel." They did not see any point beyond that. Most of them thought that Jack was a real villain, though when questioned further they seemed to be equating villainy with mental flabbiness. They were undecided, and somewhat divided, about Mr. Barthwick. C - regarded him as despicable, arguing that the very act of thrusting aside Mrs. Jones's mute appeal for help makes him more contemptible than if he had been sufficiently insensitive not to see it. Another boy,

however, felt that the shame-faced gesture of refusal at any rate hints at internal conflict even if it does not go very far. They were unanimous that the play had dated, particularly as regards the snobbery and the "immorality". Altogether their reactions were unfavourable. With the arrogance of youth, they swept aside my arguments, and put John Galsworthy firmly in his place - well "down under."

Though conditions were such that the experiment was not as valid as it might have been, I think nevertheless that it was worth recording. I could perhaps have influenced the response more if I had prepared the group for what was to come; by more detailed argument after we had read the play I might have forced them to reconsider some of their arguments. But this would have falsified the result even further. As it was, their reactions were not unlike those they would have had if they had seen the play, and gone out afterwards to discuss it. From their criticisms it is possible to see something of what our rising generation demands of a play. It has obviously, for instance, a desire, probably nurtured by special study of Shakespeare, for subtlety of characterisation and mental conflict. It seems to prefer a plot rather less carefully worked out; at any rate where the dramatic situation is subsidiary to character. It is more aware of individuals than of social forces in the abstract. These are perhaps sweeping generalisations, but that group of twelve pupils - all under twenty years of age - is not unrepresentative of the generation which will be our theatre-goers of the future.

I was able to go further into my researches with the club at the residential college for women. After the actual reading we had quite

a long discussion; then those who were willing answered a questionnaire, and further, a few interested and co-operative people wrote essays on the subject, which I shall later use as evidence. We had worked together for nearly twelve months, so that they were ready to give serious consideration to anything I put before them. They were, by reason of age and because they valued education more, less arrogant - but perhaps a little too prone, through intellectual humility, to accept what their tutors offered them as a Delphic oracle - in fact, as different from the grammar school group as the amiable, serious-minded old St. Bernard next door from our jaunty self-confident little West Highland terrier.

The play which I had chosen to read with the students - Strife - gained perhaps inadvertent significance by being read during the long 'bus strike in the summer of 1958. It was apparent as the reading went on that it was holding attention, and a lively discussion followed. The opening remark, by one of the less mature students, that it was a slow play and hadn't much in it was soon squashed. All were prepared to grant that it was a serious play, tackling a serious problem; they therefore gave it serious consideration. For the sake of clarity I have summed up the main points of the discussion, taking first the charges which were laid against the play. One of these was again that the issues were very obvious, though a forthright Yorkshire woman of fifty-two countered by asking if it was any the worse for that - and several heads nodded approval. On the next point everyone was united - that Enid Underwood was a complete hum-bug. Dramatically she was unnecessary. Galsworthy's attitude both to her and to Annie Roberts was unforgivably sentimental. In fact his hand was far less sure with the women characters than with the men. Some people felt that the characters were

mainly types; that there were too many of them and the mind could not sufficiently examine them. Edgar came in for censure, as being too weak. One student felt that the conflict between Anthony and Roberts came too late, and was not an adequate preparation for the end. However, despite these adverse criticisms, judgment really was in favour of the play.

Most people agreed that the dramatic situation was good. It was felt that the conflict between the groups and between individuals was well-worked-out, and the tension held. The scenes with the workers were extremely effective. One student suggested that the play could be pruned a little and Enid Underwood omitted. Opinion was fairly unanimous that Anthony and Roberts did really emerge as characters, not mere mouth-pieces for ideas, and that the fight was a matter of principle and personal pride, not simply of class. The general effect after the reading was of an audience which had witnessed a powerful play. Most people had found in it food for thought. It must be admitted that the younger members of the group did not appear quite to grasp the desperate situation of the workers and those over thirty years old were the most ready to accept the play.

