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DOMERASKI, REGINA

A WORLD DIVIDED: THE PLAYS OF HENRY ARTHUR JONES

City University of New York

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A WORLD DIVIDED: THE PLAYS OF HENRY ARTHUR JONES

by

REGINA DOMERASKI

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
The City University of New York

1980

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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The City University of New York

Introduction

Henry Arthur Jones, one of the most successful playwrights of the late Victorian and early Edwardian theater, was fond of quoting Oscar Wilde's three rules for playwriting: "The first rule is not to write like Henry Arthur Jones, the second and third rules are the same!"¹ Jones's fatal flaw, of course, was that he was earnest. He hated liars, hypocrites and moral cowards. He hated the close-mindedness of the puritan mentality and the prudery of "the philistine," a term he borrowed from Matthew Arnold to describe the smug and self-righteous members of the British Middle Class. He also despised the affluent boredom of the upper classes and the artificial barriers inherent in their rigid social code with its double standard and craving for scandal. On the other hand, Jones loved truth, honesty and openness. He himself was a passionate idealist whom necessity forced to face the real world. A farm boy with little formal education, he worked first as a clerk and then as a commercial traveler. Armed only with ambition and a passionate love for both literature and the theater, he attempted with evangelical zeal to raise the artistic standards on the stage of his day. Because he was the first New Dramatist, he had to face the harsh realities of the Victorian theater more directly than any of his successors. Willing to do battle with the sterile bombast on the stage in the Eighties, he was able to interest a young, better educated and more serious audience in the theater, and this encouraged original minds like Shaw to seize the medium as a platform for their ideas. Jones, through his controversial early plays, made the theater an interesting and exciting

place to be. The insight in his writings on the drama during this period is often remarkable, and he eventually became an excellent dramatic craftsman, a fact particularly discernible in the best comedies of his mature years. But as he helped to demolish the barriers holding back the tide of new ideas and feelings which had built up in England throughout the nineteenth century but which had not been permitted a place upon the stage, he himself had trouble staying afloat as the new wave of radical ideas surged into the British theater, carrying with it feminism, socialism and compulsory education. A fundamental rift occurred between him and one of his closest friends, George Bernard Shaw, on political and social issues. Jones continued to believe that every man was responsible for his own conduct and that society was a natural outgrowth of man's behavior. He could not accept the kind of radical reform that Shaw and the Fabians stood for even though Jones remained a Socialist until after the First World War. Ironically, he became the defender of what he came to consider the lesser of two evils, the status quo. He also wrote his best plays, The Manoeuvres of Jane, Dolly Reforming Herself and Mary Goes First, in the style of Oscar Wilde--without earnestness.

Jones was born the son of a farmer in Grandborough, Buckinghamshire, on September 20, 1851, the eldest of five sons.² His parents' marriage was far from ideal. His father was hard-working, puritanical and strict, and obviously disappointed in his ailing wife, a neurotic and deeply religious woman who took large doses of laudanum. It seems that Jones's father talked about sending his precocious son to Oxford but in reality drew him out of school abruptly at the age of twelve and sent him off to his uncle's shop in Ramsgate to earn

his living. For the next sixteen years, Jones held a variety of jobs. He worked as a clerk in a store and in a warehouse and finally as a commercial traveler because he needed money to get married. After 1879 Jones supported himself, his father, his wife and eventually six children by his writing alone.

Jones saw his first play in London when he was eighteen and the experience changed his life. William Lyon Phelps speculates that this one performance had the same effect as a powerful religious conversion on the young man who had been brought up in a strict Protestant Evangelical faith where the theater and most other forms of entertainment were considered wicked:

Perhaps as a natural result of this repression, he became wildly enthusiastic about the art of the drama and the theatre, and the fervour of his father's religious faith survived in the son in the form of a passionate defence of the stage and the upholding of all that is lofty and noble in the drama.³

Jones became obsessed with the theater and fascinated with the "mechanism" of playwriting. His work as a "bagman" turned out to be a blessing in disguise. It gave him money and independence and the leisure to read widely and to indulge his taste for the theater on his many business trips. Most important of all, it gave him the means to finance several productions of his own early plays in provincial theaters. Soon after this small start, Jones began to work seriously in the theater and he gave up his business connections. Thereafter his playwriting career falls into four major periods: 1878-88, when he worked mainly as a writer of melodrama; 1889-96, when he had his greatest influence in the theater; 1896-1906, when he fell into a period of disillusion; and 1907-19, when he suffered

from ill health, both physical and mental, but when he did his best mature work.

During the first ten years of his career, Jones spent most of his time writing melodrama to suit the actor-manager Wilson Barrett. Together with an associate of Barrett's named Henry Herman, the three men wrote one of the most popular melodramas of its time, The Silver King (1882). The success of the piece eased some of the financial pressure on Jones, now a husband and father, and he gained the attention of a serious public when Matthew Arnold praised the play in the pages of the Pall Mall Gazette. Jones struck out on his own only once during this period with Saints and Sinners (1884), a play whose portrait of greed and hypocrisy in a country town caused so much controversy that no London manager would look at his plays for years. More offensive to us is a play Jones co-authored with Henry Herman, also in 1884, called Breaking a Butterfly, an adaptation of Ibsen's A Doll's House. Suffice it to say that in the Jones-Herman version the "miracle" which Nora Helmer hopes for so desperately, that her "heroic" husband will take the blame for her thoughtless forgery upon himself, actually happens. Although Jones reversed himself completely in his opinion of Ibsen later in his life, this "adaptation" and his disparaging remarks about the Norwegian dramatist hurt him very much with the intellectual community.

Jones finally became famous in his own right in 1889 with two plays about the world he knew best--the business world. Wealth and The Middleman, along with Judah (1890), mark the beginning of his most influential period as a dramatist, which, however, culminated in 1896 with the disastrous production of Michael and His Lost Angel.

During these years, Jones was a champion of artistic freedom, and his plays were often praised by Shaw, then the drama critic of the Saturday Review. Jones's friendship with Shaw endured throughout the Nineties and into the new century. He was also a friend of Arthur Wing Pinero and William Archer, although Jones and Archer had a serious falling out over Archer's review of Jones's verse-tragedy The Tempter in 1893. During this period Jones crusaded tirelessly in plays, in critical articles and in public lectures for higher standards both in the writing and the performance of plays.

In the Nineties, Jones's output was prolific. In seven years, he produced ten full-length plays and two tragedies, The Tempter (1893), a four act play in verse, and Grace Mary (1895), a one act play completely in the Cornish dialect. Some of these plays were enormous theatrical successes, such as The Dancing Girl (1891), The Masqueraders (1894) and The Case of Rebellious Susan (1894). Others like The Crusaders (1891), for which William Morris designed the scenery, The Triumph of the Philistines (1895) and Michael and His Lost Angel (1896) were dismal failures. Both the successes and failures were produced by some of the most famous actor-managers of the day: Beerbohm Tree, E. S. Willard, Charles Wyndham, George Alexander and Johnston Forbes-Robertson. Jones was quarrelsome and exacting at rehearsals, and his home life was chaotic. With all these pressures, it is no wonder that his failure with Michael and His Lost Angel, the play he always considered his best, crushed his spirit.

Jones's third period was one of disillusionment and cynicism. Between 1896 and 1900, the playwright regained some of his popularity by retailoring old material for Charles Wyndham, upon whom he was now

as dependent for production of his plays as he once was on Wilson Barrett. Together they were enormously successful with The Liars (1897) and Mrs. Dane's Defence (1900), but it soon became apparent that Jones was both restless and out of step with the theater of the new century. After 1900, Jones's artistic personality grew increasingly two-sided. On the one hand, he wrote serious, rigidly moral and sometimes cynical plays while, on the other, he wrote genial, tolerant, laughing comedies with a fairy-tale quality reminiscent of J. M. Barrie. In 1904, the pressure upon him to choose sides increased, and that pressure was both personal and professional. His children were unruly and defiant. In 1904, his youngest and favorite daughter Doris eloped at the age of sixteen. Soon afterwards one of his older, married daughters began an open affair with Somerset Maugham. Jones began to write plays centering on the relationships of parents and children, and for the first time in more than fifteen years, he could not get his plays produced. Moreover, 1904 was the year when Shaw enjoyed his enormous success at the Court Theatre. With the failure of The Heroic Stubbs (1906), a play written especially for the popular comedian James Welch, Jones began a curious period. He spent a good part of his time in America, where he was lionized at American universities. Yet his career at home and abroad continued to be checkered with both successes and failures. Seemingly drained both physically and mentally, he was still able to pen some of his best plays--too late to be noticed amidst the new wave of plays by Shaw, Galsworthy, Maugham and others.

Between 1906 and 1912, Jones wrote twelve new plays, an incredible number for a man in poor health who had been writing almost

constantly for more than twenty-five years. Even after his health broke down completely in 1912 and he underwent cancer surgery in England, he recovered and wrote his best play, a feather-light satire with a biting edge called Mary Goes First (1913). He did not write his last play until 1919, after which he devoted most of his time to thinking and writing on political and social issues, determined to keep the ideas of his once close friends, H. G. Wells and Bernard Shaw, from gaining too strong a foothold in England. He died in 1929.

Neither Jones's critical reputation nor the quality of his work was ever consistent. Shaw described Jones's roller-coaster qualities aptly in a letter of advice to Ada Rehan in 1904:

What are the objections to Jones? If you feel that he could fit you with a part, there is only one objection; and that is that you are aiming at a certainty; and Jones, though perhaps on the whole the most successful dramatist of his class, is a hit-or-miss author, sometimes succeeding tremendously, sometimes failing openly and disastrously, especially when he does his best or his worst.⁴

Nonetheless, most modern critics would agree with Richard Cordell that to Jones "belongs a generous share of the credit for restoring the drama in England to its rightful position as a civilized and civilizing art."⁵ A few years earlier, Clayton Hamilton put this view even more bluntly. Jones and Pinero, he said, "created the modern English drama out of nothing."⁶ But aside from the almost universal recognition of his historical importance, Jones has been the victim of a long history of facile invective by those critics who have not studied his work in depth. Allardyce Nicoll, for example, sees Jones as ruined "by the narrowness of his outlook and the pettiness of his nature."⁷ Others have found Jones the victim of a

"creeping paralysis" of viewpoint⁸ and a "chronic timidity."⁹ Maurice Valency in his recent book on Shaw, The Cart and the Trumpet, has remarked "unhappily" that Jones "had neither the imagination nor the courage to make a new departure in the drama."¹⁰ Indeed Shaw's is a hard act to follow but the fact is that Jones did not follow Shaw but preceded him. Too often critics view Jones solely from a modern perspective and not from within the context of his own day. They also do not see his work as a whole and usually emphasize a few of his most famous plays, which often reflect the popular taste of the time or the demands of an actor-manager rather than Jones's own point of view. Meanwhile they ignore the plays which were ruthlessly attacked by his contemporary critics or which were written when Jones was no longer a controversial playwright. They emphasize The Dancing Girl rather than The Crusaders, The Liars rather than The Triumph of the Philistines or The Manoeuvres of Jane. They dwell on Mrs. Dane's Defence instead of Jones's best plays Dolly Reforming Herself and Mary Goes First. They also take Jones's opinion of his own work at face value and emphasize his serious plays like Michael and His Lost Angel, forgetting that a dramatist is often not the best judge of his own work. Further, they fail to see him as part of the theater within which he had to work and as a man who had to live under constant pressure from both liberal and conservative critics, the theatrical establishment, the public, his family and his own conscience.

