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SOCIAL SATIRE IN HENRY ARTHUR JONES

By

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INTRODUCTION

Henry Arthur Jones in his plays, essays, and lectures deserves to be considered a leader in English play-writing in the latter part of the nineteenth and the first part of the twentieth century. He came into notice during a highly unfavorable time in the English theatre, which was the aftermath of a long siege of misfortunes for the drama.

From the closing of the theatres by Cromwell in 1642 to 1892, the English drama had been obliged to endure an inherited distrust of the theatre and all its works which had been implanted in that middle class which is not unjustly called the backbone of the nation, by its Puritan forbears.¹ For the most part the plays themselves did little to eradicate that distrust.

Another thing that kept the English drama from coming into its own was the establishment of Shakespeare as a romantic idol by literary critics such as Coleridge and Lamb. Nearly all of the great poets of the nineteenth century in England endeavored to write plays; but, "instead of studying the conditions of the theatre in their own time, they adopted the Elizabethan form of Shakespeare and succeeded only in writing anachronisms."²

Never was the divorce of the theatre and literature so complete and prolonged as during the major part of the nineteenth century. Robert Browning, T. W. Robertson, Swinburne, and Tennyson, as well as Byron and Shelley, all

¹ Clayton Hamilton, Representative Plays by Henry Arthur Jones, Little, Brown, and Co., Boston, 1925, (Vol. I, Intro., p. XXI).

² Ibid., p. XXI.

tried their hands at drama but were not very successful. Shelley's The Cenci is a poem of great beauty and dramatic power, but it is essentially a poem. Virginus by Sheridan Knowles and Richelieu by Bulwer-Lytton received some acclaim, but were not recognized as good dramatic productions. They were only the best that were then being written. Then, too, people in the nineteenth century went to the theatre to be amused, not to be edified. A. G. Jones has repeatedly pointed out in his critical writings, the drama is one thing and the theatre is another. The drama is an art of authorship, but the theatre is a place of entertainment which is capable of exhibiting many other things besides the drama. For example, Kean in 1856, produced what he called exhibitions of pageantry appealing to the eye; illustrations addressed to the understanding. He attempted to present Shakespeare with emphasis on the theatrical trappings. In criticism of Kean's work, Allardyce Nicoll declared, "Pageantry is not scenic art, and historical instruction, what on earth is it doing in this galley?"³

The great actors of the nineteenth century, from Mrs. Kemble and Mrs. Siddons through Kean and Maccready, all the way to Irving, did little or nothing to foster contemporary authorship. When they were not appearing in Shakespeare, they preferred to appear in an imitation of Shakespeare, confident that their acting genius would make the play a success

³ Allardyce Nicoll, The Development of the Drama, Harcourt, Brace, and Co., New York, 1927, p. 196.

and that its technical or emotional deficiencies would be overlooked. Also, the development of a contemporary drama was greatly handicapped through the greater part of the nineteenth century by a lack of copyright protection. It was cheaper for English theatrical managers to steal French plays than to pay English playwrights for original copies. If playwrights did publish their plays, they were unable, until near the end of the century, to restrict and control their acting rights; if an English play were produced, it could be pirated in America without the writer's receiving any of its royalties. This condition forced such men as Charles Reade, for example, to write against their will the kind of literature that would earn them a living. Reade turned to novel writing.

This was one of the most important reasons for the almost absolute divorce of drama and literature in the nineteenth century, and it is not surprising that plays that were readable became unactable and vice-versa.

The English drama is more indebted to Henry Arthur Jones than to any other one man for changing this condition. He pleaded for the publication of plays at the time of their production; and he fought vigorously for copyright protection as he later fought against censorship. For it is to be remembered that England was greatly handicapped by censorship. Shaw has found the censors very trying, and Pinero and Jones, who in the eighteen--nineties were considered writers of advanced and daring drama, were obliged to consider that sensitive playgoing matron, Mrs. Grundy.

There was, however, Thomas William Robertson, mentioned previously, who lived from 1829 to 1871 and was supposed in his day to have been a rebel and realist, who substituted fresh individual characters for the stale humors of the type. He endeavored to render a veritable picture of the life of his time. In 1865 his Society was successful, not merely because of Robertson's dramatic skill, but largely because of the strictly naturalistic method employed in its production. With the production of this play with real door knobs and real furniture called for by the play, stage realism became established and much of the sensationalism and claptrap of the theatre lost its popularity. Exaggerations of every sort in actors' dress, facial expression, and rhetorical bombast were no longer in vogue.

The innovations of Robertson, improved upon by others, established the basis for the plays of John Galsworthy.....With the picture-frame theatre had come an approximation of dramatic fiction and of life... The comic clown had abandoned his grotesque garments and modified his actions; laughter he sought to raise by a turn of the wrist, preferring that to the farcical merriment created by a somersault.....The whole of the movement from Robertson to Pinero and Jones was characterized by this one common aim--the reproducing of the real on the stage.⁴

Both Pinero and Jones are said to have been influenced by Robertson, and while Pinero is said to have been influenced by him a great deal more than was Jones, Robertson's ideas were just an attempt or a tendency and theirs was a completion and mastery of the drama of social life. Robertson had shown some stirrings, then, of a returning sense of responsibility,

⁴ Allardyce Nicoll, The English Theatre, Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., London, 1936, p. 160.

Jones approached his work with a sense of high purpose; he never failed to envisage the drama as a branch of literature--in his view, the highest and most difficult. He had neither the highly polished wit of Oscar Wilde, nor the intellectual force of Shaw, but as a craftsman he was perhaps superior to both.⁵

As soon as Jones perceived the necessity and conceived the possibility of a modern English drama that should be worthy of genuine attention, he devoted himself to it with an earnestness and eagerness that is characteristic of him.

That he was an earnest and tireless worker may be surmised by the fact that he was a self-made man. Henry Arthur Jones came from the middle-class of England. His drama was not written, therefore, by an aristocrat for other aristocrats. Jones, accustomed to poverty in early years, was satirically concerned, in his dramatic writings, with the foibles and frivolities of the aristocracy.

Henry Arthur Jones was born on September 28, 1851, in an old English farm house at Grandborough in Buckinghamshire. His father was a tenant farmer with a large family. Jones was not given a great deal of formal education, consequently, having to quit school at the age of thirteen to enter an apprenticeship to a London draper. In his leisure time he read widely and wisely, writing much, and with The Silver King, a melodrama produced in 1882, he achieved financial independence at the age of thirty-one for himself, his wife, and their three sons and four daughters.

⁵ Dictionary of National Biography, 1922-1930, Edited by R. H. Weaver, Oxford University Press, London: Humphrey Milford, 1930, p. 461.

Jones wrote and lectured with one paramount aim, the re-establishing of the theatre and drama in their rightful sphere. His plays were largely studies of contemporary English life. However, in The Tempter, his only play in blank verse, he used the background of a Chaucerian pilgrimage. In the latter part of his life, too, he wrote Grace Mary, a one-act tragedy in Cornish dialect. It was a mystic, far-off, poetic piece, fatalistic and weird in the manner of the Irish playwrights, especially Synge's Riders to the Sea. It showed how varied was Jones' ability, for the play challenged description. It has to be read in order to comprehend what a wealth of variety Jones' plays afford. One other play of his that should be mentioned is Mary Goes First, one of his most highly satirical plays, ridiculing social climbers and petty politicians, whose only ambition was to overshadow their acquaintances.

Most of his themes were relatively commonplace. He realized, as Shaw said Ibsen did, that "the more familiar the situation, the more interesting the play."⁶ Jones, probably more than any other dramatist of his time endeavored to use the theatre as a source of cultural advancement. He was interested in the unity of literature and the theatre. Jones received further impetus in his play writing from Matthew Arnold, who in a complimentary letter to him on Saints and Sinners, said, "The theatre is irresistible! Organize the theatre!"⁷

⁶ George Bernard Shaw, Quintessence of Ibsenism, Brentano's, New York, 1913, p. 230.

⁷ Henry Arthur Jones, Saints and Sinners, The Macmillan Co., 1891, London, Preface, p. XXV.

In his preface to Saints and Sinners Jones said of Arnold:

I am pleased to acknowledge the constant courtesy and encouragement of the sweet singer who lies silent today by the banks of his beloved Thames. No, not silent.⁸

In 1890 there was a reawakening of the comic spirit largely through Gilbert's librettos. This comic spirit was just one of the evidences of a new era in the drama. The new drama undertook the role as critic of civilization. The year 1900 marked the full beginning of the revival of comedy. It ended a period including most notable contributions to the species by Jones and Pinero and the early work of Shaw, the active propaganda for new ideas in the nineties in England and the beginning of the Irish drama in Dublin. Ibsen was the outstanding dramatist on the continent.

Mr. Clayton Hamilton in his critical introduction to the plays of Jones did not believe that Jones was very greatly influenced by Ibsen, if at all. Jones did help to rewrite The Doll's House and gave it a happy ending. That is definite. However, he had a genuine task of his own to perform and that was to bring recognition of the right sort to the theatre, to make the theatre safe for drama with a purpose, and to educate, lecture, and refine the general playgoing public so that drama of a thought-provoking type could be presented and appreciated.

⁸ Ibid., p. XXV.

I have fought for a recognition of the distinction between the art of the drama on the one hand and popular amusement on the other, and of the greater pleasure to be derived from the art of the drama.