The questionnaire had three main sections; one concerned the plot and story, one the characters, and one the general dramatic value. One student felt that the story went on too long, but though it is ordinary now, it probably wasn't when it was written. Another said the plot reminded her of The Winslow Boy and Lancashire "mill" stories. Others however decided that the story made good drama. One went so far as to say that most plays take an inevitable course, and Galsworthy was not to

be censured for this. Asked about the parts which they considered most dramatic, the majority picked out the first scene, with the first meeting of the two sides, and the last, leading to the climax where Anthony and Roberts nearly salute one another. The workers' own meeting, with its conflicts and contrasts, was also mentioned several times. On the subject of characterisation one student, while finding Anthony and Roberts intensely convincing, yet felt that we only see one aspect of their characters. Most people found the main characters credible. Opinion was a little uncertain in the section concerning the general dramatic effect. I asked in particular whether they thought the play was good theatre and whether they felt it had dated. Most people were inclined to answer 'Yes' to the latter question, basing their arguments on the fact that nowadays the men could hold out indefinitely. One, however, thought that the essence of the play did not change; circumstances altered, but the principles remained the same. The younger students did not think the play would be well-received to-day. One asserted that young people prefer a play with a modern setting, and another was convinced that the rising generation would receive it with indifference. These however were exceptions. Most were - a little hesitantly - of the opinion that it was good theatre. I found it interesting that the questionnaires, which of course were completed in the students' own time when they had leisure to think about the play more fully, were a little cooler than the discussion which immediately followed the play. On the other hand, more of the younger people answered the questionnaire, and I have already noted that they were slightly less favourably inclined even after the reading.

Six women wrote essays about Strife, and as they happened to form an excellent cross-section in several ways - age, intellect, literary background and the like - I have summarised the points from each, and will indicate with the summary something of the capacity of the writer.

The first, Miss A, aged twenty-two, had had a grammar school education, and had seven subjects, including English Literature at G.C.E. Ordinary level. The gist of her essay was as follows: The leading characters rather tend to be types, although Anthony and Roberts are "real life", and not merely mouth-pieces for opposing ideas. The minor characters, particularly Green, are well-observed and convincing. The difficult position of Edgar Anthony, and his sister Enid Underwood, is well-brought-out. The various conflicts are extremely dramatic, and the irony of the final curtain is striking. The scene involving Enid and Annie Roberts together is rather weak, but shows how, in such cases, the innocent suffer. The play is powerful "and is a true and vivid representation of what might happen in a similar situation at any time ..... In this play, as in others of Galsworthy which I have read, the situation is obvious in that it is not confused by conflicting underlying themes and messages from the author, and as such it provides a welcome relaxation."

The second, Miss B, had left school at fourteen, and was a member of the National Adult School Union. Though untrained, her mind was intelligent and perceptive. She was very much struck by the sincerity of motive of Anthony and Edgar, but felt that Galsworthy probably wished to show that no motive is as pure as its holder thinks. Present-day audiences would find the use of Annie Roberts's death as a pivot for action unsatisfactory; it is to-day unnecessary, and is also sentimental. The emphasis also on

class distinction also would not mean much to this generation. The lasting feeling one would take out of the theatre would be one of pity for the waste of emotion and human life. We might feel that Galsworthy was asking the question, "When shall we learn to compromise?"

The third student, Mrs. C., was a woman of 54, who had left school at 14. Her interests were wide, particularly in art and literature; her mind, though untrained, was extremely intelligent, original and most perceptive. She had taken the trouble, not only to write an essay, but to write to a friend, of the same age and background as herself, about the play. She commented first on the excellence of the opening scene, showing status, motive, contrast. The interest was sustained right through the play, and the surprise of the final speeches, saying that the position was exactly what it had been before the strike,was most effective. She did however feel that O'Casey had a more direct impact, and drew my attention to the more spontaneous reaction of the drama club to The Plough and the Stars, which we had already read. However she concluded with the sentiment that Galsworthy had 'the balance and perception, if not the intellect and sparkle, of better minds.'