A fair hearing for Jones has been difficult to obtain, first of all, because of the modern prejudice against the Victorian theater in which he has his roots and where he enjoyed his earliest successes. Dismissed until recently in the same way as most serious critics

dismiss television sit-coms, mid-nineteenth-century theater was both the ground on which Jones and his contemporaries built and the establishment against which they rebelled.

Objectivity has also been difficult to attain because of many of the conservative political and social attitudes Jones held to at the end of his life. Although he has always been considered one of the most English of all British playwrights and a disciple of Morris, Arnold, Carlyle and Ruskin, Jones is philosophically closer to the French tradition of Skeptical Humanism. He may have studied at length the writings of the major Victorian thinkers and read Herbert Spencer in his youth, but it is to Voltaire, Montaigne, Rabelais and, in his own day, Anatole France that he finally bears the closest resemblance. When confronted with radical change like that suggested by Shaw and Wells, he was skeptical and lashed out at them, challenging their ideas. To the modern mind, this seems foolish and reactionary. From a more sympathetic point of view, this is caution and genuine concern for those who might be hurt by radical change. When we read plays like The Ogre, in which Jones gives the male view of the New Woman, and The Pacifists, in which Jones makes a persuasive case for fighting force with force, we can see that he had solid arguments on his side.

An objective view of Jones and his career has also been difficult for technical reasons. After a long search, I have been able to uncover the texts of about 70 complete plays and several fragments. Many of Jones's earliest plays, those produced between 1878 and 1889, were believed lost by the playwright himself, but they have been preserved, ironically enough, by his old adversary the Lord Chamber-

lain in the files now available at the British Library. From 1889 through 1902, most of Jones's plays were either privately printed or published, but after 1902, a fairly large number of Jones's plays went both unproduced and unpublished. These have become available to scholars through a substantial gift of papers, memorabilia and autograph manuscripts to the Enthoven Theatre Collection, temporarily housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, by Jones's granddaughter, Mrs. Dorinda Maxse. A few plays exist only in private collections, and these too have been made available to me through the help of Jones's family, most notably through the kindness of Mrs. Michael Albery. To all these, both institutions and private individuals, I owe a debt.

The second technical problem in studying Jones is the lack of a modern biography. Jones's "official" biography was written by his own daughter, Doris Arthur Jones (Mrs. Thorne). Although she has made an important first step in helping future generations understand her father and his age, her book is more useful for personal details than for a rigorous and critical approach. Still, Mrs. Thorne sticks to the facts for the most part, and her contribution is invaluable. To remedy the lack of a modern biography, I have had to supplement my knowledge of Jones's life by examining major holdings of his correspondence at the Enthoven Collection, the University of Chicago, the University of Leeds, the University of London and the British Library. My gratitude to these institutions for their generous help and gracious hospitality.

The third and largest technical problem in studying Jones is the lack of modern critical treatments of the nineteenth-century stage

and of Jones's plays in particular. The first serious work on Jones was done by Clayton Hamilton in the Preface and Introductions to the "representative plays" he collected and which were published in 1925. The only critical work on Jones to appear in print was Henry Arthur Jones and the Modern Drama by Richard Cordell in 1932. A substantial work on Jones was being prepared by Aubrey Ward Goodenough at the time of his death, but today Professor Goodenough's work is available only from Iowa University in the form of a dissertation. Jones himself read the dissertation, Henry Arthur Jones: A Study in Dramatic Compromise (1920), and commented upon it in detail. Jones's "Notes" are in autograph manuscript at the Enthoven. There is also a published dissertation in German, Henry Arthur Jones's Dramen by Hans Teichmann (1913), which Jones read and which Goodenough comments upon at length, and a Masters' thesis completed with the help of Doris Arthur Jones, Henry Arthur Jones and the Dramatic Renaissance in England by F. Marjorie Northend at the University of London in 1940. Aside from these few works and some scattered articles at the time of Jones's death and thereafter, Jones and his plays have been almost completely neglected.

Finally, I wish to express my thanks to Professor Morton N. Cohen of the City University of New York for his patient and sound advice while I was writing this dissertation and to my family for their unflinching and generous support.

Notes

Introduction

¹ Doris Arthur Jones, The Life and Letters of Henry Arthur Jones (London: Victor Gollancz, 1930), p. 187. Hereafter cited as Thorne.

² Unless otherwise noted, all biographical information taken from Thorne.

³ "Henry Arthur Jones," The Yale University Library Gazette, 4, No. 2 (1929), 21.

⁴ Collected Letters 1898-1910, ed. Dan H. Laurence (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1972), p. 450.

⁵ Henry Arthur Jones and the Modern Drama (New York: Ray Long and Richard R. Smith, 1932), p. 253.

⁶ "Henry Arthur Jones Reconsidered," Theatre Guild Magazine, 8 (December 1930), 48.

⁷ A History of English Drama 1660-1900 (Cambridge: Univ Press, 1959), V, 166.

⁸ George Rowell, The Victorian Theatre (New York: Oxford Univ Press, 1956), p. 125.

⁹ Gerald Weales, Religion in Modern English Drama (Philadelphia: Univ of Pennsylvania Press, 1961), p. 11.

¹⁰ (New York: Oxford Univ Press, 1973), p. 57.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	iv-xv
I. Apprenticeship and First Successes 1878-88.....	1-46
II. Jones and the Renascence of the English Drama 1889-96.....	47-98
III. Disillusion 1896-1906.....	99-150
IV. Maturity 1907-19.....	151-196
Conclusion.....	197-199
Bibliography.....	200-213

Chapter I

Apprenticeship and First Successes

1878-88

Coming to grips with the plays of Henry Arthur Jones is complicated by the fact that Jones grew up and developed as a playwright during one of the fastest-changing periods in English dramatic history. He learned his craft in the harsh school of Victorian melodrama between 1879 and 1888, and it is a tribute to his vitality that, in spite of the rough treatment he got, he was able to make the theater interesting enough to attract such talents as Oscar Wilde and George Bernard Shaw to serious playwriting. We must also speculate about whether or not that quintessential professional, Arthur Wing Pinero, would have taken the time off to write The Second Mrs. Tanqueray had Jones not proven with plays like Saints and Sinners, Wealth, The Middleman and Judah that there was an audience for serious drama in the nineteenth-century theater. Indeed, one of Jones's greatest strengths was that he came to the theater as an amateur and an outsider armed only with ambition, high ideals and an enormous capacity for hard work. Anyone but a Don Quixote would have despaired after one realistic look at the slovenly and empty-headed monster that was the mid-nineteenth-century English stage with its jaded and sensation-loving devotees.

Jones himself was always an artist with the highest ideals, yet he often chose to write plays which appealed to a popular audience. Certainly no playwright could have been successful in 1882, 1897, 1908 and 1923 as Jones was, unless he was an experienced man of the theater, and clearly he could not have failed as dismally in 1891,

1896 and 1911 as Jones did, unless he was willing to go against the popular ideas of his day.¹ First and foremost, Jones's plays reflect change: his world and its changing values and his personal life and his own changing values. His purpose always was "to paint English life and character" and to draw "truthful" portraits. To his future biographers and critics, Jones gave the following advice:

As for anyone who concerns himself to find a compact body of criticism of life in my fifty or sixty plays, I intreat him not to bother himself about it, anymore than I bothered myself about it when I was writing them. The same difficulty will present itself to him if he studies the works of Providence. Apparently in those also there is an alarming confusion of aim. Let us hope it can all be reconciled by the Author.²

Reading Jones's seventy odd surviving plays from the first to the last is like looking through an album of drawings sketched over a period of forty years. We can see in them the changing styles, the clothes and furniture and other externals with which human beings decorate their lives, for Jones often gave detailed stage directions. We can also see the changing attitudes of the people in these drawings, the differences in the way they wear themselves and express themselves and their posturing. Finally we can see the attitude of the artist toward his subjects and their world. We see the locations in which he chooses to draw them and the kinds of people he chooses to sketch. In Jones's work, then, there is a changing public style but also a private view. There is a vision and a history both limited and expanded by the possibilities in the world around the playwright and by his own personality.

The influences on Jones's life and career were many. The first and one of the most important was the religious atmosphere which

surrounded him as a boy. First, his parents' religion: they were Baptist Dissenters, and writing many years later about his early life, he remembers two things in particular: "My upbringing was strictly Puritanical; dancing, card-playing and theatre-going were vices. Lying was a sin to be promptly punished by a severe thrashing."³ Jones easily gave up the sensual deprivations he suffered as a child, and he often indulged himself in the "vices" of card-playing and theatre-going and in one of his favorites, wine-drinking. He apparently felt no guilt about his sensuality as long as the indulgence was personal, even though he pursued all of these pleasures, especially the drama, with a kind of religious fervor. He certainly preached the gospel of theatre-going, in his prose writings and in his lectures about drama, with an evangelical zeal. But when any self-indulgence affected the rights of others, such as in the case of adultery and hypocrisy, Jones harbored a strict sense of morality and duty. He believed always that faithlessness in marriage and lying were inexcusable.

The second important influence in Jones's life was his parents' personalities. Jones was a country boy descended from a Welshman, William Jones, who settled in England in 1814 after marrying an Englishwoman, Sarah Hazzard. This man, Jones's paternal grandfather, had a successful career as a farmer, a baker and an innkeeper, and he eventually became the proprietor of the Three Pigeons Inn in Winslow, Buckinghamshire. Jones's father, Silvanus, was born in Winslow in 1827, took up farming and married Elizabeth Stephens, a farmer's daughter. They eventually settled in the village of Grandsborough near Winslow where Jones was born on September 20,

1851, the eldest of five sons. He loved the country; yet he found the life there narrow and confining and escaped through his imagination. After he left Winslow at the age of twelve, he returned there only for occasional visits to his family.

For a simple, if perhaps simplistic, explanation of Jones's almost obsessive use of strong father figures as symbols of respect and restraint and his penchant for highly emotional, "mystical" women in many of his plays, one need look no further than Jones's parents. Silvanus Jones was a "hard, unsympathetic" man who was apparently often intolerant of his neurotic wife who was "extraordinarily sensitive" and "highly strung" and who used large doses of laudanum throughout her life. This sickly, nervous woman, loved and respected by her sons, was also deeply religious. Her Baptist religion was said to be the "informing motive of her whole life." But regardless of his emotional attachment to her, her eldest and favorite son was never able to adopt her religious beliefs.

Jones's father has been described as "not at all lovable, in spite of a great sense of humour, but humour tinged very often with a streak of malice."⁴ Perhaps the cruelest joke he ever played on his eldest son was to dangle the prospect of Oxford in front of the intellectually precocious and hard-working boy just before he withdrew him from school at age twelve and sent him off to Ramsgate to earn his own living. Here he was employed and watched over by his father's brother who owned a draper's shop and who was the deacon of a Baptist chapel. For the first time, Jones became acquainted with that loathsome Victorian mixture of business and prudery labelled "philistine" by Matthew Arnold.

This abrupt change in lifestyle from country boy to clerk was an important step in Jones's development. To escape the boredom of his new life, he began to read widely and to write stories, essays and poems which he attempted to place in magazines. But perhaps, most important of all, his uncle gave him something to hate. He had loved his mother and at least respected his father's Puritan honesty and independence, but there must have been something of the hypocrite about his uncle because Jones freely admitted that he used the shop-owner at Ramsgate and a man named Bryant for whom he worked at Gravesend as the models for Hoggard and Prabble in Saints and Sinners⁵ and probably in a less heavyhanded way for Jorgan and Pote in The Triumph of the Philistines.