I have fought for the entire freedom of the modern dramatist, for his right to portray all aspects of human life, all passions, all opinions; for the freedom of search, the freedom of the phrase, the freedom of treatment that are allowed to the Bible and Shakespeare, that must necessarily be allowed to every writer and to every artist that sees humanity as a whole. I have fought for sanity and wholesomeness, for largeness and breadth of view.⁹

Between the years of 1883-1894, Jones endeavored, through his lectures and essays as well as his plays, to raise the standard of the theatre and to wipe out theatrical sensationalism. He challenged the playwrights; he lectured and persuaded, and in 1894, he could see enough advancement in the standards of the drama, that he said he should not have written his essays or ever have given his lectures at all, had the status of the theatre been in 1883 what it was in 1894.

Jones believed with Matthew Arnold that the middle-class foibles could more easily be weakened by means of the theatre than by any other. Jones' aim for the stage was to present, not the passing and unnecessary facts of actual occurrences but to show the eternal and necessary verities of life and character. He said that everything that tricked and deceived the playgoers, or that attempted to trick and deceive them into believing that what they saw was real life, instead of being a representation, an interpretation, an abstract of real life, was false and unworthy of art and must sooner or later be surrendered and abandoned as failure. Jones was a

⁹ Henry Arthur Jones, The Renaissance of the English Drama, Macmillan and Co., London, 1895, Preface, pp. VII, VIII, IX.

great exponent of truth and he reiterated the same ideas many times in his essays and lectures. He remarked:

These things will always remain as the never-to-be-destroyed essentials of the drama--a great idea, an interesting tale, the faithful portraiture of character and literary power.¹⁰

In achieving this faithful portraiture in the drama, Jones employed, as one of his devices, the soliloquy; he called it the dramatist's "piercing spy-glass." He used the soliloquy in most of his plays and argued that its use was legitimate. He advocated free-trade in the drama; he was not bothered by the fact that the theatres had become commercialized and numerous. He wanted "by constant endeavor on the part of the actor and manager and author to show the public how high a pleasure the study of life gives in comparison with the search for mere amusement, and by constant response of the educated public to higher and yet higher efforts," to draw a distinct line of demarcation between the theatre for amusement and the entertainment of art.

Jones believed that the greatest dramas teach and concern themselves about the greatest and most central truths. He said that a wide knowledge of life and mankind is what the drama can give in a transcendent measure. He believed there was a direct ratio between what a race or nation knows and what it does; that intellectual advance means sooner or later moral advance, and intellectual advance always comes first.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 179

Jones would not allow physical horrors or disease on the stage for their own sakes, but he would allow one's heart to be cut open if it could show a higher spiritual beauty beyond. He argued that relation of man to woman, religion, institutions, and politics were fit materials to be discussed and the truths concerning them to be presented in dramas. He said that the stage had the responsibility of pointing out truths, but that it had a pleasanter task in teaching good manners and the delicacies and amenities of social intercourse. He said:

To sum up then; the drama should teach; if it does not it is meaningless, empty, puerile, trivial. It should never teach directly and with a set purpose; if it does it is meddlesome, one-sided, intolerant, irritating, and tiresome. Briefly we may say, it should teach but it should never preach.¹¹

Jones, then, coming at an in-between period in the development of modern drama baffles classification. He has been called a realist, a liberal conservative, and a writer of emotional drama preceding the drama of serious intention. He does not fall into the role of satirist completely. He cannot be catalogued as belonging definitely and wholly to any one type of writer. For this paper it will be sufficient to show him as a satirist who was conservative in his ideas and used the raisonneur, so popular with Dumas, fiis, as the purveyor of his conventional opinions, concerning marriage, clergymen, and reformers.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 305.

Although satire of many phases of social life are to be seen in Jones' plays, for a paper of this length, it is necessary that one limit his material so that he can deal properly with the topics chosen. These topics of marriage, clergymen, and reformers were obviously ones in which Jones himself was primarily interested and upon which he had commented in his critical writings as well. Because of these facts, the scope of this study will be confined to Jones' attitude toward and satire of, marriage, clergymen, and reformers.

CHAPTER I
MARRIAGE

In the new tendency of the theatre in the latter part of the nineteenth century to look boldly at life and present whatever phases of it appealed most to the dramatist, there was quite a lot of emphasis placed upon marriage and woman's place. Ibsen was the one individual who first put the question of the womanly woman and marriage in its theatrical setting. Although Jones meant always first and last to be typically English, and said he was not influenced by the continental dramatist, it was not long until he, too, turned with his satirical drama to the marriage as an institution.

Jones has been called a conservative liberal; true it is that he did not often allow his characters to overstep the bounds of propriety. His was a kindly satire, but satire was his most deliberate means of showing marriage as he saw it. Jones did not want to preach; his aim was to teach subtly. He must have enjoyed writing these satires of married life. They make enjoyable reading.

In The Case of Rebellious Susan, 1894, Jones satirized first, the fact that Mr. Harabin's case was a "respectable average one." The sympathy of her friends was infuriating to Lady Susan. Lady Darby and Inez, Mrs. Quesnel, advised Lady Susan to do nothing in a hurry but to wait till----- "Till the next time." Jones showed that English society was in the habit of condoning repeatedly such offenses, that of

infidelity in husbands. Lady Darby told Susan to "make his life a misery to him for a fortnight" and then never mention his misdemeanor again; Inez advised her to be utterly broken-hearted and mutely reproachful and after he had begged her forgiveness time and again ---- to forgive him.*

Lady Susan said, "It's our cowardice and weakness and falsehood that make them (men) such brutes."

Lady Darby replied, "They are brutes!"

(She had been married a quarter of a century.)

In reply Inez gave this amusing answer, "Yes, but that's God's fault more than woman's."

Although Jones satirized the errors and faults of marriage through Sir Richard Kato, Lady Susan's uncle and guardian, he advocated the conservative type of procedure for Lady Susan. He said that twenty-five years' experience in the divorce courts had persuaded him that marriage as an institution was perfect, but it was "worked by imperfect creatures."

Through Jones' plays in the midst of rebellion and dissatisfaction, the insurgents against convention were always advised by a conservative, sympathetic individual.

The characters in this play that were really satirized severely were Elaine, also niece of Sir Richard Kato, and Fergusson Pybus, her fiance, later her husband. Jones ridiculed

* Henry Arthur Jones, The Case of Rebellious Susan, Act I, in Representative Plays (Vol. II, Little, Brown, & Co., Boston, 1925, p. 284). All further references to Jones' plays, except where noted, are to this four-volume edition, chosen by, and with introductions by Clayton Hamilton.

Pybus' absurd idea of a sweetheart or wife as something ethereal. In speaking to Harabin, he referred to Lady Susan as Harabin's "offended Deity." Jones further satirized Pybus in this far-fetched speech:

Woman is to me something so priceless, so perfect, so rare, so intolerably superior to man in every way, that I instinctively fall upon my knees before her.¹

His belief that Elaine could inspire and enable him to "stamp himself upon the age" was caricatured thoroughly. Jones satirized the marriage quarrel by letting Elaine and Pybus go to Sir Richard Kato with a disagreement of such triviality that it could be settled by drawing a blind neither up nor down, but half-way. Perhaps that was one of Jones' thoughts that he meant to teach; that marriage should be based on a 'fifty-fifty proposition' for both man and wife. The predicaments that Elaine found herself in due to her unwifely interests in causes outside her home, were decidedly ironic and comic. The success of a marriage composed of two such opposites as were Elaine with her dogmatic, determined attitude, and Pybus, who could hardly frame his thoughts into an intelligible sentence, could scarcely be hoped for. These two were just types of individuals and not genuinely natural characters as were Susan, Sir Richard, and the Admiral.

Jones made a delightful bit of entertainment in the satire of Sir Joseph Darby, an admiral, the man who had been forgiven so many times. He had the Admiral weep crocodile tears of regret for his previous rascally behavior,

¹ Ibid., p. 290.

but he had him laugh uproariously at reminiscences of his early married life in the "shaking-down" period. He vowed there should never be any quarrels in married life after the first twelve months, just long enough "In all well-regulated households, for the woman to learn that she has got a master. In all ill-regulated households, for the man to learn that he has got a master." He was astounded by the fact that Lady Susan refused to let things shake-down, and he deplored the passing of the type of womankind he had as wife, who had forgiven him so freely what he had told her, that he decided he would not grieve her by telling any more. Another of Jones' hidden truths was probably that the reason they were so fond of each other was that they saw so little of each other, Sir Darby being at sea so much of the time. Jones pointed out indirectly the tolerant English attitude toward women guilty of the same. Lady Susan became frantic and listened to Sir Kato's reasoning only when she became afraid there might be a stir about her hearing the "very long sermon" with young Lucien in Cairo.

Sir Richard Kato had had no genuine proof of Susan's affair with Lucien, but he frightened her into submission by telling her that people were beginning to talk. An amusing scene was the one wherein Jacomb brought a message each to Lady Susan, Sir Richard, and Inez from Lucien, who had already forgotten Susan and been married, when Kato kept covertly watching Susan and she studiously kept her face

averted from him. That was the first time Kato knew definitely of her interest in Lucien Edensor. Lady Susan had not apparently been genuinely in love with Lucien, but he saved her from boredom and let her feel, in a measure, that she was evening up her score with her husband.