Her friend's comments were interesting - that the play was a 'fine' one, and 'good theatre'. "It would still be considered a good play and draw full audiences if it had a modern name attached. John Galsworthy would not draw, because I think the younger generation would not visit the play. He stands for our age, and that is enough for them." I think there is much truth in the last sentence.

The fourth essay is from Miss D., a student of 26 who had had a grammar school education and gained her School Certificate. She had stayed at

school till she was seventeen. She emphasised the social nature of Galsworthy's play, and saw in it an objective revelation of the crushing force of a class-struggle. She did not feel that Anthony and Roberts were individuals, but 'voices' presenting the problems of the two sides. The balance of the play - in situation, character and setting - was very apparent. She concluded: "Strife is certainly a very powerful play which, through economy of language, and the building-up of suspense through character and emotion, would surely hold the attention of an audience even when it had long ceased to reflect the problems of the time."

The next student, Mrs. E., aged forty, left school at fourteen, but had tremendous vitality and a great interest in literature, and in the theatre. Her reading in both these ~~latter~~ spheres had been wide and well-directed; her judgments were always spontaneous and enthusiastic. She concentrated her attention mainly on the characters of Anthony and Roberts. She felt that at the end it would have been truer to say that the two strongest men were broken, not the two best. To her Anthony had appeared over-stubborn, and Roberts bitter and clever. Nevertheless one had to pity them. Her reaction to the scene between Enid and Annie was interesting. She found the contrast between the former , "active and flexible" , and Annie, "quiescent and immovable in her loyalty to her husband," satisfying. (In the general discussion, there had been unanimity of opinion that this scene was weak; Mrs. E's opinion had changed after reading the play again). Her last remarks had cogency. Anthony - and also the Forsytes - she found very "earth-bound". "Nowadays we have higher hopes, more dangerous perhaps, but to us more satisfying."

The last essay was from Miss F., who was twenty-one years old and who

had left the grammar school at fifteen; she had subsequently gained four passes at G.C.E. Ordinary level, one being in English Literature. She was an exceptionally intelligent student, with a consuming love of drama. Her literary background was good. She too devoted most of her attention to character - that is, to Roberts and Anthony. Of them she says: "The characters were boldly drawn types rather than individuals, representatives of opposing attitudes towards life which stem from similar temperaments moulded by different environments." I go on to quote her final assessment: "One criticises the play in changed circumstances which do affect our evaluation of it as it is a social play looked at in a socially different climate. It is easy to read more faults into it than there are. The characters are types rather than individuals. Everything, each point, is stated in speech rather than implied in the actions and reactions of the characters. Reading the play one is aware of the construction, so obvious is it. The parallels are all there. Balance is maintained throughout. In spite of these weaknesses it is dramatically sound. One is aware of the obviousness more in reading than one would be in the theatre, and this must be kept in mind; it was written for the theatre. Although dated, it could be an exciting and worthwhile play in the theatre and one can imagine the impact when the theme was relevant. Strife is not a great play, nor is it a bad one which can be cursorily dismissed. It is a bread and butter play, nourishing when fresh, the sort which sustains the theatre while it waits for a genius. We have the benefit of sampling the nourishment that sustained our theatre fifty years ago. In Strife a certain freshness remains because the basic ingredients are wholesome and are there for us

to chew on and compare with more modern dishes."

I have quoted in detail from the last essay because I think it is the possible reaction of the kind of theatre-goer who is interested in serious drama without necessarily having a highly specialised knowledge - the theatre-goer to whom Galsworthy probably appealed most in his own day. I also feel that one can deduce to some extent what young people of this kind ask of a play. The attitude to characterisation is implied in the criticism that the people are "types rather than individuals." Too obvious construction does not appeal. Particularly illuminating is the sentence "Everything, each point, is stated in speech rather than implied in the actions and reactions of the characters." The idea may not be original, but it indicates a tendency. It is unlikely that the same person, seeing Strife for the first time in 1909, would have written in the same way. It is some measure of the changes through which we have passed that she writes so now.

To draw conclusions from two isolated instances would be madness. Nevertheless these separate readings have borne out what casual conversations and common-sense conjectures had indicated - that Galsworthy is appreciated more by those who remember the world as it was before 1939. The standards and values which he represents are intelligible to those of us who had experience of this world; a younger generation sees little but the superficial signs of a vanished society.