Having found no real emotional satisfaction in either the country life of his puritanical parents or the dull tediousness of business life, he was ripe for the powerful "conversion" which took place in 1869 when he came to work in London and saw Kate Bateman in Leah at the old Haymarket during his first visit to a theater. On that very day, the theater became his salvation. Anyone who doubts the suddenness and strength of his conversion need only read his short play written in the 1880s, The Deacon, in which a philistine turns rabid theater lover after just one performance of Romeo and Juliet.

Since Jones had already been writing for several years (he claimed to have written his first play at sixteen), he naturally became fascinated with the "mechanism" of playwriting and soon wrote his first long play, The Golden Calf, under the influence of Bulwer-Lytton's play Money. Jones also developed the usual passions

for a number of leading ladies, especially for Adelaide Neilson under whose window he would watch for hours. He might have continued to work at this low paying warehouse job and daydream, his ambitions going unfulfilled, had it not been for a chance meeting in 1870 with the seventeen-year-old Jane Eliza Seeley whose mother owned and managed a warehouse where artificial flowers were made. Jones was soon deeply in love, but, in order to marry, he would have to increase his income substantially. This he did by taking a job as a commercial traveler. His work as a "bagman," a grueling job but one through which hard work could be made to pay, had many advantages for the young Jones whose ultimate goal was to become a literary man. The large commissions he earned gave him self-respect and allowed him to marry and to save enough money so that he could quit his job and devote himself exclusively to writing in 1879, when the time seemed right. The long railway journeys gave him time to read widely, though uncritically, and the traveling allowed him to meet many different kinds of people throughout England. He also had the opportunity to attend the theater as often as he liked. He later wrote that during this time he attended the theater in one Northern manufacturing town or another "almost every night" for more than a year.⁶ Both his business sense and his experience in the pit made him realistic about what an English audience would actually pay to see, and he learned at first hand how boorishly the spectators could behave when they were offended or felt cheated.

Along with reading the classics and going to the theater, Jones began to take part in amateur theatricals. He first appeared as the Second Grave Digger in Hamlet during the winter of 1871 and

then as Bylis in H. T. Craven's Miriam's Crime and Cousin Joe in A Rough Diamond. For these last two performances, he received a good notice in the Era⁷ and a first kiss from his fiancée who apparently encouraged Jones's stage ambitions. But equally important was the fact that Jones's enthusiasm for these performances led him to take professional acting lessons from George Barrett⁸ and this involved him further in the legitimate theater.

Between 1870 and his marriage in 1875, Jones wrote one-act plays which were regularly rejected by managers. Discouraged, Jones spent his spare time for the next two years writing a novel which he considered a "masterpiece." Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately for the theater, Kegan Paul considered it merely a "good third-rate novel." Thus Jones turned to the theater once again, and in 1878 he finally found a way to have his plays produced in what he jokingly referred to later as "subsidized" productions. He submitted a play to Wybert Rousby, an actor-manager who had had a disastrous season in Exeter. Rousby agreed to play the lead in the piece when Jones, the successful commercial traveler, agreed to buy up half the seats in the dress circle, the highest priced seats in the house.⁹ The play, It's Only Round the Corner, was advertised as "expressly written for Wybert Rousby" and was played on December 11, 1878, as an after-piece to the Rousby Company's production of Uncle Tom's Cabin.¹⁰

Between 1878 and 1882, Jones wrote many short plays and several full length ones. With two exceptions, the short plays were produced either during these years or a short time later while most of the full length plays did not get onto the boards. All are the work

of a talented amateur slowly learning to be a professional playwright.

Jones had four short plays produced in 1878 and 1879, the last one in London. In them, Jones is obviously writing to suit the tastes of his day so that he can get his name known in theatrical circles. The person to whom he looked at this time and who would help him survive until he was ready to go off on his own was the actor-manager Wilson Barrett. For this help, Jones had to pay a high price. He had to write highly theatrical, melodramatic vehicles for Barrett. He also often wrote with Henry Herman, a master of the intricacies of the Victorian plot and a close associate of Barrett's.

The earliest of Jones's plays to be produced on the stage, It's Only Round the Corner, was written to please.¹¹ It is both pathetic and comic, and it is, predictably enough for a mid-Victorian comedy-melodrama, about the effects of alcoholism. Having lost his wife, the blind musician Michael Kinsman has taken to drink and thereby lost his job as a church organist. His sweet and innocent young daughter is secretly engaged to her father's professional successor, and during the play, her kind-hearted beau Frank Seaton gets the organist's job back for him and wins his consent to marry his daughter. Touched by this and by sentimental thoughts of his dead wife, the blind organist promises to teach his daughter's fiancé everything he knows and to give up drinking.

Noticeably more natural language than was usually found on the stage at this time is the only recognizable Jones trait in It's Only Round the Corner, and it is also to be found in Jones's next two plays, both, again, author-subsidized productions, Hearts of Oak and

Elopement.¹² We already see in these plays the two sides of Jones's personality which will be in conflict throughout his entire play-writing career, the serious and strictly moralistic side and the comic, indulgent and more tolerant side. Both plays are based on a domestic confrontation where parents must bring their wild children into line with their own sense of duty, but the mood of each play is completely different.¹³

Jones labelled Hearts of Oak a "domestic drama." When he uses the term drama, he generally means that he has written a play with a serious message and one with a simple plot and straightforward characterization. He further underlines his serious intent by using the following lines from Tennyson's In Memoriam as an epigraph on the title page of the printed edition:

How many a father have I seen,
A sober man, among his boys,
Whose youth was full of foolish noise,
Who wears his manhood hale and green;

And dare we to this fancy give,
That had the wild oat not been sown,
The soil, left barren, scarce had grown
The grain by which a man may live?¹⁴

Jones's anti-puritan theme then is that sensual indulgence in a young man is not only natural but necessary to his future well-being. Still marriage must be kept sacred.

Jones sets the backdrop for this theme with a trio of male characters, each of which represents a different generation: Grandfather Prettyjohn, Jehu Prettyjohn and Ned Devenish. Grandfather Prettyjohn is a cantankerous old man who acts as a kind of chorus throughout the play. He continually reminds the other characters that wild oats must be sown or the soil will be barren. Jehu, his

son, is the grain at present, and he is the instrument through which wild Ned Devenish will come of age. It is here that the parent-child relationship comes into the play. Ned is in love with Jehu's pretty daughter Kitty and when the father convinces his daughter to follow duty and not her own desires, Ned also falls into line. As a contrast to both Ned and Jehu, Jones provides the audience with an example of a man who never did sow any wild oats and so in middle age is a suitor still. This is Mr. Cornelius, or "old Copybook" as Ned calls him, whose formal and primly correct language labels him a fool throughout the play.

The plot of Hearts of Oak is neatly divided into two parts. The overbearing Mrs. Prettyjohn puts forth the situation for the audience in the very first words of the play:

Never, Jehu! Never, while my name's Susan Prettyjohn, will I stand by and see our Kitty married to that good-for-nothing Ned Devenish; and so I tell you, once and for all--and if you won't speak to him, and break off the engagement, I will, and this very night, too!¹⁵

Jehu is thus reminded of his responsibility at the start to insure his daughter's domestic happiness, and so the rest of Act I is taken up with Jehu convincing his daughter to break off with Ned. Her rebuff leads directly to her suitor's enlistment in the Army, and his leave-taking closes Act I. In Act II, he returns to his faithful Kitty tamed. The couple reconcile and are allowed to marry.

The simple plot and skillful management of characters combined with a natural dialogue should lead to an effective play, if not a very exciting one. It does not, however, because Jones apparently feels an overbearing responsibility to moralize. He must reward his hero with the financial security his Victorian audience would expect

to be granted to the elect. And so Jones forces into his plot an extraneous coincidence which will transfer funds from the proper but barren Cornelius to the rakish but fertile Ned. This contrived subplot pushes the events of the play beyond the bounds of credibility and distracts from the genuine emotional conflict between Jehu and his daughter and then Kitty and Ned.

Since in Elopement Jones does not overtly have to reward the characters who choose duty over their own desires, he is able to write a more naturally complex and less deliberate play. This second short piece dating from 1879 was first performed on August 19 at the Theatre Royal, Oxford, and is subtitled a "comedy." Thus Jones, in a more relaxed mood, can quote Molière's Les Précieuses ridicules as an epigraph:

Then follow adventures; rivals who thwart our mutual inclination, persecution of fathers, jealousy based upon false appearances, reproaches, despair, ELOPEMENT, and its consequences. It is thus things are carried on, and in a well-regulated love affair these rules cannot be dispensed with.¹⁶

What in Hearts of Oak is a serious conflict between generations becomes a tongue-in-cheek "persecution of fathers" in Elopement. Jones's plot also resembles the listing of adventures in the Molière quotation, a fast-paced succession of events. To match this less deliberate and more complicated story line, the characters are more frivolous types. In this play, the traits of Grandfather Prettyjohn and Mr. Cornelius have been combined in the person of Phil Raikes, a "middle-aged roué." He is both wise old man and rival suitor complete with learned vocabulary. But obviously he is less earnest and more sophisticated than "old Copybook." He does not yearn for the

heroine's hand, but his jealousy of the hero does provide comic plot complications. Jehu, the honest farmer-father, becomes witty, lazy innkeeper Jonathan Honywill who is married to a scold. The most interesting change is in the character of the heroine. No longer a naive country girl, Elopement's Maggie is an intelligent and energetic young lady who is well-educated and perfectly willing to go along with her lover's plans to escape the tyranny of her family. As her father knows, "she's [a] warm-hearted girl--you can lead her where you please--but you can't drive her!"¹⁷

Again the wife sets up the situation for the audience: "And there's our Maggie gallivanting all over the parish with young Godney, and everybody talking about it!"¹⁸ Mrs. Honywill's interference with the young couple in fact drives them to plan an elopement. Raikes overhears their plans and decides to stop them. His machinations, though, become superfluous when, showing his natural affection for her, her father unknowingly talks her out of her plans. Still Raikes's plot twists and turns to its comic conclusion and her father Jonathan finally consents to a marriage between Maggie and young Fritz. It is only then that Jones "blesses" the union by having Fritz's brewer-father die so that he can come into a fortune and live properly ever after. When Jones encumbers his play in Hearts of Oak with an incredible subplot and a heavy denouement, he fails to win his audience; when he allows events to follow their natural comic course in Elopement, even a sudden windfall of coincidence is believable and Jones can have duty triumph over desire--painlessly.

Eighteen seventy-nine was a busy year for Jones. While Hearts

of Oak and Elopement were being given at Exeter and Oxford, It's Only Round the Corner was being put on by Wilson Barrett as Harmony Restored at the Grand Theatre, Leeds. Jones also wrote a one-act comedy called A Clerical Error which Barrett liked so much that he rewarded the novice playwright by putting it on at the Court Theatre on October 16. Thus one of Jones's early plays received a London production--his first.¹⁹

A good salesman, Jones tried to capitalize on these small beginnings. He had much of his work privately printed and he clipped all his notices and had them printed in with the plays.²⁰ But these neat little pamphlets apparently did little to sell his wares to managers. The three full-length plays he wrote at this time, Humbug, A Garden Party and Lady Caprice were not produced. They were more original in content than any of his shorter plays, but they were also full of technical faults. He could not sustain an interesting plot over three or more acts and could not coordinate the story line with his own ideas.

Humbug is probably the earliest of Jones's long plays in this period, and it is the best of the three.²¹ It is the first of several outspoken satires that Jones would write during his career exposing the vices he saw in English society. In Humbug, Jones ridiculed corrupt reformers and their connections with equally corrupt businessmen.