Another instance in which Jones satirized the double standards for marriages was Harabin and Lady Susan's reconciliation, wherein Harabin shamefacedly admitted many intrigues, but flew into a rage when Susan told of an elderly gentleman's having kissed her hand because she had played the piano so beautifully. The one source of active punishment that she had over her husband was in the reconciliation being made without his actually knowing her conduct during their time of separation. And again in Sir Daniel's speech to Lal in Mrs. Dane's Defense, Jones satirized the idea that no matter what kind of profligate a man was, he demanded the best of women for a wife:

A man demands the treasure of a woman's purest love. It's what he buys and pays for with the strength of his arm and the sweat of his brow. It's the condition on which he makes her his wife and fights the world for her and his children. It's his fiercest instinct and he does well to guard it; for it's the very mainspring of a nation's health and soundness. And whatever I've done, whatever I've been myself, I'm resolved my son shan't marry another man's mistress.²

The Hypocrites had another type of marriage satire in it, that of society's forcing marriage upon such individuals as William Sheldrake, a farm laborer, and Sara Piper, a bad

² Mrs. Dane's Defense, Act IV, (Vol. III, p. 261).

woman of the community; forcing vows upon people who uttered them with no thought as to their sanctity nor their eternal qualities. There was satirized also the straight-laced set of rules Mr. Wilmore had for the lower classes to follow with regard to illegitimate children, but when the social climbing Wilmore's own son, Lennard, was guilty of the same offense, his parents tried to pay in cash for their son's misdeeds.

Jones satirized in The Masqueraders society's willingness to allow practically any type of abuse and neglect to be undergone within the marriage vows. He depicted a wretched state of marriage between the brutish, drunken Sir Brice and his wife Dulcie. The disrespect, the hatred, the selfishness, the duplicity, and meanness of Sir Brice to Dulcie were lawful and therefore accepted. It was in striking contrast to the pure, noble, enduring, honorable, unselfish love of David for Dulcie. Yet, because of the attitude of people toward marriage and divorce, she was hopelessly chained to a beast of a man for life, while happiness stood just beyond the threshold, unattainable because of the creeds of man. Even after David had won Dulcie and her child from her blackguard husband in cards and Sir Brice had relinquished all claims to them, convention stood in the way.

Henry Arthur Jones pointed to the defects of marriage but stayed consistently on the side of the majority. Sir Richard Kato had said that the majority of the people had

to be in the right. At least Jones believed there was no escaping the patterns of tradition, that greater peace was to be had by the individual in abiding by the customs of society than by following one's own wishes and bowing one's neck despite the social ostracism and heartache that the world would inflict on its wrong-doers. To do the part of showing the line of duty in this play, Jones chose Helen, older sister of Dulcie, who said that it was the wife's duty "to her husband to keep her vows, to herself to keep herself pure and stainless because it is her glory as it is man's duty to be brave.....because no nation has ever survived whose women have been immoral."³ The dialogue concerned itself in this passage with one of Jones' themes already mentioned, that of the double standard; Helen said she did not know whether or not it was man's duty to be moral, but it was certainly a woman's duty. Dulcie in her indignation sarcastically replied:

Moral! Moral!! Moral!!! Is there anything under God's sun so immoral --- as to be married to a man one hates! And you go on plastering it and poulticing it and sugaring it over with "moral" and "ideal" and "respectable," and all those words men use to cheat themselves with.⁴

Jones allowed his characters to shout themselves hoarse in denunciation of prevailing codes of ethics, and no doubt he meant them to show up the weakness of existing rules; yet,

³ The Masqueraders, Act II, (Vol. II, p. 26).

⁴ Ibid., p. 251.

in this play as in others he had his raisonneur, Helen, point out the pitfalls of the individual's freedom versus society's traditions.

The same futility in hoping to avoid the laws of life was expressed in Sir Daniel's reply to Mrs. Dane's question, "Then who is it, what is it, drives me out?"

Mrs. Dane asked this question after her defense had fallen through and her marriage to Lal was not to be allowed. To this question Sir Daniel answered:

The law, the hard law, that we didn't make, that we would break if we could, for we are all sinners at heart --- the law that is above us all, made for us all, that we can't escape from, that we must keep or perish.⁵

Henry Arthur Jones did not intend to be evident in his teachings. He said that life itself taught indirectly and that drama's truths should be deduced by the individual and not put into quotation marks for the benefit of the reader or playgoer. He showed how irrevocable were the attitudes of society toward miscreants, especially toward women. Mrs. Dane, guilty of an amorous affair with her employer when she was a young girl, could not be accepted by legitimate society even though she had tried to change her mode of living and line of conduct. He showed that life built upon the foundation of duplicity and lies could not withstand the searching penetrating glances of truth.

⁵ Mrs. Dane's Defence, (Act IV, Vol. III, p. 272).

With The Liars in 1897, Jones showed himself to be the master of comic satire. He has been praised quite extensively on this social comedy of his. From the standpoint of technique and finesse, it is said to be truly excellent. The play was so cleverly written that the purpose and methods employed were more evasive than in most of his other plays. He had in mind the satire of different types of husbands and wives, the foolhardiness of a married woman's entertaining herself with even an innocent flirtation, the foolishness of depending on a lie as a shield, and the settling of the principal characters by the advice of the raisonneur, Sir Christopher Deering.

There were three types of husbands and wives definitely portrayed in this play, none of them having the combination of sympathy and understanding requisite to a congenial married life. First, there was Freddie, the unhappy, Freddie the cipher, Freddie the maltreated, and his wife, Lady Rosamund Tatton, who had fun at his expense and considered him of small consequence in her daily course of activities. Jones showed Freddie (the very name gave a sense of weakness) continually and amusingly asking advice on women and married life as soon as he felt himself sufficiently "tiled in." He was always on the verge of revolt: "That's all I want, Coke, to call my soul my own --- and some of these days I will."

When he told Lady Rosamund that he was going to place everything in the house on a new basis, she laughed at him; when he shouted that he would no longer remain a cipher in

their establishment she made him desperate by humoring him: "Run away to your club Freddie, and think over what figure you would like to be. I dare say we can arrange it."

The wretched Freddie, baffled throughout the play as how to manage his wife, was one of Jones' cleverest satirical devices of the play. Next, there was the married couple whose activities revolved around the interests of a hypochondriac, self-centered, consciously upright husband married to an acquiescent, nondescript, dependent little woman whose ambition was to do as she was told by her husband, or anyone else who was convincing.

The other couple, Gilbert Nepean and Lady Jessica, around whom the liars congregated, was poorly matched also. Jones satirized Gilbert as the serious, unsocial, big business man, who was too busy with business for the social amenities conducive to marital happiness. He was married to attractive, venturesome, young Jessica, interested in social life and personal, flattering attention. When George, Gilbert's brother, warned her of her flirtation with Falkner, she replied, "The thinner the ice, the more delicious the fun, don't you think? Ah, you're like Gilbert. You don't skate --- or joke."⁶

Jones showed throughout the play how foolhardy it was for a married woman to indulge in this type of behavior, although it was begun from sheer boredom and to shock her

⁶ The Liars, Act I, (Vol. III, p. 107).

husband and their men friends. He proved the danger of playing with fire and the likelihood of the worst possible interpretation always being placed on such attractions. He showed, too, the almost inevitable outcome to be that one or both of the parties actually fall in love.

Sir Christopher agreed with Falkner that this was a "lying, selfish, treacherous world" but that it had learned some truths with regard to love affairs....."And I want to ask you, Ned Falkner, what the devil you mean by making love to a married woman?" Ned countered with the argument that Lady Jessica was married to a man who wasn't worthy of her, to which Sir Christopher replied: "All women are married to men unworthy of them --- bless 'em!"

Jones used Sir Christopher Deering as his raisonneur, but he satirized him also. There is comedy in the lines repeated often by Sir Christopher concerning women, "They're not worth it --- except one."

Jones allowed his audience to smile at the weakness of even this nonchalant man of the world for womankind --- just one. In this manner Jones showed him to be a normal individual. Jones had a scheme of showing his characters subject to the same whims, foibles, or weaknesses that they disapproved of in others. There was a satire also of causing people to err in lies in order to prove their innocence in other matters. The first attempt of Sir Christopher to persuade Falkner of the fallacy of his ways was unsuccessful, for on the same evening Ned and Lady Jessica arranged, at least on the part of Falkner,

for a clandestine meeting at The Star and Garter. When Jessica did "take the wrong turning" and find herself at The Star and Garter, she naturally ran into Falkner, who had believed she was coming and had ordered an elaborate dinner. They were discovered together there by George NePeau and the subsequent lies of Lady Jessica and her friends were an effort to avert the suspicions of her husband that George's story had aroused. Sir Christopher Deering was the only sane, level-headed, honest man in the center of a group of "honourable" men and women who were afraid of a lie but more afraid of the truth.

One of the most satirical and amusing things about the third act with its rehearsed lies was Coke, Dolly's husband. Jones made him one of the most ridiculous and laughable prigs of any of his entire list of characters. He was forced to lie and did not know the lie he was to tell. His squeamishness at lying was not funnier than the absurd replies he made in guessing which would be the correct answer. Falkner arrived on the scene and precipitated things by telling the truth.

Again Jones came to the fore with his expression of conformity to conventions, with the technical device of the raisonneur, in Sir Christopher who told Falkner:

....But running away with another man's wife has one defect in this country --- it won't work! You know what we English are, Ned. We're not a bit better than our neighbors, but, thank God! we do pretend we are, and we do make it hot for anyone who disturbs that holy pretense.⁷

⁷ The Liars, Act IV, (Vol. III, p. 172) .

Sir Christopher then turned to Lady Jessica and painted some very sordid and unhappy pictures of the way the same plan had failed for others, and remarked: "Marriage may be disagreeable, it may be unprofitable, it may be ridiculous; but it isn't as bad as that!" The raisonneur also offered some advice to Gilbert, telling him that he should realize he could not marry a woman and sit down and neglect her; and in the manner of Lord Chesterfield's "Letter to His Son" advised him: "My dear fellow, she's only a woman. What are they? A kind of children, you know. Humour them, play with them, buy them the toys they cry for, but don't get angry with them. They're not worth it, except one!"