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C O N C L U S I O N S

In trying to reach a conclusion as to why Galsworthy's plays, so highly-esteemed by critics of repute in the earlier part of the century, should later suffer such marked loss of favour with the public, one is faced with the difficulty of deciding who exactly constitutes the 'public' - that nebulous body which includes equally a young eighteen year old intellectual who, after seeing The Skin Game televised, dismissed it as 'rot', and an intelligent though untrained middle-aged woman who thought it a fine play. With certain sections he has never lost his popularity; to others his very name is anathema. For the purpose of this study I have taken the 'public' to be the informed and articulate voices - playwrights, critics, thoughtful playgoers - whose opinions influence most directly the course not merely of drama but of literature, and art itself.

Why then was Galsworthy in the first place acclaimed? What had he to offer, which, in the eyes of the theatre-goers of the first two decades, placed him with Ibsen and Shaw? His subjects had a profundity lacking in the 'society drama' of the time; they provided not merely three hours' entertainment; they forced one to take the problems out of the theatre, to reconsider one's own attitudes and values. Nearly always they concerned the individual, but man in a community - possibly oppressed by, or in opposition to, society, not man in isolation from his fellow-beings.

His values were everywhere implicit - humanistic standards of honesty, integrity, fairness and tolerance. Although he seldom condemned, or dictated a moral judgment to his audience, one knew that in the last resort he drew a distinction between good and evil - Adrian Bastaple bears witness to that. In his earlier plays particularly he spoke for the more enlightened members of the community - in The Silver Box for instance, and Strife, that play

which caught the public conscience at exactly the right moment. At this period he seemed exactly the right distance ahead of this time - far enough to startle public opinion into greater awareness, yet not so far as to be out of touch with the tenour of thought.

Later it might almost be said that the incredible confluence of rebellious opinion engulfed him, the rising currents of new ideas swept by him in a swelling tide which swallowed up what he had achieved in a wave of derision. Violence and rapid changes were completely alien to his nature; by his own token, he was an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary.[1] Arrogance, seeing in his gentle tolerance only topical and temporal issues, ignored the underlying truths his work embodied, and because also his method was objective and straightforward, the antithesis of the restless spirit of the 1920's, wrote him off as a specious representative of an outworn culture. Had the changes come severally, his reputation would probably have followed a normal course, through mild rejection to a final equilibrium of reasoned appreciation.

And what of to-day? There are indeed signs of that reasoned appreciation, a resurgence of interest in his work; however before finally coming to such an assessment of his position one must admit that he is unlikely to make a widespread appeal to the younger critics and playgoers. Nor is this due to faults on either side, but rather to the gulfs which the currents of the age have created between the generations of his century; gulfs to which we have become inured but which are nonetheless almost unbridgeable. Kenneth Allsop has great truth when he writes "the background of anyone under forty is lacking something that those over forty have known."[2]

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1. Marrot. Life and Letters. p.796
2. Allsop K. The Angry Decade. p.18. 1958.

This is indeed a dispossessed generation. An urban civilisation educates its children, many of them in the arts, then thrusts them back into a world which has no use for any but technical knowledge, whose moral standards are "Snatch as snatch can" - a world almost unknown to Galsworthy. They belong to no community; they have no code; the old unities broken, society has become an amorphous agglomeration of ill-assorted individuals. Old values have been destroyed, and in their place is a vacuum. Materialism is the hall-mark of the age, yet to the sensitive it is as unsatisfying as synthetic cream. Doris Lessing writes of her generation: "If there is one thing ~~that~~ which distinguishes our literature, it is a confusion of standards and the uncertainty of values ..... One certainty we all accept is the condition of being uncertain and insecure. It is hard to make moral judgments, to use words like good and bad."[1] About the difficulty of making moral judgments Galsworthy would agree; but in a final assessment his sense of right and wrong seldom deserted him.