Jones had a natural talent for satire. In Humbug, he has plainly hit upon the style and the theme which excite his imagination. The plot develops much more naturally from the characters' personalities than it does in his other early efforts and the reader's

attention seldom flags. Although there are several original characters here along with some of the usual types found in Jones's early plays, only with one does Jones fail badly, the lovelorn Lady Lightfoot. Although Jones continually tried throughout his career to express passion in dramatic form, he generally failed as he does here with the frustrated Kitty. He encumbers her character with too many asides and too much self-sacrifice, and he neglects to give this naturally shrewd young woman enough wit.

The play gets off to a good start with a dialogue between Major Bob Benbow, a dissolute half-pay army officer who has proposed unsuccessfully to Lady Lightfoot six times, and his nephew Jack Freke, the type of young and spirited squanderer Jones seems to enjoy including in his early plays. He is the only male character in the play who performs a selfless act, saving the young Gertrude Lester from a savage beating by her uncle. Unfortunately Jones ruins the heroism by having Jack fall in love with the pathetic young girl in a sentimental fashion.

The hopeless passion of Lady Lightfoot for Jack connects him conveniently with the main plot which is not romantic but satiric. His late guardian, Joshua Pennefather, had left Jack a fortune which he managed to squander in a few years and ten thousand pounds in trust with Pennefather's business partner Samuel Morpus. The catch is that if Morpus decides before Jack's twenty-fifth birthday that he is hopelessly dissolute, Morpus can give the ten thousand pounds to a charity of his own choosing. From this idea of the double legacy, previously used by Jones in Hearts of Oak, grows a new one. Jones contends that many lay evangelical organizations are merely a

"humbug" and are run by charismatic men who pretend to be ascetic but are really bon vivants out to swindle the richest widows available with their personal charms and oratorical gifts. Such a man is Doctor Benjamin Bellwether, the "Great American Exhorter" who pointlessly lectures on Mesopotamia and who proposes to "build an edifice that may partake of the universally comprehensive character of Noah's Ark, so that the animals may come in by two and two."²² It is with this nonsensical building proposal that Jones exposes a second side of the corruption in Victorian charity organizations. Samuel Morpus, the businessman who controls Jack Freke's ten thousand pounds, is not a disinterested, godly man entertaining Bellwether and his "coadjutor" Mudge for purely charitable reasons. Rather it is common knowledge that Morpus, a builder and contractor by trade, subscribes generously to charities in order that he will be awarded the contracts to build their charitable homes and meeting houses. He proposes to give Jack's ten thousand pounds to Bellwether in order that he might gain most of it back in the building contract for the New Noah's Ark. A conflict arises because Bellwether has already agreed to a sizable kickback from a contractor in his native New York. All of this corruption leaves Bellwether vulnerable to the machinations of Lady Lightfoot who is determined to save the ten thousand pounds for her hopeless love Jack.

At this stage of his playwriting career, Jones had difficulty keeping his plot moving and for action, he substitutes some passable farce. Bellwether, always eager to secure his future comfort, instructs his partner Mudge to find out which of the ladies in his congregation have good incomes and which are poor. Mudge does find

this out from Morpus, but he tells the exact opposite of the truth to Bellwether so that he himself can try to capture the richest spinster for himself. All of this comic romancing works far better than the more serious goings-on between Lady Lightfoot and Major Benbow and between Jack and Gerty.

The second act is almost completely static with the deed of gift awarding Jack's ten thousand pounds to Bellwether being announced at the beginning and actually being awarded at the end. In between these two scenes, there is some good farcical business, but the plot does not develop. First, Major Benbow attempts to propose to Lady Lightfoot for the seventh time and fails. Next, Doctor Bellwether is interviewed by Basil Fosh of the Daily Telegraph. During the interview, Bellwether tells Fosh that he nourishes himself solely on a diet of oatmeal gruel and asses' milk. The audience knows that he survives mainly on Mrs. Morpus's oysters and champagne. Following farcical logic, the next scene is one in which Bellwether attempts to drink some champagne but is repeatedly interrupted by three of his female admirers, each of whom gives him a hand-decorated pair of slippers in homage. Unfortunately, the third lady, Mrs. Morpus herself, faints in his arms just as Brother Mudge enters. Bellwether thus becomes a blackmail victim. Finally, as he puts the champagne bottle to his lips at last, he is discovered by Lady Lightfoot.

Still Jones does not choose to punish the lazy Humbug, only to embarrass him. At the end of the play, Bellwether becomes engaged to the rich widow Lobelia Todd, and Jack, thanks to the contrivance of Lady Lightfoot, has his ten thousand pounds and his Gerty. It is only the liar Mudge who is left out in the cold, and, of course,

Morpheus loses his lucrative contract.

A Garden Party is another long play Jones wrote and had printed at this time. It is too heavy and serious to succeed on the stage. Jones tried to attract some attention for it by sending a printed copy to the Era under the title A Perfect Woman and asking for a review. He received a fair hearing and the Era, in fact, printed two columns of excerpts from this play about a woman who will not commit adultery even though she hates her cruel husband. Calling it "an imperfect play," which it most certainly is, the Era particularly takes Jones to task for his "obstruse [sic] dissertations" very close to "sermonizing" which appear throughout the play.²³ The heavy philosophizing, stereotyped characters and lack of plot movement make the play even difficult to read, let alone stage. Jones had a little more artistic, if not professional, success with Lady Caprice, three acts of froth which show a slightly surer touch and less self-indulgence than A Garden Party.²⁴ But it is only with Humbug that Jones shows real promise.

In the early Eighties, Jones also wrote several shorter plays and all of these proved successful, probably because they were all comedies and because a short plot was all Jones could manage at this time. An Old Master, the bittersweet story of an old school teacher and his daughter, was produced at the Princess's on November 6, 1880, and Sweet Will and The Deacon were produced later, in 1882, after the success of The Silver King.²⁵ Of these three, The Deacon deserves a closer look because for the first time Jones mixes autobiography into a play, an element which will always add freshness to his comedies. The play also reflects Jones's genuine love and affection for

the theater.

The Deacon has two major assets. First, Jones is able to work out a pet idea of his in a reasonably well-developed plot. His basic argument is that upright citizens are not anti-theater because the theater is boring or wicked but because they have just never been present at a theatrical performance. The story-line is that a businessman arrives in London, is convinced to go to the theater by a charming actress, and so is immediately and totally converted.

The Deacon's second asset is the delineation of the two atypical major characters, the Philistine factory owner Abraham Boothroyd and the charming trickster Mrs. Bolingbroke, a "fascinating actress of any age between twenty-five and forty-five."²⁶ She is unique in Jones's canon, a warm tribute to the leading ladies he idolized in his youth. There is no serious battle between lifestyles or points of view here. The play has the logic of a daydream, rather like the wishful thinking in Whitewashing Julia and other late Jones comedies. Mrs. Bolingbroke wins over Boothroyd with very little effort. She uses her feminine wiles without guile or guilt as we see in her soliloquy in Act I after she is told about the personality of Abraham Boothroyd:

I wonder if I could bring Tom's old uncle to my feet--
I used to make fools of men fast enough, and they liked
it! (going up to glass, looking in it) You old darling!
(kisses herself in the glass) There's a spice of witchery
left in you still, I do believe. (pp. 7-8)

This is followed by a deft scene between Tom Dempster, Boothroyd's citified nephew, and Mrs. Bolingbroke where she play-acts being old at twenty-eight, and he tries to comfort her as only a young man who sees twenty-eight as ancient can.

Mrs. Bolingbroke is thus presented as a clear-sighted, gentle woman without strong passions such as jealousy or greed. She is not out to seduce Tom or his uncle. She is generous and independent and decides to lure the bacon and sausage manufacturer for neither evangelical nor monetary reasons, really for no serious purpose at all. She does it for fun. Perhaps Jones still believed at this point that life in the theater was fun.

Abraham Boothroyd is also a more charming character than is usually found in Jones's work partly because he is not a Philistine by conviction but rather by accident. His only daughter ran away with a theatrical troupe and died in poverty. He is also, like Jones himself, a bit of a sensualist. In the letter to his nephew Tom in which he announces his arrival on the scene, Abraham reveals his intention of attending the "Great Indignation Meeting" in London that evening which is being organized

to protest against the iniquitous acquisition of Exeter Hall, by the lessee of a neighboring theatre, and to petition Government against the conversion of that venerable edifice into a public nuisance and temple of Folly. (I, p. 3)

He also orders Tom to get him a "snack" of a chop or a steak and then adds in a postscript: "And if it is a steak see that it's cut thick." Obviously a man that interested in his dinner can't be all bad. He also falls innocently for Mrs. Bolingbroke's feminine wiles and flattery, especially in the delicious scene where she wins Boothroyd over by criticizing the portrait of him which appears on each of his company's sausage tins. It lacks "expression," she says, "that indescribable something" in his face. The sausage tin portrait reveals no "intellectual fire and force" and not a morsel of soul."

There is "no poetry, no life, no subtle emanation" there. For this mock critique, Boothroyd labels her "a very sensible woman" (I, p. 12). Jones writes well in this act even when Boothroyd pleads his daughter's desertion as an excuse for not going to the theater. But Mrs. Bolingbroke prevails over him nonetheless.

The weaknesses in The Deacon only become apparent in Act II. The first problem is the incredibility of Boothroyd's sudden conversion to the theater. It may well be that such things do happen in real life, but they are not convincing on the stage. Then Jones has Boothroyd express his rapture in rather awkward, sentimental language:

When I heard them making love there, and the moon,
and the trees, and the girl upstairs and the young
chap down below there, and he couldn't get up to
her: why it was just as if it must be my own boy-
days as they were acting all over again. (p. 19)

Jones further compounds the problem by having Rosa Jervoise, Mrs. Bolingbroke's ward, Tom's fiancée and the new Juliet, turn out to be Boothroyd's own granddaughter. But Jones's theatrical missteps still cannot crush the genuinely charming Mrs. Bolingbroke. The play ends with Tibbetts, Tom Dempster's man-servant, announcing that Mrs. Bolingbroke's cab awaits. She exits lightly with the following speech:

I hear some noise within.
Dear friends adieu.
(to Tibbetts) Anon, anon, good Tibbetts.
(to Tom who is with Rosa)
Sweet Montague be true.
(getting up to door with Rosa)
Stay but a little, I will come again. (p. 23)

Unfortunately, in Jones's plays, she never does, and it will be many years before Jones will again treat any serious theme with such ease

and charm.

Jones took another important step in making his name in the theater on April 16, 1881, when his first full-length play His Wife was staged at Sadler's Wells. It is an adaptation from The Prodigal Daughter: A Story of Female Prison Life, a three-volume novel by Mark Hope.²⁷ Although Jones still managed to inject some of his own political and moral sermonizing, he at least had fewer problems because he did not have to create his own plot: he merely rearranged someone else's. He apparently learned a lot from this experience because he was then able to write a serviceable three-act play called Home Again which Billy Florence produced at Oxford on September 7, 1881.²⁸ Jones ended this phase of his career with the production of yet another short play, A Bed of Roses.²⁹ In this slick little piece, he uses some of his detailed knowledge of businessmen's behavior to create a believable study of a chicory merchant's personality and how his behavior affects his health. Tyrannical Peter Vellacott suffers from chronic dyspepsia until he humbles himself and is reconciled with his son Charles. Both his health and his peace of mind are then restored.