In this, Jones ridiculed the prevailing attitude toward woman's place. On the other hand, in Evie of The Divine Gift, Jones ridiculed the wife who wanted a career and who thought, to become an artist, one had only to desire to strongly enough. Cutler, the raisonneur of this play, told Evie that we all felt the urge to do something great, to be something great, felt that we had it in us to achieve, but the principal difference between ordinary people and the artist was that the artist could bring that something out.

He satirized Evie as the discontented wife who wanted to be free from marriage and her "ordinary" husband, so that she might give her talents to the world. But, when scandal threatened, she refused to let her husband have a divorce.

I can't go about the world alone with this disgrace hanging over me. The only thing for me to do now is to go back to Oakminster as Will's wife. That will convince everybody I am quite innocent....I find all the visitors cutting me and everybody believing that I am not a good woman. Gaurdy, Why are things like that allowed to happen?⁸

To which Cutler replied:

The monstrously unfair treatment that Providence deals out to deserving people is fully discussed in the book of Job. The only conclusion reached there is the violently improbable one of a happy ending.⁹

Although practically every one of Jones' later plays had something to say about the institutions of marriage, enough has been said to show that he did not wholly approve of existing ideas with reference to marriage and divorce. He believed in marriage thoroughly, but he satirized its weaknesses. He was a conservative, however, as the English nation, generally speaking, has always been conservative. He did not advocate open or drastic rebellion, but believed in a gradual enlightening of the public, and that national improvement would follow in the wake of national knowledge. He wished to use the theatre in the furtherance of this public education.

⁸ The Divine Gift, Act III. (Vol. IV, p. 172.).

⁹ Ibid., p. 173.

CHAPTER II

CLERGYMEN

"Go ye therefore into all the world, preaching the Gospel...."

Jones in his belief that the field of the drama was illimitable and that dramatists should have a free atmosphere to work in, felt it was their right faithfully to depict religious life along with other aspects of society that engaged their attention. He believed that in no instance could it ever be profitable for the stage to become prejudiced for or against any creed or doctrine; he said that Shakespeare's use of religion had withstood the criticisms of all dogmas and faiths, because he was universal in his religious outlook to the extent that many different sects had declared their religion was Shakespeare's choice.

The hateful, foolish, convenient maxim so often dinned into our ears of late that the English modern drama should teach nothing and believe in nothing, received no countenance from the greatest dramatists of the past, least of all from Shakespeare. The greatest dramatists of the past held the greatest art is as instinctively, as relentlessly, though as unobtrusively, moral as Nature herself. One cannot always perceive it, but there is no escaping it.¹

Jones reasoned that man's life was six-sevenths secular and one-seventh sacred, so that legitimately, one-seventh of the dramatists' themes could be on religion, should the dramatists be interested.

Henry Arthur Jones, The Renaissance of the English Drama, Macmillan & Co., London, 1895, p. 47.

Every character is woven all of a piece; if some threads are taken out, the garment is mutilated and falls to bits. The whole of the nature of man is sacred to the dramatist, as the whole of the body of man is sacred to the physician.²

He declared that the dramatist is right in noting the scope and influence of religion upon the character he has to portray.

Clergymen frequently have been the objects of ridicule, satire, and sarcasm on the stage; especially has this been true since the reaction against Puritanism in the latter part of the seventeenth century. Jones, however, dealt more kindly with his churchmen. He wanted to picture them in their correct light, their true light. He preferred to sympathize in many cases with those he laughed at, but he did not laugh at all his clergymen.

Jones had no intention primarily of appealing to the upper class alone; nor was he as severe in his attitudes toward the church as many twentieth century writers are. He satirized keenly only those clergymen who were unworthy or worldly. He showed weaknesses in practically every minister he portrayed, but in that respect he was merely writing realistically, for life is composed of no perfect creatures. In portraying life as he saw it Jones complied with Yeats' idea: "That is the way I have seen her in my mind, and what I have made of her is very living. All art is founded

² Ibid., p. 37.

upon personal vision."³

Jones had that same vigorous belief in his personal vision; for example, Michael and His Lost Angel, caused controversy because it contained a church scene and because it showed a clergyman guilty of adultery. Truth found the very title of the drama as silly as it was objectionable; Mrs. Patrick-Campbell, after rehearsing for seven weeks, abandoned the part of Audrie because she disliked the church scene, yet Jones, as was his invariable practice, refused to alter a line. He considered Michael and His Lost Angel one of his five best plays. He was a man of unwavering purpose who, eleven years before his above reaction to the criticism of Michael and His Lost Angel, had written:

Upon any question of dramatic craftsmanship, literary skill, or originality of plot, a playwright will do well to abide by the wholesome rule that forbids an artist to speak of his work or to question any verdict that may be passed upon it."⁴

Jones was certainly not unsympathetic toward religion; it is true that he used satire in many instances but in the majority of cases there was an understanding of the mistakes made by clergymen who are all subject to temptations, as are the rest of the human family. It was his idea to scorn or ridicule the common attitude that religion and life were things apart; that though man's religion was from a divine

³ William Butler Yeats, Plays and Controversies, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1924, p. 154.

⁴ Jones, The Renaissance of The English Drama, p. 26.

source, the man who stroved to follow it was human and humanly weak. He wanted to show up discordancies between what man professed to believe and what he practiced. Jones did show, however, the narrowness, the formalism, the fear of what others may think and say in the individual, Canon Bonsey, of Mrs. Dane's Defense. Canon Bonsey was a priest worried by a scandal that threatened his parish and fearful, above all, of what effect it might have upon his aristocratic patrons. He tried diligently to make everything around him smooth-running and convenient. He endeavored to justify himself for having introduced Mrs. Dane to the community by by saying:

And when a delightful lady comes to church, and subscribes regularly to all the parish charities, and has a perfect mastery of the piano, and is evidently a very dear sweet creature in every way, and a gentlewoman, I don't think it's the duty of a clergyman to ask her for references as if she were a housemaid, eh? ⁵

Nor, indeed, should it be necessary for a woman's minister to have to justify her before she can be accepted by a community; yet Jones meant to show how judgments were based on exteriors and not on the inner person, as well as how little Canon Bonsey cared whether he really helped his people spiritually or not, so long as they did not disturb him.

Jones pictured Canon Bonsey as the rather worldly, harmless, gullible type of clergyman who begged to be excused from the responsibility of asking Mrs. Dane about

5 Mrs. Dane's Defense, Act I, (Vol. III, p. 225).

her past for the lame reason that he was too easily "taken in" by anything a lovely woman said. He was satirized as the type of clergyman who knew when he had a good thing of it and was clever enough to keep it so. The same dread of scandal and awe of aristocracy that was seen in Mrs. Dane's Defense was shown also in the Reverend Algernon Portal, who, in The Crusaders, opposed a social reform merely because it brought into his dignified parish five hundred girls from the city's working class. His was the attitude of yet another of Jones' churchmen, the unctuous vicar of The Hypocrites, the Reverend Everard Daubeny, Vicar of Weybury. Jones placed Daubeny in direct contrast to the Reverend Edgar Linnell to bring out the excellent qualities of the latter.

Daubeny was a connoisseur of rare vintages and a student of his parishioners' cookbooks. He was presented as the obese, cunning, insincere minister who knew how to keep his bread well buttered. Jones described him thus:

A fat, rosy vicar of sixty, purring, placid,
time serving, self-indulgent.

Daubeny: Fie! Fie! Ah you may scoff, but whether we believe our religion, or whether we don't; whether it's true or whether it isn't, you can't deny that it's the linch-pin of society; and once you take away the linch-pin --- By the way, Mrs. Wilmore, your cook never sent me the receipt for those heavenly devilled quails--- what did you call them?⁶

The sudden transition of Daubeny's subject from the sublime to the absurd was an amusing stroke in Jones' caricature of the vicar. Edgar Linnell was interesting both from

⁶ The Hypocrites, Act I. (Vol. III, p. 285).

the standpoint of the reformer and as clergyman. When asked, with reference to the forced marriage of William Sheldrake and Sarah Piper, discussed in chapter two, if he did not want to preserve the sanctity of marriage, he replied bluntly that that was just what he was doing. However, Linnell demanded that Lennard marry Rachel, who really loved him and whom Lennard had seduced. But Lennard's parents, the social-climbing Wilmores, fought the proposal by overt and implied lies in their attempt to carry out Lennard's marriage to Helen Plugenet, daughter of the wealthy Sir John Plugenet. Eventually Lennard broke away from the scheming lies of his parents, confessed his love for Rachel, and Linnell's idea of sanctity of marriage was victorious.

The extent of the difference between the two clergymen was cleverly shown in this dialogue between them.

Daubeny: In your position, your conduct involves the church herself. You are placing her in antagonism to the world around her.

Linnell: She has always been in antagonism to the world around her! She always will be!

Daubeny: Yes, yes, in a sense. But these are troublous times for the Church. What the Church needs today is "safe men," pre-eminently "safe men"! (tapping his sentiments into his fat stomach with his fat fingers) safe Christian men!⁷

Jones believed in presenting the story and letting the truth be deduced by his readers and theatre-goers. He said that life itself taught lessons but never directly. In these two men Jones pictured the good and bad sides of clergymen.

⁷ Ibid., p. 290.

Linnell expressed the same steadfastness and fearlessness in his work that Jones put into his own career.