Another issue upon which he makes little contact with these young writers is that of religion. One is struck, in reading Declaration, which after all represents the opinion of eight of our most articulate young people, by the number who grope after some kind of faith. Colin Wilson states unequivocally, "Religion must be the answer. Humanistic liberalism won't do."[2] To Bill Hopkins the great need of our civilisation is 'for a new religion to give it strength"[3]. Stuart Holroyd, after a period of scepticism, came to the conclusion that "religion was simply life at its highest pitch of intensity".[4]

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1. Declaration p.14 1957 edited Maschler T.
2. Declaration p.46
3. ibid p.151
4. ibid p.193

That they use the term in a completely personal and non-doctrinal sense is obvious. Religion is not a duty imposed from outside, but an inner necessity - an example once again of that turning-in upon-itself which is so characteristic of this age, so alien to Galsworthy's dramatic work.

Thus through confusions, uncertainties, and disintegrating standards, in a world where Galsworthy's middle way of tolerance seems if not actually wrong at least impossible to follow, many of them have come to "a tough, ruthless, hell-with-it approach" to their particular undertakings."[1] They can have little in common with the author of The Fugitive, Loyalties, Escape.

Yet this is not the whole picture. There are many who, while not asking the impossible, are yet grateful for what Galsworthy gives. Gordon Fraser, speaking of Shaw's successors, among whom he names Galsworthy, acknowledges that they are lesser men than Shaw, but says of them that they ~~somehow~~ "have sometimes a closer feeling for everyday atmosphere and a more warm and instinctive sympathy with the 'ordinary' man".[2] Even in a world where standards have changed with unprecedented rapidity there are those who recognise the virtues of these earlier playwrights.

It would indeed be a disservice to praise Galsworthy for the qualities he does not possess, or to insinuate that he ranks among the highest in drama, but if only the latter are accounted worthy how few would see salvation, how infinitely the poorer would our heritage be. Let us rather take in appreciation what he gives. At the lowest level there is almost always a good story, well handled, which holds the interest from beginning to end. Add to this, convincing characterisation, with variety and surprise within its appointed limits. Add again, ideas which emanate from a controlled yet abounding sympathy with humanity, ideas which through

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1. Allsop. The Angry Decade. p.10

2. Fraser, G.S The Modern Writer and His World, p.~~100~~ 46. 1953.

this very sympathy force upon the audience a re-assessment of their own convictions. Moulding and informing all these is the sincerity of a personal integrity which honoured those traditions and values built up by centuries of western civilisation. To deny to a writer possessed of such qualities a place among those who have served English drama is lunacy. As changes in life and thought pass into accepted currency, as the passage of time adds perspective to literary judgment, may the years bring with them, what indeed is justly due, a fairer and truer appreciation of the dramatic power of John Galsworthy.

APPENDIX I a.

Years in which Galsworthy had a play or plays produced in London.

1 06	The Silver Box	
1907	The Silver Box	R.
"	Joy	
1909	Strife	
1910	Justice	
1912	The Eldest Son	
"	The Pigeon	
1913	Strife	R.
"	The Fugitive	
"	The Silver Box	R.
1914	The Mob	
1915	A Bit o' Love	
1917	The Foundations	
1920	The Skin Game	
1922	The Silver Box	R.
"	Justice	R.
"	The Pigeon	R.
"	Windows	
"	A Family Man	
"	Loyalties	
1924	The Forest	
"	Old English	
1925	The Show	
1926	Escape	
1928	The Silver Box	R.
"	Justice	R.
"	The Eldest Son	R.
"	The Pigeon	R.
"	Loyalties	R.

1929	The Skin Game	R
"	Exiled	
"	The Roof	
1931	The Silver Box	R.
1932	The Silver Box	R.
"	Justice	R.
"	Loyalties	R.
"	Escape	R.
1933	Strife	R.
1934	The Roof	R.

R denotes revival

APPENDIX I b.

Plays produced at Liverpool Playhouse between 1911 and 1934.