Looking back at Jones's work during his apprenticeship years, one can easily detect his love for language, his talent for observation and his gift for satire. It is also easy to see that he was poorly educated, unsophisticated in his thinking and sometimes doggedly determined to get his message across. These were difficult years for Jones. He was ambitious, and although his reach would exceed his grasp for many years to come, these years of striving and learning would later bring rich rewards. The characters he intro-

duces into his plays during these early years, idealists, businessmen, reformers and frustrated lovers, will reappear again and again in his plays--and change as Jones himself and his society did.

Although Jones had gained a lot of experience by early 1882, he had not had any major financial or artistic successes, and he was growing impatient. He had written a few interesting but technically faulty long plays which went unproduced. He had also written a few short, mildly successful but undistinguished pieces. With the encouragement of Wilson Barrett and against the strong opposition of his own and his wife's families, Jones had given up his lucrative job as a commercial traveler to devote himself entirely to play-writing in 1879. He was twenty-eight years old at that time. Three years later, he found himself in serious financial trouble. He had a wife and two small children and only three hundred pounds left from his savings. Clearly he had to compromise in order to succeed. Succeed he did, however, by pandering to the public taste in a play called The Silver King.

The Silver King was not the work of one man but of three: Henry Arthur Jones, Henry Herman and Wilson Barrett. Although Jones undoubtedly deserves the lion's share of the credit, it is unlikely that the play would have been written at all, and it certainly would not have been such an enormous success, without the cooperation of all three. Each man made a significant contribution. Herman took the first step and sought Jones out as a collaborator. Jones did the actual writing, and Barrett acted as a kind of editor. He also controlled the theater where the play would be produced.

When The Silver King opened on November 16, 1882, at the

Princess's, Henry Herman was listed as co-author with Jones. Surely, had the play failed, the question of who wrote what would never have come up. But the play made a great deal of money, and it was praised lavishly in the press, even by Matthew Arnold. Obviously the authorship of The Silver King was a prize worth fighting for, especially to the ambitious and aggressive young Jones. The behavior of Herman eventually forced Jones to pen a barbed account of the planning and writing of the piece, which he published as a Letter to the Editor of the Era on September 12, 1885.³⁰

Jones reports that he and Herman initially agreed to construct a plot between them. If the plot was acceptable to Barrett, then Jones would write the play and the fees would be shared. This was common practice with Herman.³¹ It is also obvious from his work up to this time that Jones could not have constructed an original plot of much merit on his own. But the plot gave them greater difficulty than anticipated, even after they "hit upon the idea of bringing a man up from a state of utter degradation and self-contempt to affluence, respectability and self-esteem." When the plan was finally submitted to Barrett, he rejected all but the second act in which he found a "strong domestic interest." Concerned with refuting Herman's claim, Jones credits Barrett with having "directed in its main outline" the plot construction of the first, third, fourth and fifth acts while he (Jones) "filled in" according to Barrett's "suggestions." Making the hero Wilfrid Denver believe himself guilty of a murder he never committed was an idea Jones took from a story he had read in Good Words as a child entitled "Dead in the Desert." Having the hunted Denver presumed killed in a railway accident was a

detail added by Herman, who took it from the tremendously popular East Lynne. But Jones is not interested in taking credit for the plot which he considers tantamount to quarreling over "dry bones." He does credit Barrett with rescuing both Herman and himself from public ridicule for their faulty "constructive powers," but he insists that he alone was responsible for the tone and "atmosphere of English life" in the play and his evidence is convincing. Herman, he writes, is "one who has not a drop of English blood in him, and to whose tongue our noble mother-English is a stumbling-block."³² As further proof, he cites his own unpublished novel, the story of a man who commits murder because of circumstances over which he has no control and who then suffers "terrible" remorse:

Many of the same expressions which are in MS. of my novel are now nightly uttered in different parts of the world by the various Wilfrid Denvers. The exclamations of the self-supposed murderer at the end of the first act of The Silver King are in places identical with the exclamations of my former hero.

Finally Jones grants Herman an absolute maximum of one hundred lines credit in the final text.

Apparently Jones's closely reasoned letter to the Era silenced Herman, but it unfortunately gave Barrett a potential claim. The actor-manager kept still until after the turn of the century when, down on his luck, he took credit for the authorship of the play in an interview in an Australian newspaper while on tour there. Jones first answered him in a personal letter, but an arbitration with Sir Squire Bancroft, Sir Charles Wyndham and Ben Greet was eventually necessary and was held in January 1905. Barrett's claim was refuted.³³

But what of this play over whose authorship three men quarrelled for so long? Certainly any modern reader familiar with melodrama would agree with Jones that there is "not one single new or original situation in The Silver King," and the usual young hero, who at first is ruined by gambling and drink but who later redeems himself, is a sympathetic, uncomplicated character throughout. Still The Silver King in sum is more than its melodramatic parts and in language and characterization offers new blood and a precocious talent, both contributed by the young playwright who aspired to be more than a hack. Using Herman's and Barrett's "dry bones," Jones fleshed out a "classic" play of its kind.

Matthew Arnold recognized The Silver King's merit immediately. The fledgling playwright himself had been responsible for Arnold's presence at the opening night, offering him a box and pressing him to come.³⁴ Arnold went, as he told John Morley when he proposed to write about the play for publication, "expecting to be bored," but he left "highly pleased."³⁵ Jones's persistence was thus rewarded with an article in the Pall Mall Gazette. Arnold stresses the "natural" quality of the writing among the virtues of the play:

In general, in drama of this kind, the diction and sentiments, like the incidents, are extravagant, impossible, transpontine; here they are not. This is a very great merit, a very great advantage.... Instead of giving to their audience transpontine diction and sentiments, Messrs. Jones and Herman give them literature.³⁶

Words like these must have been most gratifying to the young Jones.

The story-line in The Silver King is typical of melodrama. The villain Geoffrey Ware has one irrational goal in life: to destroy the happiness of Wilfrid and Nelly Denver because of his uncontrol-

lable jealousy of their love. He manages to ruin Denver systematically by employing a band of gamblers to tempt him into wagering more than he can afford. The play opens at the Wheatsheaf tavern in Clerkenwell on the day when Denver is finally cleaned out completely and where the villain taunts Wilfrid Denver and reveals his treachery to Nelly. In a drunken rage, Denver vows to murder Ware and goes to his house for that purpose. When Denver arrives, he accidentally disturbs a gang of robbers led by the gentleman-burglar, Captain "Spider" Skinner. The gang chloroforms Denver and as he is lying unconscious on the floor, Ware returns unexpectedly and is shot to death by the gang leader Skinner. This homicide is interpreted as murder by everyone including Denver who, waking up in the same room with the dead Ware, believes that because he was drunk, he is unable to remember committing the crime. This is reinforced by the unfortunate fact that Skinner had inadvertently used the innocent Denver's gun to kill Ware.

Here then the plot has been twisted so that there are two characters who will be consumed by guilt--Denver and Skinner--with no villain to be hissed in the traditional sense. This strategy was probably necessary because Jones and Herman were writing here for two powerful actors, Wilson Barrett and E. S. Willard. They simply tailored each lead to suit the individual actor's special style. Barrett was an actor of the old school of bluster and bombast, whom Max Beerbohm called "the greatest of all our melodramatists, having a keener scent for situation and a greater disregard of human nature than any of his rivals."³⁷ Barrett's manner was neither natural nor realistic even in the nineteenth-century sense of these terms, and a

flashy, simple device was needed to show him off to advantage. The authors, one of whom was, of course, Barrett himself, chose to use the obvious solution which in the context of the play seems inspired. Aside from long speeches of remorse, Barrett is given the opportunity to indulge himself in the age-old device, disguise. Along with his real personality and his alias John Franklin, the Silver King, Denver disguises himself as a Sailor to elude his pursuers and then as Deaf Dicky in order to infiltrate the gang of criminals who know the truth about the shooting.

Having satisfied Barrett with a complicated theatrical challenge, the authors were free to exploit Willard's slightly more subtle talents in the role of Skinner. The technique is one that Jones used time and again in pieces written expressly to show up the talents of an actor-manager in a central role. In actor-manager roles, the character does nothing as subtle as evolve or develop. Rather the actor-manager's part has a two-dimensional personality while all the other characters in the piece are kept in one dimension. Jones's simple technique for achieving this can be seen clearly in his early pieces. In A Clerical Error (1879), the Reverend Richard Capel misinterprets the behavior of his ward Minnie Heritage. He comes to believe that she loves him while it is obvious to the audience that she really loves his scapegrace nephew Dick. A sharp servant sets the country vicar straight just in time. When he learns the truth, the Reverend Capel makes believe that he was only joking when he proposed and unites the young couple. The audience watches the actor-manager, sick with disappointment on the inside, act outwardly as if he knew it was a joke all along. The audience enjoys the two-

dimensional play-acting and they are fully in sympathy with the luckless vicar.

With Skinner, Jones and company use the device familiar from A Clerical Error. Skinner is outwardly brave and relaxed while inside he is consumed with guilt and fear. A murderer so consumed was not new to Victorian audiences. Henry Irving had had an enormous success with just such a role in Leopold Lewis's The Bells (1871). Skinner's wife Olive is the character used to reveal this tension within him. In the first scene of the third act, the following dialogue takes place:

Olive. Rich? When I think how our money is got, I grudge the poorest labourer's wife her crust of bread and drink of water.

Skinner. Ah, that's foolish. My dear Olive, all living creatures prey upon one another. The duck gobbles up the worm, the man gobbles up the duck, and then, the worm gobbles up the man again. It's the great law of nature. My profession is just as good as any other, till I'm found out.

Olive. When you talk like that I hate you. Your profession, indeed! Burglary and (in a whisper) murder!

Skinner. (starts up with a frightened look and seizes her by wrist). If you remind me of that cursed affair again I'll--I'll--(Dropping her hand.) There don't be a fool, Olive, don't do it again, there's a good girl.

Olive. You're not quite deaf to the voice of conscience, it seems.³⁸

Skinner does have good reason to remain silent since Denver has presumably been killed in a railway accident while making his escape.

Inner conflict is also revealed in Skinner's relations with Nelly, Denver's wife. At first he does not know her true identity and believes she is just another poor woman who cannot pay her rent. When she comes to him as her landlord to plead that she and her children not be thrown out into the cold, he agrees to let her stay.

It is only when Coombe, one of his robber-band, realizes who she really is that he panics and orders her evicted from his property. When Denver returns to the scene, now a rich man thanks to his silver mining in America, the melodrama moves to its traditional conclusion. The outlaw Skinner is arrested by the detective Sam Baxter and Wilfrid and Nelly and their children settle down to live happily ever after.

Although The Silver King is a "classic" Victorian melodrama, it is not a great play. Its success did provide Jones, however, with two very important things: money and a wider audience. Money bought Jones a period of domestic peace and gave him the freedom to look around and decide what to do next. He did not look very long. The success of The Silver King brought him to the attention of a new audience, thanks to Matthew Arnold's notice of the play in the Pall Mall Gazette. Jones realized that this more serious audience was the one to which he wanted to appeal and the one that he had to convince to come to the theater. Thus he began to write articles and to give lectures analyzing the problems of the contemporary theater and offering solutions.³⁹ He set up standards by which an intelligent audience could judge playwriting, and he set up "tests" for measuring the artistic worth of a play.⁴⁰

Jones also began writing plays with a vengeance. Between the premiere of The Silver King, in November 1882, and the opening of Breaking a Butterfly in March 1884, Jones apparently completed four plays, three of which were full-length.⁴¹ Since none of these long plays has survived, it is impossible to know why they were never produced.⁴² It could have been that Jones's outspoken criticism of the theatrical system had closed many doors to him. In one of his

periodical articles, for instance, he likened theater managers to "cheesemongers" who "choke the public with whatever garbage it relishes for the moment."⁴³ Throughout his career, Jones was known for his hot temper and sharp tongue, a reputation he obviously deserved. But it is more likely that the long plays from this period were not produced simply because they were just too poorly written. Although Jones gained skill with every play he wrote, it would take almost seven more years of hack work before he could write a reasonably competent full-length play on his own, and he was neither artistically nor emotionally mature enough to write a truly satisfying play by modern standards until after the turn of the century.