Linnell: I resolved I would always do what I thought to be right, and never think of consequences.⁸

Technically, the play built up to a fine climax at the end of the third act when Linnell was outfaced by his opponents and in seeming defeat denounced them as hypocrites; there was nothing novel in point of characterization however, unless it were the curate Linnell.⁹

There was no satire in Jones' portrayal of the Reverend Edgar Linnell as the strongest, or perhaps, the least-sinning of any of his ministers. However, Linnell was not subjected to the temptations that assailed Judah and Michael. He showed tolerance and kindness to Judah and Michael and treated them as upright, godly men who erred in situations of great temptation and were fearless and honorable in their confession and repentance.

However, there was the feeling that Jones was satirizing negative goodness, that of being virtuous and noble because sin had never been presented, not because of great strength of character. Jones unmasked the weak vicars in The Hypocrites with Daubeney, in Mrs. Dane's Defense, with Canon Bonsey, and in The Crusaders, with Algernon Portal, but they were employed expressly as foils to throw into relief the virtues of other characters, the truly straight-

⁸ Ibid., p. 293.

⁹ Frank W. Chandler, Aspects of Modern Drama, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1922, p. 156.

forward and sincere ones. The Reverend Everard Daubeny's weakness showing up Linnell's strength has already been discussed. Another of Jones' characters may be classed with his churchmen sympathetically set forth in subordinate roles with Philos Ingarfield in The Crusaders, previously explained. He was also in contrast to the Reverend Algernon Portal. Portal himself was a negligible character; He was not an individual but a type and was extravagantly caricatured.

Although Ingarfield as idealist and reformer was treated kindly, Jones implied the folly and the futility of reform in general, especially the application of youthful ideal aspirations too strenuously to human conduct.

In turning to the discussion of Judah, and Michael and His Lost Angel, it is to be remembered that in the best plays of Jones' religious experience was presented, not for itself alone, but as a motive to action and as a prompting always to moral conflict. In these two plays Jones showed a conflict waged within the souls of his clergymen.

Judah Llewellyn was a mystic, half Celt and half Jew, attracted to the miracle worker, Vashti Dethic, who seemed divine to him. Like Ingarfield and Michael, Judah was an ascetic idealist about twenty-five years of age, dark complexioned, with shaggy, clustering hair which fell in thick curls over his forehead. His actions were quick and nervous and he had a glowing, enthusiastic manner. He was the type of young man who would inevitably be attracted to such a

woman as Vashti, with her appearance of spirituality and devotion that was superimposed upon her by a prideless father. As was her habit, Vashti, before engaging in her feats of faith-healing, was accustomed to fasting, a trick thought up by her rascally father, to make the healing ring true. Vashti's cures were remarkable and made her half believe that she really did possess supernatural powers, but she had grown sick of practicing deception.

Lady Eve, the last surviving child of Lord Asgarby, wanted Vashti to come stay with them and cure her of a malady, presumably consumption. This was Vashti's last time to go through the farce of her faith-healing; she had made her father promise that it should be so. A skeptical Professor Jopp believed the scheme to be fraudulent and challenged Vashti to let his daughter be the keeper of the keys to the tower in which she was to fast.

Because of his consuming love, Judah, too, secretly watched the tower. He was horrified to find Dethic taking food to his daughter by night; Judah's sin was a lie. In order to save Vashti from certain exposure and imprisonment, he vowed to Professor Jopp that he had seen no one enter the tower. The invalid out of sheer faith improved so remarkably, that in compliance with her and Vashti's request, her father gave Judah money to erect a new church building.

Professor Jopp, some time later, discovered the evidence that proved Vashti's guilt, but Jones arranged it through Jopp's daughter and her fiancé, a far-fetched, supercilious,

intolerant young man, so Jopp would keep silent. Both Vashti and Judah were so tortured in conscience that they confessed. Judah resigned his ministry, rejected the offer of the new church, and resolved to remain in the community and win back the respect of his flock, keeping Vashti with him.

Again Jones settled his characters very definitely at the conclusion of his play. Jones' interpretation of Judah was not essentially ironic. Jones' satire was seldom in the bold, scathing form of later² satirists. It is difficult to put one's finger exactly on the thing Jones aimed at, in every particular, possibly because of his being a curious admixture of realist, romanticist, satirist, and comedy writer. In being evasive with his underlying teachings, Jones followed his own advice that the theatre should never preach, and its teachings should not be too greatly in evidence.

In Judah, Jones relentlessly aroused a feeling of intolerance and distaste for the exaggerated type of freedom of expression in the howling ignorance of the liberated young man and woman, Juxon Prall and Sophie Jopp. Their lovemaking was amazingly dull and prosaic, but they felt themselves superior to all the older and more conventional characters, their own parents included. It was intensely amusing but not with the sort of amusement that evoked laughter.

Jones satirized also the imposter, who duped the English public, in *Dethic*, and he brought to attention the gullibility of the greater mass of the people. Judah had an intensity of feeling and an earnestness that lifted it to the realms of literature. It showed that Jones' earlier and melodramatic period was at an end. Judah proved the spiritual power of love, a love that could turn even a lie into an instrument for moral growth. In this play, Jones showed the chivalry and bravery of a man who lied to save the woman he loved, when to a man of his spiritual nature, to lie meant unrest and unhappiness.

Jones portrayed life as he saw it. If it required satire of religion, he employed that; if it meant unpopularity for him and his plays he still used his art as a mirror of life, as best he could. He not only taught drama of serious intention in his lectures and essays, but he attempted to give examples in his plays of what he meant playwrights to do: give the theatre meaning and ally literature and the stage.

Judah if original in conception is mediocre in execution. Michael and His Lost Angel, although its central conflict be sufficiently old, is full of fresh interest. It is written more carefully than most of Jones' work. It is romantic yet sufficiently real to satisfy reason and the sense of fact. Its setting is poetic and its personages truly live. Morally, Jones is interested in showing how character affects character, when Audrie asks in Michael and His Lost Angel, "Do you think you can have any influence on my soul without my having an equal influence on yours?"

And Michael answers, "Action and reaction are equal and opposite."¹⁰

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 158.

An adverse criticism of the play might be that it offered too little food for thought to the intellectual and was too sober in mood to serve as entertainment for the unthinking. Clayton Hamilton said that he would rather have failed with this play than to have succeeded in a half-dozen of Jones' more popular and prosperous plays.

Michael and His Lost Angel was a failure on the stage, partly at least, because of Mrs. Patrick-Campbell's having been replaced three days before the play was to open, and the withdrawal of the popular star was said to have been responsible for the play's being closed peremptorily on its eleventh night.

In this play the author showed again the love of an ascetic for a temptress, in which the man in order to lead the woman ultimately upward to his own level, had first to descend to hers. To save her soul he had to jeopardize his own. Michael's foe was worldly love and passion; the irony of it so aptly shown by Jones was his committing the identical sin that he had judged so harshly in another.

The Reverend Michael Feversham was a serene, scholarly, and honorable gentleman, dignified, calm, and strong. His face showed much sweetness and spirituality; his whole presence radiated strength of character, gentleness, and self-control. He appeared a little forbidding in his supreme goodness. It was partially this quality in him that must have piqued Audrie Lesden into wishing to force herself upon his consciousness as a woman. At any rate, when Michael

found that Rose, the daughter of his secretary, Andrew, had been guilty of an illicit love affair, he required that she avow her sin before his congregation in order for her to achieve peace. Jones later satirized in Michael's own case the emptiness of such a plan. The play opened with Andrew's grief over his daughter.

Michael returned home from church saddened over the scene that had transpired, but tranquil in his belief that he had acquitted himself well. Fate, or temptation in the form of Audrie called to him from his window. Her first taste of victory over him was her success in being allowed to kiss the picture of his good angel, his mother.

Audrie, an adventuress who became interested in Michael after reading one of his books, deliberately studied how to weave her spells about him. She was candid with him and warned him against herself. As the play progressed the inevitability of the outcome became more and more certain. Though Jones showed the irony of Michael's predicament, he aroused sympathy for this minister more than for practically any of the others.

Michael became aware of his danger and retired to a desert island to meditate; Audrie pursued him and claimed him as her purchase from the powers of evil. Just as she seemed almost genuinely won to his cause, fate or chance intervened and marooned them for the night on the island, because her boatsman did not receive her message.

The most maddening thing of all to Michael in his guilt was Andrew's watchful, knowing eyes and his constant reassurances to Michael that their secret was safe with him. This was certainly an ironic touch of Jones', showing the balance of justice. Jones employed the anguish of remorse to bring Michael to the church in the confession scene that set Mrs. Grundy to wagging her tongue.

"I have sinned as David sinned," Michael told his people. "It is my sentence to go forth from you, not as your guide, your leader, your priest, but as a broken sinner, humbled in the dust before the heaven he has offended."¹¹

Jones grippingly showed Michael's inability to forget Mrs. Lesden, even though he had steadfastly willed to do so and had renounced her. He, too, was human and subject to human weaknesses. The position of Audrie was genuinely touching; she was so utterly without guide or mainstay. Audrie was very poor in emotional resources and spiritual strength. Jones showed Michael's grief to be as intense as Audrie's despite the fact that Michael had his church and faith as a sanctuary. When Audrie went to him to die, Michael quit fighting his love for her and gave in to the intensity of his grief. Audrie's fate of death was easier than Michael's of a living death.

Jones satirized Michael in the first part of the play for being shocked at every remark his father, Sir Lyolf,

¹¹ Michael and His Lost Angel, Act IV, (Vol. III, p. 76) .

made with any reference in a joking manner to woman, or even at such trivialities as the expression, "I bet."

Sir Lyolf was continually having to correct himself in an ordinary conversation with Michael so as not to offend Michael's religious sensibilities. The ludicrous contrast between Michael's squeamishness at such minor indelicacies and his later sins was not lost sight of by Jones.