Justice
Strife
The Eldest Son
The Fugitive
A Bit o' Love
The Pigeon
The Silver Box
The Foundations
The Sun
A Family Man
Windows
The First and the Last
Joy
Old English
Loyalties
The Skin Game
Exiled
The Roof
The Forest

APPENDIX II

Plays, or extracts, broadcast by the B.B.C.

1930	Strife	
1931	The Forest	
1933	Escape	
"	Strife	
1934	Loyalties	
"	The Skin Game	
1935	Justice	
1936	The Silver Box	half-hour extracts
"	Justice	
"	Loyalties	
"	The Skin Game	
"	Strife	
"	The Little Dream	
"	Joy	
"	The Pigeon	
1937	Old English	
"	The Silver Box	
1938-1944	Records not available	
1945	Strife	
"	Loyalties	
"	The Forest	
"	Escape	
1946	Justice	
"	The Sun	
"	A Family Man	
1947	The Little Man	
1948	Loyalties	
"	The Silver Box	
1949	The Skin Game	
"	The Roof	

1950	The Forest
"	Strife
"	Loyalties
1952	Windows
"	The Pigeon
"	Escape - excerpts.
"	The Mob
"	Strife
"	The Show
1954	The Skin Game
1955	Old English
"	Strife
1956	The Skin Game

APPENDIX III

Plays shown on B.B.C. Television programmes.

1948	Loyalties
1949	Old English
"	The Silver Box
1950	Justice
"	Strife
1951	The Skin Game
1957	The First and the Last
1959	The Skin Game

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

I have selected from my reading those works which I have found most helpful and significant, and classified them in the following way:

I. Galsworthy's own works.

II. Studies of his works.

III. More specific dramatic criticism and history.

IV General background of the century

V Plays used for comparison

I GALSWORTHY'S OWN WORDS.

(a) A list of his plays

Full-length plays, with date of first production

The Silver Box	1906
Joy	1907
Strife	1909
Justice	1910
The Eldest Son	1912
The Pigeon	1912
The Fugitive	1913
The Mob	1914
A Bit o' Love	1915
The Foundations	1917
The Skin Game	1920
A Family Man	1922
Loyalties	1922
Windows	1922
The Forest	1924
Old English	1924
The Show	1925
Escape	1926
Exiled	1929
The Roof	1929

Shorter plays

The Little Dream	1911
The First and the Last The Little Man Hallmarked Defeat The Sun Punch and Go	published 1921
The Winter Garden:	four dramatic pieces assembled by Mrs. Galsworthy after her husband's death.

With the exception of The Winter Garden, the above plays were published in one volume by Duckworth in 1929.

(b) Some of his more important novels.

The Island Pharisees	1904
The Man of Property	1906
The Country House	1907
Fraternity	1909
The Patrician	1911
The Dark Flower	1913
The Freelands	1915
Beyond	1917
A Saint's Progress	1919
The Burning Spear	1919
In Chancery	1920
To Let	1921
The White Monkey	1924
The Silver Spoon	1926
Swan Song	1928
Maid-in-Waiting	1931
Flowering Wilderness	1932
Over the River	1933

(c) Prose writings which have particular bearing on his drama

Some Platitudes Concerning the Drama (published in The Inn of Tranquillity, 1912)

Our Literature and The War (published in A Sheaf 1916)

The Drama in England and America (published in Another Sheaf 1919)

The Creation of Character in Literature (Romanes Lecture delivered on May 21, 1931)

Prefaces in the Manaton editions of his works, published by Heinemann in 1933.

II STUDIES OF GALSWORTHY

Boats, R. M.	John Galsworthy as a dramatic artist	1926
Croman, N.	John Galsworthy; a study in continuity and contrast	1953
Cross, W. L.	Four Contemporary Novelists: Conrad, Bennett, Galsworthy, Wells	1930
Dupont, V.	John Galsworthy, the dramatic artist	1942
Kaye-Smith, S.	John Galsworthy	1916
Marrot, H. V.	Life and Letters of John Galsworthy	1935
"	A Note on John Galsworthy; dramatist	1929
	A Bibliography of the works of John Galsworthy	1928
Mottram, R. H.	John Galsworthy	1953
Ould, H.	John Galsworthy	1934
Schalit, L.	John Galsworthy: a survey	1929
Smit, J. H.	The Short Stories of John Galsworthy	1948.