Three plays bearing Jones's name were produced in 1884. Two of them carried Henry Herman's name as Jones's collaborator, but Jones must bear the major responsibility for both of them.⁴⁴ The first was Breaking a Butterfly, an adaptation of Ibsen's A Doll's House which he publically apologized for twelve years later.⁴⁵ Beerbohm Tree, just making his name in London, starred in it when it opened at the Prince's Theatre on March 3. Although Shaw once called Breaking a Butterfly a "capital acting version" of Ibsen's play, the Jones-Herman "adaptation" is entirely different from the original.⁴⁶ Humphrey Goddard (Torvald Helmer) is drawn as a clear-sighted and heroic male figure who immediately takes the blame for his wife's forgery entirely upon himself and who defies his wife's accuser to dare to "touch a hair of her head."⁴⁷ Ibsen's drama becomes instant melodrama; all Jones and Herman manage to do is put together a smoothly working plot.

This is not the case, however, in the next Jones-Herman play,

Chatterton, which was written as a vehicle--and a gift--for Wilson Barrett.⁴⁸ Bearing little resemblance to the celebrated Romantic treatment of the young poet's tragic life penned by Alfred de Vigny,⁴⁹ the Jones-Herman play is both artificial and trivial. Vigny's Chatterton poisons himself in indignation at being offered "une place de premier valet de chambre." As he drinks an overdose of opium, he cries "Ô mon âme, je t'avais vendue! je te rachète avec ceci."⁵⁰ The Jones-Herman version of Chatterton takes his own life for exactly the opposite reason. He does not find the promise of a Secretarial appointment at Whitehall on his desk until after he has drunk the poison. He then laments the cruel trick Fate has played upon him--at great length.

The Jones-Herman play is deliberately structured as half comedy and half "tragedy." In the first half, two frivolous young upper class women, one of whom dotes on Chatterton, visit the poet's rooms to see how a "real" poet lives. There is some clever comic writing in this section, but little purpose other than exposition, and most of that rather clumsily managed. The second half is Chatterton's death scene, written in the bombastic acting style for which Barrett was famous. The Jones-Herman Chatterton is typical of English drama in the Eighties, the drama that Jones was determined to reform.

Jones was right in assuming that The Silver King was the turning point in his career. Without the financial success of that melodrama, there probably would have been no career at all. But the turning point for the English drama was Saints and Sinners, the third Jones play to be put on the boards in 1884. Both the play and the essay entitled "Religion and the Stage," which Jones wrote and

published shortly after the opening of the play, provoked much discussion.⁵¹ Jones argued for more freedom for the dramatist to portray new ideas and characters on the stage, and his claim was not disputed. The problem was that there were no playwrights with the ability to take advantage of this new freedom--not even Jones himself.

In Saints and Sinners, Jones wrote a slightly daring but basically conventional play with just a bit of real life in it, the philistine characters Hoggard and Prabble. Jones was the sole author, and the play was not produced by Wilson Barrett but by Tom Thorne at the Vaudeville Theatre on September 25. This controversial and surprisingly successful play⁵² is based upon a simple conflict of conscience between two men, the unscrupulous businessman Hoggard and the incorruptible clergyman Jacob Fletcher. Fletcher has control over a widow's property that Hoggard wants to buy cheaply. He has it under-valued by his own man Crisp, but one of his trusted employees, Lot Burden, has a conscience and he warns Fletcher to be careful. When Fletcher asks for a second appraisal, Hoggard tries to dissuade him. He promises gifts and higher pew rents, and when these are refused, he threatens to withdraw all support. He even attempts to bring pressure through his fellow-deacon Prabble who is angry that Fletcher will not advise his congregation to buy their groceries from him rather than from the more fairly priced Stores. Both the philistines agree that what religion needs to prosper is "business-energy and push and advertising."⁵³ Thus Hoggard is not above threatening to use his knowledge of Fletcher's daughter's affair with Captain Eustace Fanshawe in London to ruin him if he does not agree to accept the Crisp evaluation. Still Fletcher refuses to be intimidated, and

he himself confesses everything about his daughter before his congregation.

All of the clergyman's virtue pitted against the unscrupulous businessman's character is good drama. Jones is able, for the first time, to motivate a villain in a believable way. Usually such evil men are seeking revenge, but Hoggard is not. He is simply greedy, as his name implies, and proud of it to boot. He continually buys valuable property cheaply through bribery and lies, and he casually puts in insurance claims to the railway even when his goods arrive in perfect condition. Then he brags about his cleverness to his fellow businessmen and his employees. Not only is he a thief but also a man who sees nothing wrong with it even though he is supposedly deeply religious.

But try as he might, Jones could not make Saints and Sinners more than a good melodrama. Why? In 1884, Jones was a complex man but not a very sophisticated or experienced one. To him religion was a serious subject and so a serious play should be written about religion. Further, he was a brash young man who was infatuated with science and the "modern" ideas of Herbert Spencer. He had no respect for any form of organized worship and no sympathy for true religious feeling. To him everything was simple. There were good clergymen and there were bad clergymen. He could create believable hypocrites because of his resentment towards his Puritan father whom he believed had deprived him of an education and his hatred for his Philistine uncle Thomas whose clerk he had become at the age of twelve, but his good men, including his clergymen, are unworldly and unbelievable.⁵⁴ Jones could not supply any complex motivation for the characters in

Saints and Sinners because his hatred overwhelmed his ability to see and express genuine goodness.

The controversy around Saints and Sinners made the theater more stimulating, but the production of the play and Jones's writings critical of the theatrical system of his day did not help Jones become a playwright popular with actor-managers. He was soon reduced to doing hack work for Wilson Barrett again in order to make a living. Two plays followed in the next two years, Hoodman Blind and The Lord Harry, both vehicles for the actor-manager which he himself co-authored.

Hoodman Blind, produced at the Princess's on August 18, 1885, is a play extolling rural goodness. Ben Chibbles, a simple-minded country blacksmith, befriends the young heroine Nance Yeulett and continues to believe in her fidelity to her husband Jack even when the villain has managed to convince everyone, including the husband, that she is an adulteress. Dickensian in flavor, Hoodman Blind was a great popular success. The Lord Harry, produced at the Princess's on February 18, 1886, is a romance play set during the English Civil War. It centers around a Royalist super-hero Lord Harry Bendish who infiltrates impregnable fortresses, escapes prison by jumping into a moat, survives a flood and wins several hand-to-hand combats. He is, naturally, in love, and with the daughter of a Roundhead, Colonel David Breane. His Esther helps him escape jail, survives the flood with him and is wounded by a bullet when she steps in front of Harry to shield him.

Jones later called The Lord Harry "as hard, as unprofitable, as futile a piece of work as I have ever done." He had carefully

researched the period and had sought in his writing to eliminate all anachronisms. But after completing three acts, he gave up and Barrett wrote the fourth act in his own heroic style.⁵⁵ Clearly Jones was disenchanted with Barrett and when an article entitled "Managerial Collaboration" appeared in the Era for June 12, 1886, attacking Barrett's methods of production, Jones did not choose to side with the actor-manager.⁵⁶

Jones's last play in association with Barrett and the Princess's was A Noble Vagabond. Although Jones may have felt he had been wasting his time at the Princess's, this play shows that he now had a firmer grasp of technique and some interesting ideas about characterization which he did not have when he started to work for the actor-manager. Further, this play was not written especially for Barrett, but for Charles Warner, so Jones had a little more freedom to write according to his own ideas. In A Noble Vagabond, Jones tells the story of Rafe Lester, the wronged heir to the Deveson fortune and his pursuit of the hand of his cousin, Maude Deveson. Lester is the son of the elder brother of Sir Godfrey Deveson, a real scoundrel. Sir Godfrey had Rafe's mother Mary Lester committed to an asylum so that he could take possession of his brother's title and the family fortune to pay off his debts to one of his family's retainers, Joseph Scorier. In the meantime, Rafe had been befriended by a group of vagabonds, in this case traveling actors, for whom he steals food at the beginning of the play. Jones implies that Rafe is a noble personality precisely because he was not brought up as a member of the aristocracy. Jones's own feelings towards the aristocracy were ambivalent. He accepted the prevailing British system as a sound

one. He felt that the aristocracy had the ideal qualifications to rule. They had the leisure and education to rule wisely. But when they shirked their duty to society or became prisoners of their own social code, Jones was as unsparing of them in his scorn and criticism as he was of the middle and lower classes.

Jones shows some subtlety in characterization here, but he is still far from being in complete control. Sir Godfrey tries to blame all his misdeeds on Joseph Scorier, and indeed Scorier has all the marks of a villain: he is deformed and a drunkard. But Jones does not allow the simpleminded explanation to pass. Why has Scorier helped to ruin the Deveson family? He gives Sir Godfrey his reason:

When I was a boy, your father came across our land with his hounds, I wouldn't open the gate and he rode over me-- yes, blast him he rode over me, and lamed me for life.⁵⁷

He has passed his spite on to his own son Ralph whom he has tried to marry off to Sir Godfrey's daughter Maude. But even Maude is not free of haughtiness. She does help the needy Rafe at the beginning of the play without knowing that he is part of her own family, but a few years earlier, Ralph Scorier recalls, she had "marked my face with her horsewhip" (I, p. 26). When he approaches her during the play, she cuts him with: "You oblige me to tell you that I do not choose my friends from my father's servants" (III, p. 6). The only completely sympathetic characters here are the vagabonds. They are more for color and for the light they shed on Rafe's character than for plot's sake even though they do aid Rafe in his escape from a murder accusation and they befriend Mary Lester. They also provide some humor in the piece. Jones has left behind similes which compare Londoners to a jar of mixed pickles,⁵⁸ and he is now more comfort-

able with remarks like that of Dick Vimpany, the showman who is a friend of Rafe and who makes the following comment on stage tragedies:

Well yes, tragedies as a rule are uncommonly like parliamentary trains, precious slow and uncomfortable and nobody patronizes them except from a severe sense of duty. (II, p. 12)

Also improved is the language. The hero need not be bombastic like Lord Harry Bendish and so Jones can pen a simpler and more touching speech for his hero Rafe to speak to his loved one Maude:

I love you, because I must love you! I love you so that what you tell me I must believe, and what you bid me I must do--I love you so, that whatever you are, whatever you do, just that is goodness and truth and innocence to me! Give me your hand! (III, p. 2)

But most improved of all is Jones's technique in managing entire scenes. The third scene in Act I is a good example. Jones is now experienced enough to use asides either sparingly or with greater cleverness than he has before. One of the few times he uses asides in this play is in Scene 3, and they are spoken by Rafe when he stumbles into his enemy Joseph Scorier's house by mistake during a storm. His sardonic remarks lighten the scene at the same time as they prepare the audience and the hero himself to be doubly shocked by Scorier's inadvertant revelation that Rafe has been the legitimate son and heir to the family fortune all his life and need not have starved as a vagabond or been ashamed of his origins. Jones is also sure enough of himself not to have the villain stand center stage and tell the audience about his evil machinations. Jones has Scorier mumble to himself to reveal crucial information to the audience. He also has the villain tricked into revealing his secrets by Rafe whom he mistakes for his own son Ralph.