He also satirized Michael in his assertions to Father Hilary that there was nothing bothering him, that he was at peace, and then showing him in the next scene fairly tearing his hair because of Audrie Lesden. Another point of ridicule was that of Sir Lyolf and the Reverend Mark Docwray, who having agreed that a confession was the correct procedure in a hypothetical case cited by Michael, his own case, changed their opinions when they found Michael to be the one who was to confess.

These plays did not include all of Jones' ministerial characters. He had a few earlier ones that were satirized more severely, but these discussed were the ones that are generally considered his best religious characters.

Of Michael and His Lost Angel it was said,

But what is new in Michael and His Lost Angel and what makes it stand unique among its author's works, is the fervour, the passion, and the poetry that pulses through it. The mood of the play is lyrical and the text is very beautifully written.

"The soul," said Browning, "doubtless is immortal,"
---and this play has a soul.¹²

The clergymen of these plays served to show that Jones did not see even the clergymen as models of perfection, as reformers who were themselves free from need of reform. Jones used his satire, at times severe, but as often not, to show the divergence between the theory of religion and its practice.

¹² Clayton Hamilton, Representative Plays by Henry Arthur Jones, Little, Brown, & Co., Boston, 1925, (Vol. III, Introduction, p. XIV).

CHAPTER III

REFORMERS

That Jones did not believe in sudden changes of a revolutionary tendency was shown by his attitude toward reformers. They were apparently one type of English citizen that he had little sympathy for. Whether they were self-appointed or part of a retinue of reformers, he had no use for the bigoted, blatant, boisterous, aggressive, and overbearing individual, who would re-make civilization overnight. Palsam, for example, in The Crusaders was a skeptical, gossip-mongering person who found unpleasant tales much easier to believe than pleasant ones. He was satirized keenly by Jones; his first appearance on the stage was to tell Cynthia that he had seen her new French maid, Victorine, walking in the park with a soldier who had his arm around her waist, or he thought so; but being short-sighted, he was not sure. He recommended that Cynthia question her because it "would be much better to err on the right side and accuse her wrongfully, rather than let her escape if she is guilty."

When asked, "Guilty of what?" he replied, "Well, she's French. I'm sorry to say it, but such a thing as genuine morality as we know it in England, doesn't exist in the whole of the French nation."¹

In a letter to Mrs. Grundy, Jones had used the same ironical tone about the blameless English and the highly immoral French, and concluded his remarks by saying,

¹ The Crusaders, Act I (Vol. II, p. 10).

Let us, therefore, again thank Heaven that we are not as other nations are.....Happily, there is not the slightest necessity for disturbing our cherished natural belief that immorality is confined to the Continent, and especially to France.²

This showed Jones' supreme use of irony; he had no sympathy whatsoever for the Pharisaic attitude of an individual or nation.

In The Crusaders he employed characters who had so much time and money on their hands that they took up reforming as a deadly serious pastime. He showed Cynthia's interest in the crusade to be laughable in its vanity and superficiality; Mrs. Campion-Blake's to be one of making correct social contacts in her efforts to reform, and Philos Ingarfield's to be that of an impractical dreamer and idealist, ridiculous in his absorption with his fanciful schemes.

Lord Burnham was finally prevailed upon to be president of the London Reformation League, though he, like another of Jones' sixty year old characters, Dolly's father, Matt Barron in Dolly Reforming Herself, had no desire to reform anybody, himself included. Anyway, as Palsam solemnly told him, none of the London Reformation League needed reforming except in trifles; which was a clever ironic touch. Lord Burnham remarked that he had always been opposed to reforming himself; that it was a "peculiarly base kind of treachery to be any better than my neighbors. It's leaving them in the lurch."

² Jones, The Renaissance of the English Drama, p. 175.

This play has satire of dialogue with the opposing side very obviously ridiculing the crusaders against ugliness. Jones even had Mrs. Campion-Blake laugh at the peculiarities of her co-worker, Philos Ingarfield:

He's a new variety of inspired idiot. Something between an angel, a fool, and a poet. And atrociously in earnest! A sort of Shelley from Peckham Rye.³

With reference to the reformation, Lord Burnham asked Philos, "Well, where do we begin?" Philos replied:

Everywhere where there is dishonesty, misery, disease, despair! I want to make every Londoner feel that every broken waif of humanity in this city, no matter how evil, wretched, ignorant, sunken, diseased, is his brother, his sister, his child.⁴

Jones portrayed Ingarfield as a radical in his urge to reform, although many things have been accomplished by radicals. Jones did not believe in a sudden upheaval or attempt to change things within one short period of time. He realized that his own attempts to aid the status of the theatre would probably not be rewarded immediately.

Jawle, though a type, was cleverly drawn; he was caricatured in his scheme for "legislation against the terrible increase in the human race," against marriage, and in favor of "forcible and abrupt extinction of life in certain cases --- his own included."

But Palsam was the prize nincompoop, always eager to make an example of somebody. Lord Burnham would have been

3 The Crusaders, Act I, (Vol. II, p. 17) .

4 Ibid., p. 21.

such an excellent example, and Palsam simply could not avoid hoping for scandal through the source of the French maid. His delight was to get a company of "good" people together to iron out the sins of the erring ones, about whom he itched to hear every sordid detail.

Palsam's pleasure knew no bounds when Philos, upon his return from Costa Rica, went to see Cynthia, who had promised to marry him as soon as he arrived home. But Cynthia had, in the meantime, become interested in Dick Rusper, son of Lord Burnham, and had forgotten her idealistic lover. Palsam knew that Cynthia and Philos had been in a compromising situation, when in reality it had been Dick who had tried vainly for admittance into Cynthia's room. He vowed that he would not be deterred in his ambition to make the scandal known by a horse-whipping, having set himself "the inexpressibly painful task of rooting out vice from English life."

Rather than have Cynthia exposed, Philos agreed to let Mrs. Campion-Blake arrange the plan of having been to see Victorine, the French maid, even though it meant ruin for him in every way. In this part of the play, Jones treated Philos sincerely as the honorable man that he was, suddenly brought down to earth by the sordid details of reality. He also showed Cynthia as a woman whose eyes had been opened, when Mrs. Campion-Blake was scheming to avert the scandal, as she said:

Life's a farce just to keep the husk of reputation and know there's no grain there! And that man Ingarfield last night in loyalty to his plan was not afraid of prison, or hunger, or death! And I'm afraid of the truth! I'm afraid of what people will say of me! Oh I am small! I am contemptible!⁵

Here Jones showed the reformers more in need of reform than were their subjects, with the exception of Ingarfield. When Philos was to sign the written statement of "last night's unfortunate affair," he asked if there were plenty of lies in it, for --- "When one lives in a world of lies, lies are the only truth."

Dick would not allow Philos to be sacrificed, however, and corrected the lies conceived by Mrs. Campion-Blake; while Palsam consented to keep his suspicions quiet upon the condition that Lord Burnham give up horse racing. He finally got to 'reform' Lord Burnham, which was almost as good as Victorine's being found guilty. Philos, then, was the true reformer, noble and well-meaning but far-fetched and as such was ridiculed in the first two acts as well as for his youthful beliefs that he could reform the world. But in Palsam, Jones showed the busy-body agitator of social strife at its worst. The Crusaders was an incredible tale, crowded with improbable if not impossible occurrences. From the factual standpoint it was obviously weak, but Jones' idea of a drama was that the facts need not be true, but that truth be found in the facts. His minor characters including Jawle, Figg, Jawle's 'manager', and Palsam, hearkened back to the

⁵ Ibid., p. 70.

humors of Ben Jonson. Although the play did not meet with success on the stage, it served as Jones' tool in showing up sham very admirably. Jones was philosophic on the reception of his plays; he said, "Surely it is better to be blamed for work either good or bad than to be praised for work that is transparently bad."⁶

However, Mrs. Dane's Defense met with an excellent reception. In this play Mrs. Bulsom-Porter as busy-body ran a close second to Palsam, for her most enlightened reason for knowing that Mrs. Dane was guilty was,

There is a curious expression on Mrs. Dane's face which exactly corresponds with that of a Miss Spooner—I need not pursue the story.⁷

Mrs. Bulsom-Porter also relied upon her instincts in such cases, for they were invariably right. She believed in keeping scandal well-ventilated. She appealed to Canon Bonsey to affirm that she was right in not allowing the story about Mrs. Dane to rest. Canon Bonsey was quite sincere as Jones had him answer to this ironic vein:

Quite true. Whenever it is necessary that any disagreeable scandal should be stirred up for the good of society, I am very much obliged to those dear, good people who kindly stir it up for me, and save me the trouble.⁸

The Canon was by nature a pacifist. Mrs. Bulsom-Porter did not have the pleasure of finding her belief true. When

⁶ Jones, The Renaissance of the English Drama, p. 72.

⁷ Mrs. Dane's Defense, Act II, (Vol. III, p. 216).

⁸ Ibid., p. 216.

Mrs. Dane's defense was found false by Sir Daniel Carteret's cross-examination, Lady Eastney kept the news to themselves, and especially from Mrs. Bulson-Porter, and managed to frighten her into a written apology to Mrs. Dane.

Lady Eastney was Jones' mouthpiece against reformers in this play:

Aren't we all humbugs? Isn't it all a sham? Don't we all have one code on our lips and another on our hearts; one set of rules to admonish our neighbors, and another to guide our own conduct?⁹

Sir Daniel Carteret, the middle-aged character who helped to work out the destinies of others and was the kind of character Jones was especially clever in employing to draw the threads together, was not essentially a reformer; but he was a stabilizer who brought the erring and emotional Lal back to reality and safety. Jones' characters may have been left with unrest in their minds and hearts, but Jones always settled them so far as their outward circumstances were concerned; to achieve this, his plays had to have the raisonneur, a man who had had much experience in life and knew many of its answers.

