

CHAPTER IXCONCLUSION

As a social dramatist Galsworthy essayed to produce a new kind of drama, renascent English drama as it was called by him. What is the renascent drama? "It is not renascent because this or that man is writing," explained Galsworthy, "But because of a new spirit. A spirit that is no doubt in part the gradual outcome of the impact on our home-grown art, of Russian, French, and Scandinavian influences, but which in the main rises from an awakened humanity in the conscience of our time."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, in his dramas we find 'stuff' of actual life from which certain problems and conflicts rise or else, are predicted to rise. The problems in his plays are stated very plainly. One of the dominant problems which is most often treated as the main theme of his plays is the class problem. More than a half of his plays deal with the conflict between people of different classes or different races, the most remarkable examples of such being Strife, The Eldest Son, The Skin Game, Loyalties, and Windows. Galsworthy was also very much concerned with injustice, especially as caused by the defects of the English law. These were often overlooked in his time and are examined in some of his plays such as The Silver Box, Justice, The Fugitive, and Escape. There was injustice too in the different treatment meted out to poor and rich, an injustice which could, Galsworthy saw, lead to revolution. In The Foundations he dealt with the problem of the poor people whose extreme poverty causes them to oppose the rich and rise in arms against them. In addition to this, war itself became one of Galsworthy's chief concerns, and the problems which rise from it constantly emerge in such plays as The Mob, The Forest, The Little Man, Defeat, and The Sun.

Galsworthy's aim in presenting his social dramas was "to create such an illusion of actual life passing on the stage as to compel the spectator to pass through an experience of his own, to think, and talk, and move with the people he sees thinking, talking, and moving in front of him."<sup>2</sup>

In order to present "Life as it is lived",<sup>3</sup> Galsworthy seldom exaggerated

1. Galsworthy : Candelabra (1932), p. 10

2. Galsworthy : Candelabra (1932), p. 11

3. Marrot, p. 246

and always kept his plays close to stark reality. That is why the problems in them were often left unsolved because that was really the way of life. Galsworthy's view of life is "that of a perpetual conflict between opposing principles."<sup>1</sup> And this conflict will come to a certain point of reconciliation which is mysterious and is seldom appreciated by us.

Galsworthy treated his themes with the utmost seriousness. Like Ibsen his style is rather gloomy, and the laughter in his plays is only spasmodic. In Galsworthy's earlier plays such as The Silver Box and Strife, Ibsen's influence is quite distinctive, for instance, in the extreme carefulness over details, and in the sincerity and seriousness of purpose. But later on, Galsworthy developed his own technique though the seriousness in his later plays still remains, laughter comes more often (as in A Bit O' Love, The Foundations, and A Family Man).

Galsworthy never stopped experimenting with new techniques. In the post-war phase of his development, he found himself very popular after the productions of The Skin Game and Loyalties. The success of these two plays indicated that, "It is possible, .... for plays to succeed with that public in spite of a definitely ethical content; but only if the sugar of dramatic incident sufficiently thickly 'encases' the ideological pill."<sup>2</sup>

Galsworthy even made a fresh start towards the end of his dramatic career. In his last three plays, Escape, Exiled and The Roof, he employed a new episodic style which proved a great success especially in Escape. There is little moral teaching behind these plays especially Escape and The Roof in comparison with Galsworthy's earlier plays. They are meant for entertainment rather than anything else, and sentimentality seems to dominate their atmosphere.

In writing plays, Galsworthy believed that the portrayal of the characters is the most important thing. "Take care of character; action and dialogue will take care of themselves!"<sup>3</sup> And "The dramatist who hangs his characters to his plot, instead of hanging his plot to his characters, is guilty of cardinal sin."<sup>4</sup> Galsworthy's characters, as we have seen, are by no means outstanding people. They are just ordinary

1. Ibid, p.p. 330, 331

2. Ibid, p. 517

3. Galsworthy: Candelabra (1932), p. 8

4. Ibid, p. 7

people who must follow the wheel of society whichever way it goes, and they come into conflict with one another mainly because of the intolerable ~~able~~ rules of society; Galsworthy believed that :- "If we all understood ~~stood~~ and tolerated each other a little more than we do the world would be a happier place to live in." <sup>1</sup> Let us hope that the wish of this great man, who devoted his whole life and all that belonged to him to humanity, may come true !

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1. Marrot, p. 263