Throughout the rest of the play, asides seldom appear and when they do, they are most often addressed to a fellow character or they are short ejaculations of one or two words. One of the few weak spots in the play is the pathetic Mary Lester, half crazed from being sane among lunatics. She is cruelly treated by Joseph Scorier who keeps her locked up in his basement in an attempt to starve her to death. Then, in the last act, Jones has her appear to special music to heighten the mood of anguish and despair. Still, the more pathetic Mary Lester, the more savage the indictment of Sir Godfrey and other aristocratic wastrels like him.

A Noble Vagabond was a failure, and, deep in debt, Barrett gave up the Princess's and went off on an American tour. His fledgling playwright was no longer interested in writing to order and was now technically mature enough to strike out on his own. But, as usual, success for Jones did not come overnight. At this time, he was probably the only playwright of quality writing for the British theater. He was interested in serious themes, and he had a talent for language, but the system in which he worked was archaic. He would flounder through two more plays before finding real success in 1889. The first was Hard Hit produced at the Haymarket on January 17, 1887. About the only good thing that can be said about the production is that it shows that Jones had left the hopeless playhouse of Wilson Barrett, and his cast this time was younger and a little more flexible. His players were Beerbohm Tree, the soon-to-be successful actor-manager, E. S. Willard, the actor whom Jones's plays would transform from villain to sensitive hero-clergyman in a few years, and Marion Terry, an actress who would play important

roles in many of Jones's future plays. Further, Jones was now a good craftsman, if not a great playwright.

Hard Hit is not an important Jones play artistically. He is still writing to order, for Tree instead of for Barrett. The play itself is about as interesting as a checker game where type characters are moved around until the play ends. Three dastardly characters attempt to destroy the happiness of an innocent young girl and her stalwart lover by cheating her out of her eighty thousand pound legacy and destroying her marriage by convincing her young husband that she is unfaithful. But at least Jones manages to put these stale plot devices into a well-managed if complicated plot. The use of so many hackneyed devices in this play might be explained by the apparent haste in which Hard Hit was written. A Noble Vagabond, a substantial achievement even as melodrama for the novice Jones, premiered on December 22, 1886, less than a month before Hard Hit opened. And by April 6, 1887, Jones had been granted a license on a complicated comedy-drama, Fair Play's a Jewel. Further, he had seen his one-act play Sweet Will put on at the New Club, Covent Garden, before the Prince of Wales on March 5.

Fair Play's a Jewel was first performed at a special matinee at the Vaudeville Theatre on November 3, 1887, under the title Heart of Hearts. On the surface, it is a conventional three act comedy-drama about the problematic road to the altar for Hugh Fitzralf and his chosen bride, Lucy Robins. Hugh is well-born, but he loves Lucy, who is the niece of his family's butler James, and he has had her educated to be his wife. When she returns home from school for her birthday, she becomes embroiled in a robbery involving the "Heart of Hearts"

ruby owned by Hugh's mother, Lady Fitzralf. Early in the play, Lucy's father, who was unjustly sent to prison by Hugh's late father, returns and steals the ruby for revenge. When Lucy learns of her father's crime, she convinces him to return the stone through her, and she herself is suspected. She refuses to implicate her father even though she wishes to clear herself and marry Hugh. This complicated plot is eventually sorted out despite the interference of two fortune-hunters, Marcus Latimer and his daughter Sybil. Jones has, however, to employ a detective named Murch to untangle the truth.

Heart of Hearts would merely be routine entertainment if it were not for the clever and often witty way in which Jones plays on the difficult relations between upstairs and downstairs at the Fitzralf house, especially because the upstairs and the downstairs find each other so very attractive. He uses several different comic contrasts to keep the play interesting. First of all, he contrasts the haughty attitude of Lady Clarissa with that of almost everyone else. Obviously she objects to the engagement of her son Hugh to a young girl whose father has spent three years in prison for assaulting her own husband and whose uncle is her butler. She is constantly calling for smelling salts and engaging in dialogues like the following with her cynical old friend Dr. Chettle:

Dr. Chettle. Come, Lady Clarissa, what would you say if Hugh was like poor Charley Carew going to marry one of the Miss Woburns?

Lady C. I should be delighted!

Dr. Chettle. But there's insanity in the Woburn family!

Lady C. But there are no grooms or butlers--and the insanity is of a very distinguished sort--precisely the same as George the Third had--and it doesn't break out very often!⁵⁹

But Lady Clarissa has more problems than she realizes. Whenever

she goes too far with her anti-servant class remarks, she is counseled to moderation by Miss Wilhelmina Fitzralf, a relation who has lost her money in bad investments and must live with her. It is soon obvious to the audience that Miss Wilhelmina has a more personal interest in the subject than she lets on to Lady Clarissa and we learn halfway through the first act that she is actually married to Lucy's butler-uncle. Why did she do it? Her dilemma is comic:

Oh why did I rush thus heedlessly into marriage? Why did I not pause and reflect? I did pause and reflect for nearly thirty years. (III, p. 1)

But her servant-lover proved irresistible and she is thrown into a panic whenever Lady Clarissa suggests that James be sent to Canada or New Zealand in order that the uncle of her future daughter-in-law not be a part of her household after her son's marriage. To make matters worse, the only domestic alternative James can offer his bride of six months is that of supervising the barmaids after he has taken a public house.

Jones also sets up a third contrast which highlights the goodness of both Lucy and her father Dan by playing them off against Marcus Latimer and his daughter Sybil, who are houseguests of Lady Fitzralf. Jones uses asides freely to show the dark side of this fortune-hunting pair who must always wear masks in order to cover up their scheme to substitute Sybil for Lucy in Hugh's affections. Their relationship is plainly a parody of a good father-daughter relationship since their villainy is not rooted in jealousy or revenge but rather in comic sloth. In the very first scene of the play, Marcus reacquaints Sybil with her filial obligations:

My dear child, reflect what a satisfaction it would be

to provide your poor dear father with the means of spending an honourable yet snug old age in a home like this. (p. 1)

Marcus also tries to woo Wilhelmina since he, like everyone else in the play, is unaware of her marriage until the very end.

Jones thus ended this first phase of his career with a kind of double play. Heart of Hearts is a serious drama about honesty with sentimental overtones. It is also a light comedy about the relationship of servants and masters in English society, unfortunately written without any first hand knowledge of the real situation. These two kinds of plays will now separate in Jones's mind and he will write serious and heavy plays for the next nine years, from 1889 through 1896. Even when he says he is writing comedy, it will either be a "tragedy dressed up as a comedy" as in The Case of Rebellious Susan or blunt satire as in The Triumph of the Philistines. Not until after the turn of the century will he return to laughing comedy and deft satire and find his true artistic home again.

Notes

Chapter I

¹ The successes were The Silver King (1882), The Liars (1897), Dolly Reforming Herself (1908) and The Lie (1923); the failures were The Crusaders (1891), Michael and His Lost Angel (1896) and The Ogre (1911).

² Manuscript of notes (Enthoven MS, pp. 47-8) made by Jones while reading Aubrey Ward Goodenough's dissertation, "Henry Arthur Jones: A Study in Dramatic Compromise," Iowa 1920. Hereafter cited as Notes.

³ "In the Days of My Youth," TP's & Cassell's Weekly, 17 November 1923, p. 134.

⁴ Characterizations of Jones's parents taken from Thorne, pp. 25-7.

⁵ Notes, p. 1.

⁶ "The Drama in the English Provinces in 1900," The Foundations of a National Drama (1913; rpt. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries, 1967), p. 222.

⁷ "Grove House Amateur Dramatic Club (Last Night)," Era, 11 February 1872, p. 13.

⁸ Probably Wilson Barrett's brother (1848-94), who was famed as a low comedian.

⁹ "In the Days of My Youth."

¹⁰ Exeter and Plymouth Gazette Daily Telegram, 11 December 1878, p. 1.

¹¹ Also produced under the titles Harmony Restored in 1879 and The Organist in 1892. Published as Harmony in 1883. For details of production and publication for all of Jones's plays, see Appendix A, "The Plays of Henry Arthur Jones," Thorne, pp. 411-24.

¹² Hearts of Oak was first produced at the Theatre Royal, Exeter, on 29 May 1879. It was privately printed under the title Honour Bright, probably in 1879. Elopement was first produced at the Theatre Royal, Oxford, on 19 August 1879.

¹³ Jones mentions the strict separation of mood and purpose in the Victorian theater in "The Literary Drama (A Reply)," The Renaissance of the English Drama (London: Macmillan, 1895), p. 106.

¹⁴ LIII, 1-2.

15 Hearts of Oak: A Domestic Drama, in Two Acts (New York: Samuel French, n.d.), I, p. 3.

16 Translation used on title page of French's edition.

17 Elopement: A Comedy in Two Acts (New York: Samuel French, n.d.), I, p. 5.

18 Elopement, I, p. 3.

19 See also p. 27-8 below.

20 Good examples of these editions, privately printed by John Tait at Ilfracombe, are available in the Ashley Collection at the British Library: Honour Bright, Humbug, A Garden Party and Lady Caprice. Also held with this group and printed by Tait is a "dramatic fragment" entitled The Wedding Guest which was never produced. Thorne dates this piece 1882-3, but since Jones apparently did not use Tait's services after 1880, it was probably completed in 1879-80 and printed along with the others.

21 Humbug actually did go into rehearsal at the Vaudeville Theatre in March 1885, according to a letter from Jones to A. M. Palmer dated the 20th (MS: Harvard). There apparently was some trouble with the license since the play was not approved by the Lord Chamberlain until October 25, and then with sizeable cuts and many revisions. The play has not appeared on the stage in any form.

22 Humbug: A Comedy in Three Acts (Ilfracombe: privately printed, n.d.), I, p. 9.

23 22 August 1880, p. 11.

24 Jones offered Barrett Lady Caprice in 1891, but he refused it. See Marjorie Thompson, "Henry Arthur Jones and Wilson Barrett. Some Correspondence 1879-1904," Theatre Notebook, 11, No. 2 (1957), 49.

25 According to the wrappings on the ms held at the Enthoven, Sweet Will was completed by January 1881. It was first performed at the New Club, Covent Garden, 5 March 1887, and then at the Shaftesbury Theatre, 25 July 1890. According to a review of The Deacon (Theatre, 1 October 1890, p. 185), this short comedy was written "about the same time as" A Clerical Error. It was first produced at the Shaftesbury on 27 August 1890.

26 The Deacon: A Comedy-Sketch in Two Acts (London: Samuel French, n.d.), I, p. 4. All further references to this work appear in the text.

27 London: Chapman and Hall, 1879.

28 Original title on ms at Enthoven is Cherry Ripe. Thorne lists an early comediotta entitled Cherry Ripe written in 1878, but a second manuscript has not come to light.

29 Globe Theatre, 26 January 1882. Ms at Enthoven bears the title Sweet Do Nothing.

30 p. 9.

31 Herman's method of "collaboration" is described in Freeman Wills, W. G. Wills: Dramatist and Painter (London: Longmans, Green, 1898), pp. 219-20.