Such a man was Cutler, in The Divine Gift. Jones showed him as a reformer who used the pamphlet for his propaganda. In his essay which he was dictating to his secretary, Seccombe,

⁹ Ibid., p. 259.

he struck primarily at two phases of current English life. One was the unrest of the working man, his demands for shorter hours and better wages, his envy of the white collared class; the other was the dissatisfaction of women and their desire for woman suffrage.

In this drama, Jones did not satirize the reformer but used the reformer to satirize the social trends. Cutler was highly proficient in the use of sarcasm and irony in his dictations:

The present rebellion of women and the present rebellion of labor throughout all the civilized world may be classed together as a twin revolt against the detestable and tyrannical conditions which misguided Nature has for the moment imposed upon the human species. This twin revolt is wholly reasonable and wholly just. For what can be more unreasonable or more unjust than to demand toil and sweat from any cultured, self-respecting miner for eight, or even four, hours daily while other members of the same society are flirting with agreeable persons over coffee and cigars.¹⁰

And as always to show a balance of thought, Jones had the secretary challenge Cutler with these words, "Aren't you cutting the irony a little too fine?"

Cutler replied,

Impossible. Irony is a trap. You must always bait it so slyly that the fools swallow their purge and think it's sugar-candy. . . . Joab missed Abner as he smote him under the fifth rib. That's irony. Again what can be more unreasonable, more unjust, more viciously one-sided than that only one-half of human kind, and this the weaker and more delicate sex, should be called upon to endure the agony of that other labor, whereby Nature has so carelessly and clumsily contrived that our race should be renewed? . . . But, it is clear that today

¹⁰ The Divine Gift, Act I, (Vol. IV, p. 106).

the whole Religion of labor is to throw down its tools.
And the whole Duty of woman is to rebel.¹¹

Another of Jones' plays, The Middleman, published in 1889, though not primarily one of reformers was in line with the labor question from the other view point, the laborer's. It was one of Jones' earlier plays but it was somewhat similar to the plays of social justice, Strife by Galworthy, and The Weavers by Hauptmann. From the standpoint of technique, it was far weaker than Jones' later plays. The working out of his plan was evident and he used the ending of poetic justice when Blenkarn, the inventor who had been duped by his employer, had the tables turned and had the upper hand over his employers. There was an all round happy ending with Chandler, son of his former employer, bringing back as bride Blenkarn's daughter Mary, whom he had wronged and who had been declared dead earlier in the play.

This was one of the best plays of his earlier or old-fashioned period, but it was a milestone in Jones' development as dramatist, in that it pointed to Jones' future period of serious social themes. Although The Middleman did not have a reformer, as such, in it it had the essence of reform expressed. In his letter of dedication of this play to E. S. Willard, Jones said,

. . . And if the matter and substance of the play are still interesting to playgoers, it is because the story repeats some rude enforcement of that old perennial message to the oppressor, "Behold the hire of the laborers

¹¹ Ibid., p. 107.

who have reaped down your fields, which if of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."¹²

Again in this, Jones used what he argued was the dramatist's prerogative, that of writing anything in life that was of vital interest to him and his country. He believed that plays should "rouse and penetrate the mind of their nation, shake its conscience, bite a hold upon any serious problem of life or come with authentic tidings of

---'.....Man who passeth by

So like a God, so like the brutes that die."¹³

Jones had the attitude of a sympathetic onlooker who used ridicule harshly or leniently as the greater or lesser degree of hypocrisy or farce showed itself to him. Cutler himself was a sort of Jones. He remained aloof, detached, and entirely cognizant of the petulancies and graver misdemeanors of his fellow man. Jones was an onlooker more than a participant in the kind of society he portrayed. Born in 1851, of tenant farming parents, he raised himself by his intelligence and diligence until he made many friends in the literary and social world; and although he was no aristocrat by birth, in many of his later plays, he wrote concerning the social customs and manners of the aristocracy. He did not write this type of drama profusely, however, until he was about forty-five or fifty years of age; at which time in his life he, no doubt, had^{had} a fairly good opportunity to

¹² The Middleman, (Preface, Vol.I, p. 116).

¹³ Jones, The Renaissance of the English Drama, p. 72.

observe first hand at least some of those things of which he wrote. The extent to which Jones felt that most reformers would be willing to suffer was ironically expressed in Cutler's answer to his secretary's remark that if he published his essays, they would burn him in effigy:

Many excellent theologians have been burnt in the flesh for airing unintelligible dogmas. I mustn't mind being burnt in effigy for warning my friends off a mirage.¹⁴

A little space should be given here on ideas in Jones' lengthy preface to The Divine Gift, 1912, part of which Mr. Hamilton printed in his introduction to Jones' representative plays. This play has not been acted yet unless within the last few years.

Jones justified his long passages of philosophizing by observing that "It is in these passages that literature may find its opportunity....the English drama can be made to say something worth saying and can be made to say it in a manner that is worth heeding and dwelling upon."

He advised young playwrights who wished their plays to live "to choose permanent themes and universal types of characters." He admitted that he had spent more time on the construction of this play than on any other he had ever written; he hoped that its mechanism might not be evident. His hopes were realized. The thing that was most apparent in this play was that he had an enormous number of ideas to propound through Cutler, the raisonneur around whom the story worked.

¹⁴ The Divine Gift, Act I, (Vol. IV, p. 122).

However much Jones believed in Cutler and believed as Cutler, his feeling was not so tender toward the prying trouble-making, doubting Mrs. Blaney in The Hypocrites. Mrs. Blaney, the childless wife of a middle class doctor, showed her magnanimous belief in the goodness of man, in her answer to her own question as to who should be trusted, by promptly replying, "Nobody."

She, like Mrs. Bulsom-Porter, was a great aid to parish gossip. She was stern in her sense of duty toward others. When William Sheldrake and Sarah Piper were under discussion she gloatingly suggested, "We mustn't shirk our duty merely because it is shocking and disagreeable."

Jones showed how utterly Mrs. Blaney was lacking in a true sense of values. He caused a feeling of amused pity as she was observed eavesdropping and as she looked greedily into Rachel Neve's luggage. He showed how uncharitable she was; she wanted the Linnels not to keep Rachel at their home when she was ill. She advised Mrs. Linnel to go through every piece of Rachel's belongings thoroughly and secretively, a thing which Mrs. Linnel scorned to do. He portrayed Mrs. Blaney as a woman of so little imagination and so little wealth of interest in her own life, and so little constructive activity that, being of an innately inquisitive nature, she grew to be the false, empty, harsh person that was observed in this play. The worst tragedy in such instances was that the individual could not get an inkling of the truth so far as her own cheapness was concerned, and would have been

shocked and grieved had anyone intimated such a thing to her. Mr. Wilmore, mentioned heretofore, was a concrete example of the two codes Lady Eastney described in Mrs. Dane's Defense, the one he and his family followed, and the one by which he would have reformed society.

Most of Jones' reformers did not arouse a sense of contempt, but engendered a chagrined amusement of half-pity, half-displeasure, in that they were so typical of people met everywhere that the playgoers felt Jones' satire reaching over to themselves and their weaknesses and humors.

Jones wrote excellent social comedy in which he strove to correct social weaknesses by ridicule and laughter, pleasantly satirizing the follies of the time. It is deadening to the enjoyment of a comedy to point out the author's purpose. But Jones' satirical comedies had serious aims, for the most part.

However, Jones in Dolly Reforming Herself, made exceedingly amusing and light entertainment of the little tasks the self-reformers imposed upon themselves. He showed that reforming oneself was perhaps the most futile attempt at reformation at all. ?

Upon hearing remarks about a New Year's religious service, Matt Barron said, "I wonder what precise difference this rousing sermon will make in the conduct of any person who heard it."

He was immediately told by Harry Telfer, Dolly's husband, that he and Dolly had already planned to cure themselves of certain weaknesses, he of his little selfish habits, such as temper, and Dolly of her weakness to run up bills. Dolly's first speech in the play was an expression of dismay over bills, and ironically enough, after a year's endeavor at self-improvement, the last scene of the play was a controversy over bills.

In fact this comedy poked fun at the customary New Year's resolutions by the erring individual to improve himself by altering his character. The play had a lighter, more frivolous tone throughout than many of Jones' mature plays. It gave a good-natured ironic account of four persons who pledged to reform themselves of one or more faults. Dolly Reforming Herself did not have a serious purpose of uplifting. It merely showed how empty most resolutions to turn a page and keep it turned really are, especially, when the only incentive has been inspired by high-flown words of an emotional nature. This play showed the weakness of the unwillingness of human nature to force itself into a new mold, when the old habits have been so well formed.

That Jones' scenes in these plays were seldom apart from the boudoir or drawing room labeled these plays as comedies of manners. For example, in Dolly Reforming Herself, the scenes throughout were in the Telford's drawing room. Matt Barron enjoyed himself at the others' expense. When Lucas Wentworth, his nephew, quite the gay Lothario among the women, said he was not going to "set up for a saint straight off" because he was afraid he could not make it work, Matt agreed that that was also all that held him back from attempting to reform

himself. Renie, the wife of Professor Sturgess, had declared that the wonderful sermon had greatly moved her, but when Reverend Pilcher called upon the Telfers and found her reading a French novel, her discomfiture was amusing.