III

(a) Works of dramatic history and criticism, published mainly during Galsworthy's lifetime; (these reveal current dramatic trends as well as throwing light on Galsworthy's work and position.)

Agate, J. E.	The Contemporary Theatre	1926
" "	A Short View of the English Stage	1926
Archer, William	Play-making; a Manual of Craftsmanship	1913
" "	The Old Drama and The New	1923
Borsa, M.	The English Stage of To-day	1908
Beerbohm, M.	Around Theatres (dramatic criticism from Saturday ~~Westminster~~ Review 1899-1910)	
Baksby, Alexander	The Theatre Unbound	1923
Chandler, F. W.	Aspects of Modern Drama	1914
Clark, B. H.	British and American Dramatists of To-day	1915
Dukes, A.	Modern Dramatists	1911
" "	The Youngest Drama: studies in fifty dramatists	1923
Ervine, St. John	Some Impressions of My Elders	1922
" "	The Theatre in My Time	1933
Grein, J. T.	The New World of the Theatre	1924
Jackson, H.	The Eighteen-nineties	1913
Lewisohn, L.	The Modern Drama	1915
Morgan, A. E.	Tendencies of English Drama	1924
Palmer, J. L.	The Future of the English Theatre	1913
Walbrook, H. M.	Nights at the Play	1911
Walkley, A. B.	Playhouse Impressions	1892
	Dramatic criticism: three lectures delivered at the Royal Institute	1903
	Pastiche and Prejudice	1921
	More Prejudice	1923
	Still More Prejudice	1925
Scott, Clement	The Drama of Yesterday and To-day	1899

(b) More recent works of dramatic history and criticism

Bentley, E.	The Modern Theatre	1948
Ellis-Fermor, U.	Frontiers of Drama	1945
Findlater, R.	The Unholy Trade	1952
Hobson, H.	Theatre	1948
Hudson, Lynton	The English Stage 1850-1950	1951
" "	Life and the Theatre	1949
Macqueen-Pope, W.	Carriages at Eleven	1947
Reynolds, E. R.	Modern English Drama	1949
Rowell, G.	The Victorian Theatre: a survey	1956
Short, Ernest	Sixty Years of Theatre	1951
Trewin, J. C.	Drama Since 1945	1951
Williamson, A.	Theatre of Two Decades (1930-1950)	1951
"	Contemporary Theatre 1955-56	1956

(c) More general histories and reference books

(1) General

Evans, B. Ifor	A Short History of English Drama	Pelican 1948
Nicoll, A.	British Drama	1925
" "	A History of late 19th Century Drama 1850-1900	1946
" "	World Drama	1949

(2) Theatrical

Baker, B. M.	Theatre and Allied Arts	1952
Carson and Comerford publishers	The Stage Year Books	(1908 to present day, excluding 1929-48.)
	The Green Room Book	1906
Lindsay, A.	The Theatre (dealing with practical matters)	1948
Marshall, N.	The Other Theatre (i.e. the non-commercial theatre)	1947
Parker, J. (editor)	Who's Who in the Theatre	

IV. BACKGROUND OF 20th CENTURY

(a) Literature

Allsop. K.	The Angry Decade	1958
Collins, A. S.	English Literature of the 20th Century	1951
Durrell, L.	Key to Modern Poetry	1952
Fraser George S	The Modern Writer and His World	1955
ed. Maschler T.	Declaration (a series of essays by young writers about their beliefs)	1957

(b) General

Alexander, I. W.	Bergson	1957
Read, Herbert	The Philosophy of Modern Art	1952
Scholes, P.	Notes to Columbia History of Music, Period V, the 20th Century	1948
Sartre. J. P. (trans. Mairet)	Existentialism and Humanism	1948
Turner, W. J. (ed.)	Aspects of British Art	1947
Woodworth R. S	Contemporary Schools of Psychology	1931
Warnock, G. J.	English Philosophy since 1900	1958