Not one of the New Year resolvers was genuinely sincere even with himself; each one kept certain privileges in reserve for his pet sin. Dolly had resolved to be upright and careful about her bills, yet she began her period of reformation by trying to argue herself and all her family into believing that she had already paid certain bills. Harry's temper got the best of him time and again when he was going over Dolly's bills with her, so that he constantly was having to put money into the box, provided by Pilcher for the purpose of fines upon themselves when they violated their resolutions.

The scene wherein the bills were studied by both Harry and Dolly, not only satirized resolutions but the woman's wiles, as well, that Dolly employed in trying to keep her husband mollified. She ran the whole gamut of the way of a 'maid with a man' but none of her efforts kept the waters oiled and Matt Barron had to be called on the scene as arbiter, an unenviable task in that situation, for when he pleased one, he angered the other.

The ones Dolly took more pleasure in reforming than in reforming herself, were Renie and Lucas, who were about to have an affair at Dolly's house. Dolly's dislike of the possibility of the affair was heightened no little because her own name might be mentioned in it. She forced her father to upbraid

Lucas, in which scene Matt forgot his errand and enjoyed recounting to Lucas some of his own escapades. Poor Matt was not of the reforming timbre; he even suggested to Harry that he not ever try to change any of his habits after he had attained the age of fifty.

Lucas' attachment for Renie was not so chivalrous nor so deep as Renie imagined. When Matt asked him why he was making love to her, he replied that she was a "jolly good-looking woman" to which Matt answered, "If you aren't in love with her, you'll most likely do some silly jackass thing that will knock your career in the head."

Matt made no scruples. He had no reforming, as such, to do, but it made a great deal of difference to him if a scandal threatened or a man's career were in imminent danger. He gave practical, unemotional, worldly advice.

So careful was Dolly that she should not have any discrepancies within her doors, that she refused to give her cousin Lucas lodging for the night because Renie was under the same roof. Renie's husband was present, but was so full of his theories about gray matter that he couldn't see what was the matter with life and his wife.

After Dolly and Harry's quarrel scene which was one of the most amusing to be found in Jones' plays, Matt shrugged his shoulders and said, "We're making a splendid start for the New Year."

A year later when Matt, who had promised a sovereign each

for the reformers who reformed themselves, had the company for a reckoning, Dolly declared that she had curbed her extravagance and had not bills of "any importance.". Harry, however, admitted that he had made a mess of taming his temper, but Lucas and Renie both vowed that they had improved themselves. Three sovereigns were collected for the parish blanket fund box by these statements, three false sovereigns. Dolly, Lucas, and Renie, far from having cured themselves of any bad habits, had added another sin to their lists in their lies. Jones stripped them of their pretenses and held each one up to ridicule as he showed wherein each had failed.

Jones did have his characters saved from failure time and again, but the saving was done by another person whose emotions were not deeply involved. In the last and highly improbable act of The Masqueraders, Jones again laboriously kept everything within the limits of society's rules, by the use of Helen, Dulcie's sister. Helen was the only woman raisonneur in Jones' later plays. If not a reformer, Helen was a restraining influence that stopped the sacrifice of career and reputation to the God of love.

When David, in order to remain with Dulcie, had refused to go on his African expedition, with the excuse that he had changed his mind, Helen told him:

Yes, but you are a soldier. We are all soldiers on this earth, bound to be loyal to everyone of our comrades, bound to obey the great rules of life whether they are easy or hard. Yes, and all the more bound when they are hard, when they may cost us our very life.¹⁵

15 The Masqueraders, Act IV. (Vol. II, p. 266) .

She further argued to him to keep Dulcie pure for her child and sent him to look at the sleeping baby; he came back philosophic and heroic, willing to sacrifice his happiness to duty saying, "If we are sacrificing ourselves for a shadow, we are only doing what earth's best creatures have done before us. If duty is reality, we have done right."

Jones' outlook in this play was modern or liberal until the last scene, when he returned with his conservatism through his mouthpiece of reform. However, Jones wrote this play during the time when censorship was yet keen in England. He felt that rules should be for the benefit of the majority of people, felt that each member of society had to be always attentive to his social surroundings and model his actions to coincide with those of his environment. He satirized many of the weaknesses of the social conventions, but insisted that unless an individual did not mind, at least, a social snubbing, he had to abide by the dictations of Mrs. Grundy. Jones dealt frankly with the themes of his own society and through satirical comedy exploited many of its major and minor fallacies. Jones had a good sense of comedy and an analytic mind, which enabled him to present both sides of a question. He lacked, however, objectivity to any great extent, and his plays have always the stamp of his personality and opinions, especially through his raisonneurs. He, then was intolerant toward sudden reform; he believed in gradual changes as the result of an enlightened public, and he used his plays indirectly to promote his beliefs.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Henry Arthur Jones, realist, satirist, romanticist, teacher, essayist, lecturer, and writer of social comedy, yet not belonging entirely to any one of these separate types, is an interesting man to study, if not an easy one to analyze. He came at a period in the English drama that was itself poorly defined and irregularly classified. A period of transition is never easy to designate. Jones was a fore-runner rather than a follower of trends in the English drama in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He was highly instrumental in reviving sincerity in the drama and in making of it a serious entertainment and an alliance of art and the stage. In comparison to the wealth of material on men who are widely read and more widely known, the amount of critical material on Jones is indeed limited.

Jones was an excellent story-teller, who amused his audiences even while he laughed at weaknesses common to them all. An example of this ability was seen in his turning with his conservative, satirical drama to a contemplation of marriage as an institution. Jones maintained in these dramas: The Case Rebellious Susan, Mrs. Dane's Defense, The Hypocrites, The Masqueraders, The Liars, and The Divine Gift, that though marriage had many faults, or rather, was worked by faulty people, a close adherence to its rules was always the wisest procedure.

Jones had little sympathy for the double standards of marriage for men and women. He was scornful of two sets of rules

for society, one for the aristocracy and one for the lower classes. He ridiculed the idea that anything sanctioned by law must be a criterion for conduct. He portrayed the futility of trying to overcome one's earlier sin against society. He always pointed out the danger of exalting the individual's freedom over society's traditions, and showed that a life built upon the foundations of duplicity and lies could not withstand the penetrating glances of truth.

Jones' raisonneurs continually advised their friends on a sane course of conduct, especially if reputations or careers were at stake. He thoroughly believed in marriage, but he wanted to depict some of the injustices of its practices. He did not advocate sudden changes, believing that a gradual enlightenment of the public would result in its subsequent improvement.

In his belief that the field of the drama was illimitable and that dramatists should have a free atmosphere to work in, Jones felt it his right to portray religion and its adherents as he saw fit. He scorned the common attitude that religion and life were things apart. He observed that though religion came from a divine source, the man who willed to follow it was human and humanly weak. He wished to show up discordancies between what a man professed to believe and in what he practiced.

Mrs. Dane's Defense, The Hypocrites, and The Crusaders gave instances of narrowness, formalism, awe of the aristocracy, and the compromising attitudes of clergymen. But Judah, Michael and His Lost Angel, and The Crusaders with the Reverend Edgar Linnell

gave examples of sincere churchmen.

Jones portrayed life as he saw it. If it required satire of religion, he employed that, or if it meant unpopularity for him and his plays, he still used his art as an interpretation of life. However, he declared that he was surprised to read an article in a current newspaper that called him a realist. He was opposed to realism as such, and argued it to be unreasonable to expect to see life in its entirety on the stage. He advocated that those who wanted to see a real "slice" of life go onto the streets, or observe their next-door neighbors. He wanted to show truths, but he had little regard to authenticity of facts. In reading Jones, one is never shocked or depressed. There are few, if any, sordid details to be found in his plays. In comparison with such a play, for example, as Gorki's The Lower Depths, his plays are fairy tales. His plays were not so gripping but neither were they so gruesome and ugly as many of those of the true realists. In fact, he said there was no excuse for ugliness on the stage unless it disclosed an inner beauty. He held to this theory of his in his plays.

In his reformers, Jones ridiculed the sanctimonious individual who had two sets of rules, one for himself and one for others. He had absolutely no use whatsoever for the Pharisaic attitude of an individual or nation. Jones did not believe in a sudden upheaval of change or reform. He was a conservative as the English, generally speaking, have always been. He realized that his attempts to aid the status of the theatre would probably be slow in showing results. Jones felt that plays should

rouse and penetrate and disturb in their presentations of any serious problem of life. These things he attempted to do in his plays of reformers, The Crusaders, Dolly Reforming Herself, Mrs. Dane's Defense, The Divine Gift, The Hypocrites, The Masqueraders, and The Middleman.

Mr. Percy Allen said that Jones was always 'a shrewd observer rather than a deep philosopher.' In point of fact, he did not cut so deeply yet within his limitations he has claims to be a pioneer.¹

In a letter to Mr. Hamilton, Jones said:

I think that my plays, taken as a whole, will give a truthful picture of English life and character from the year 1885 to 1915. I have drawn more English types in these years than any other English dramatist. And I have never put any character into a play without first realizing it fully.²

In the preceding pages there has been no intention to prove Jones a finished dramatist. The modern drama of power and high literary value was yet to come. Before the finished product could be evolved, however, there had to be prophets of a new achievement, and skillful craftsmen in the theatre, who dealt frankly with the themes of society in their own time; and Jones with his satire of institutions, reform, and religion in society expressed conservatively by means of his intelligent raisonneurs, may be seen to be such a prophet.

1 Dictionary of National Biography 1922-1930, Edited by R. H. Weaver, Oxford University Press, London, Humphrey Milford, 1930, p. 461.

2 Representative Plays by Henry Arthur Jones (Vol. IV, Intro., p. XX).

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