V. PLAYS

1. Plays quoted in some details in this thesis for purposes of comparison (in the order in which they are discussed)

Sutro, A.	The Walls of Jericho	1904
Hankin, St. J.	The Return of the Prodigal	1905
Pinero, A. W.	His House in Order	1906
Granville-Barker, H.	The Voysey Inheritance	1905
Brieux, E	The Three Daughters of M. Dupont	1905
Pirandello, L.	Six Characters in Search of an Author	1922
Toller, E.	Masses and Men	1921
O'Neill, E.	The Emperor Jones	1925
Bridie, J.	The Sleeping Clergyman	1933
Eliot, T. S.	The Family Re-union	1939
Priestley, J. B.	Johnson over Jordan	1939
Williams, T.	The Glass Menagerie	1945
Miller, A.	Death of a Salesman	1949
Fry, C.	The Lady's Not for Burning	1948
Beckett, S.	Waiting for Godot	1955
Osborne, J.	Epitaph for George Dillon	1958

2. Some less well-known plays of the period c. 1900-1914, interesting for comparison (with date of publication)

Bell (Lady)	The Way The Money Goes	1910
Clifford, W.K.	Hamilton's Second Marriage	1907
Davies, Hubert Henry	Cousin Kate	1910
Hankin, St. J.	The Charity That Began at Home	1907
Hastings, B. MacDonald	The New Sin	1912
Hobbs, J. O.	The Ambassador	1898
Klein, Charles	The Daughters of Men	1907
Robins, E.	Votes for Women	1907

3. Well-known dramatists (excluding those alrea y represented) whose works are useful as background.

Robertson, H. A. Jones, Wilde, Shaw, Barrie, Masefield, Drinkwater, Yeats, Synge, O'Casey, Maugham, Coward, Priestley, Bridie, Auden, Duncan, Graham Greene, Ibsen, Hauptmann. Strindberg, Capek, Sartre, Anouilh, Rice, Anderson, Steinbeck, Brecht.

4. Two useful collections of plays:

Marriot J. W. (edited by:) Great British Plays 1929
This includes: Milestones, Caste, Trelawny of The Wells, The Walls of Jericho, The Return of the Prodigal, Strife, The Circle, The Young Idea, Outward Bound.

Gaver J. (edited by) Critic's choice. New York Drama Critics' Circle Prize Plays 1955-55 [New York]
This includes: Winterset, Of Mice and Men, Watch on The Rhine, The Class Menagerie, All My Sons, Death of a Salesman, Darkness at Noon, The Teahouse of The August Moon.

PERIODICALS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST

(a) Articles of some length

1928	Brown, I.	John Galsworthy, dramatist,	The Bookman December
1928	D.H. Lawrence	Galsworthy	Scrutiny (collected in Scrutinies by Various Writers by E. Rickword, vol.1. 1928)
1929	Warrington G.	Two Great Dramatists, Shaw and Galsworthy	Country Life Dec. 7
1929	Boyd, E.	John Galsworthy	Theatre Arts Monthly May
1933	Scott-James, R.	Galsworthy	Spectator Feb.3.
1935	Verschoyle D.	John Galsworthy	Spectator April 19
1943	Schalit, L.	John Galsworthy, teacher and prophet	Contemporary Review. February
1952	Hamilton R.	Galsworthy, the playwright	Contemporary Review November
1955	Ervine St. J.	Portrait of John Galsworthy	The Listener September 15.

(b) A few examples of interesting contemporary dramatic criticism during the crucial years of the 1920's.

1920	Desmond MacCarthy on The Skin Game	New Statesman May 8.
1922	Desmond MacCarthy reviews the Galsworthy cycle.	New Statesman Feb. 25.
1922	W. J. Turner on the same subject	Spectator Feb.18
1926	N. G. Royde-Smith on Escape	Outlook, August 21
1926	Correspondence between G. & St. John Ervine on Escape	Observer Sept. 19 et seq.
1926	Desmond MacCarthy on Escape	New Statesman September 18
1929	Richard Jennings on The Roof	Spectator Nov. 16.