32 Herman (1832-94) was educated in Alsace.

33 Thorne, pp. 69-72.

34 Letters of Matthew Arnold 1848-88, ed. George W. E. Russell (New York: Macmillan, 1896), II, 242.

35 Letters of Matthew Arnold, II, 243.

36 Reprinted in Thorne, pp. 62-3.

37 More Theatres 1898-1903 (New York: Taplinger, 1969), p. 196.

38 The Silver King: A Drama in Five Acts, rpt. Vol. I of Representative Plays, ed. Clayton Hamilton (Boston: Little, Brown, 1925), pp. 45-6.

39 Collected as The Renaissance of the English Drama (1895).

40 "The Dramatic Outlook (1884)," Renaissance, pp. 180-6.

41 Thorne, p. 413. For the dating of the short play, The Wedding Guest, see n. 20 above.

42 The longer plays were Rex, Vladimir and The Jolly Waterman. Barrett rejected Rex in 1887 because it "reeks with rotteness" (Thompson, pp. 48-9).

43 "The Theatre and the Mob (1883)," Renaissance, p. 12.

44 Letter to the Editor, Era, 12 September 1885, p. 9.

45 "An Introduction to the English Translation by Frederick Whyte of M. Augustin Filon's The English Stage, Published in 1897 (1896)," Foundations, p. 208.

46 "On Cutting Shakespeare (1919)," Shaw on Theatre, ed. F. J. West (New York: Hill and Wang, 1958), p. 125. William Archer's comment in Theatre (1 April 1884, p. 209) seems more apropos: "Take a piece of music, omit all the harmonies, break up and rearrange the melodic phrases, and then play them with your forefinger on the pianoforte--do this, and you will have some idea of the process to which Messrs. Jones and Herman have subjected 'A Doll's House'."

47 Breaking a Butterfly: A Play in Three Acts (London: privately printed, n.d.), II, pp. 61-2.

48 "Letter to the Editor."

49 First performed at Théâtre-Français, Paris, 12 February 1835.

50 Nineteenth Century French Plays, ed. Joseph L. Bergerhoff (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959), III, p. 268.

51 "Religion and the Stage" was originally published in Nineteenth Century Review, January 1885, rpt. Renascence, pp. 26-55.

52 "Preface to Saints and Sinners, " Renascence, p. 318.

53 Saints and Sinners: A New and Original Drama of Modern English Middle-Class Life in Five Acts (London: Macmillan, 1891), IV, p. 76.

54 Notes, p. 1.

55 Notes, p. 3.

56 Thompson, p. 46. See also letter from Jones to Barrett, 17 June 1886, rpt. Thorne, pp. 96-7.

57 A Noble Vagabond, British Library MS. ADD 53370, I, p. 20. All further references to this work appear in the text.

58 "There's some of all sorts, like a jar of mixed pickles--hot ones, and sour ones--precious sour, awful sour some of 'em--and seedy ones, and mouldy ones,--shake'em up together and goodness knows which would come out first" (Home Again! A Domestic Comedy in Three Acts, British Library MS. ADD 53258, I, p. 12).

59 Fair Play's a Jewel, British Libray MS. ADD 53376, I, p. 4. All further references to this work appear in the text.

Chapter II

Jones and the Renaissance of the English Drama

1889-96

Between 1878 and 1888, Henry Arthur Jones, ambitious and hard working, had done everything in his power to make a name for himself in the English theater as a serious playwright and to encourage a serious audience to come and see his plays. He had had one major financial success with The Silver King and one important critical success with Saints and Sinners. Jones's career was gaining momentum, and the stage was set for the English Dramatic Renaissance to begin. The production of Jones's controversial play Wealth in 1889 indeed marks the beginning of that Renaissance. This time, unlike in 1882 with Saints and Sinners, he was technically ready to follow up a successful play with another one and he had an audience willing to listen to him. Although Jones's social and political ideas were still naive and his cultural values were narrow, he nonetheless stayed flexible in his views throughout this period between 1889 and 1896.

With Beerbohm Tree in firm control at the Haymarket, Jones had another chance to try to write something closer to drama than melodrama. Luckily he chose to write about a subject he knew well--business--and he was now competent enough to have fairly good control of his material.¹ The play was called Wealth, and it has its roots in melodrama and socialism as well as in Shakespeare.

In Wealth, Jones tells the story of the millionaire businessman Matthew Ruddock. Ruthless because of a deathbed pledge he made to his inventor-father never to let anyone take advantage of him,

Matthew has singlehandedly and singlemindedly created a vast empire. As the play opens, the king of tycoons, in some ways a modern day version of Lear, wishes to leave his fortune in the hands of his adopted nephew John Ruddock whom old Matthew has arranged to marry to his only child Edith. But clearly Matthew is out of touch. His values are not the same as those of his daughter. Edith has what we would call today a social conscience:

I have never done an hour's work in my life and yet I have all and they have nothing. They work that I may play, they sorrow that I may be sated with every delicacy, they are frozen that I may be wrapped from every wind, they fester in filth and disease and corruption that I may be free and healthy and strong, they die that I may live! Oh it is not right, it is not right, it is not right! (MS, I, p. 21)²

Because of her convictions, she is in love with a gentle socialist factory owner, Paul Davoren, who has taken his workers into equal partnership with himself and whom he has even loaned money to buy into his business. She despises the unscrupulous John because he symbolizes to her all the ruthlessness that has made her father hateful.

Edith flees her father's lavish house and, to avoid marrying her cousin, she goes to live with Madge Davoren, Paul's sister. Yet she refuses to wed the socialist factory owner without her father's consent. She tries continually to reconcile with Matthew, but he stubbornly refuses. Finally he cuts her out of his will, expecting her to capitulate rather than lose several million pounds. But she is not to be bought, and in a strong speech, she scorns her father's philosophy of greed which makes money a god, telling him that she only wishes to show him that "all the riches in the world are nothing

weighed against love!" (TS, II, p. 23).

The strain of holding together his business empire and putting down a strike by his workers along with his daughter's rejection cause Matthew to suffer a nervous breakdown. In the madness which follows, his worst fear seems to be realized--he believes he is bankrupt and poor again. Ironically, Matthew finds that his years of anxiety were not justified:

All my life I've been afraid of being poor. The fear of it has made my life a misery to me. I couldn't sleep at nights through dreading it, and now I am poor, I don't mind it a bit, I'm happier than I've ever been before.
(TS, IV, p. 8)

But this peaceful scene is disturbed by the arrival of John Ruddock. Sincerely believing that he is poor, Matthew tells everyone so, but the young Ruddock knows the truth--that Matthew is richer than ever--and he has taken advantage of the situation. He has made himself a fortune with his knowledge and returns deliberately to bate the old man with talk of money matters even though he has been told that such talk might upset him further and result in his death. In a frenzy, Matthew begins to ape his old tycoon behavior and then breaks down completely. In the scene that follows, Matthew has a few lucid moments during which he realizes John's treachery, and he tears up his second will. He is reconciled with his daughter and tells her that he was richest when he was poor. But the strain is too much for him and he dies in her arms.

Unfortunately, the play that Jones wrote was not the one Tree actually performed. With the fourth act especially, Tree was ruthless. He cut about 22 pages, slicing out most of the drama in the confrontation between Matthew and John and leaving merely a pathetic

Matthew who burns the second will like an automaton only because his doctor tells him to do it.³ Jones was understandably bitter about what Tree had done, and he complained privately in a letter to William Archer where he damns the actor-manager⁴ and later publically in the Fall Mall Gazette when E. S. Willard took a hatchet to his next play The Middleman.⁵ But because the later play was a great popular success, Jones was able to publish the text and restore the scenes which had been cut. Wealth was never published in its entirety.

Wealth shows a vitality not seen in Jones's earlier work. Clearly he understands the Victorian capitalist mentality and the socialistic opposition to it. Even though his language is sometimes melodramatic and the secondary characters not clearly drawn, the psychology rings true and the plot develops naturally from the personality of Matthew.⁶ But Jones does not continue to follow the path he laid out for himself in Wealth. Four months after the premiere of Wealth at the Haymarket, another Jones play about the business world was produced in London. The Middleman, one of the playwright's greatest popular successes, was first seen at the Shaftesbury Theatre on August 27, 1889, with E. S. Willard, the "Spider" of The Silver King in the sympathetic role of Cyrus Blenkarn. In The Middleman, Jones has tried to correct what to the Victorians would be considered a major weakness in Wealth: he has provided more variety in the types of characters presented and these characters are more colorful than in the earlier play. In Wealth, Jones concentrated on the millionaire businessman Matthew Ruddock and his family while, in The Middleman, he creates entire families for the inventor Cyrus Blenkarn, for the "middleman" Joseph Chandler and for the aristocrat Sir Seton

Umfraville. He weaves the fates of these families together with skill, but he sacrifices the psychological intensity he gained by focusing on one only.

In Wealth, Matthew Ruddock tries to justify his singleminded pursuit of financial success by telling how his inventor-father had his greatest discovery stolen away from him by a "middleman." In the next play, Jones tells the story of just such a stolen invention and describes the personalities involved. He first introduces the greedy, egotistical and clearly incompetent middleman Joseph Chandler as he gives a silly and ineffectual political speech to the people he hopes will soon be his constituents. Also present is the bored and haughty aristocrat Sir Seton Umfraville. Chandler has arranged a marriage between his scapegrace son Julian and the poor but titled Felicia Umfraville so that he may have some upper class connections. Even though Jones has drawn some interesting and realistic characters in this first scene, he is himself not really interested in them. He is not writing a play about social and political issues, something we would be led to expect from the nature of the first scene. Rather, he is making a personal statement. He is fascinated by the character of Cyrus Blenkarn, the dedicated inventor whose new process for firing china has been stolen by the greedy Chandler and used as his own, not because he is an exploited workman but because Jones considers him an idealistic artist like himself:

I have constantly pointed out that "The Middleman" is not so much a fight between Labour and Capital, as a fight between grasping commercialism and inventive genius, careless of money and material rewards. Cyrus Blenkarn is not so much the downtrodden workman, as the passionate, enthusiastic artist. But I allow that being also a workman, it was natural that he should be

accepted as the type of Labour fighting Capital.⁷

With a fine group of characters and with the possibility of making an important statement about the nature of Victorian capitalism, Jones does nothing in The Middleman. He really had nothing to say.⁸ Instead he falls back upon a hackneyed, sentimental plot device--seduction and betrayal--to move his plot along and open Blenkarn's naive eyes to the world around him. Why? Jones probably identified himself with Blenkarn. He saw himself as the "passionate, enthusiastic artist" fighting "grasping commercialism" but he did not see deeply enough to realize that an artist and an artisan and an "inventive genius" are three different things. He will never see himself, the artist, as anymore than a craftsman or a showman. This is one reason why Jones the playwright always remained a maker of dishes or a builder of bridges in his work. He lacked vision. He never understood the spiritual and cultural values behind the work of art. Here he lapses into melodrama and has Chandler not merely steal Blenkarn's invention but his daughter as well. Blenkarn's eldest child is hired as a companion to Chandler's daughter and she lives with the family in luxurious Tatlow Hall. There she is seduced by Chandler's son, and when the two decide to marry, Chandler thwarts them because he wants his son to marry into the Umfraville family. When Blenkarn finds out about all this, he finally manages to perfect yet another new process he has been working on for many years by almost superhuman effort. He then hires Chandler's own factory manager to direct his new works. Soon Chandler is penniless and is evicted from Tatlow Hall. But Blenkarn is much more kindhearted than the greedy middleman. He finds him a new home and gives him a job

and finally Chandler's son returns to marry Blenkarn's "fallen" daughter.

With this melodramatic plot and Jones's apparent championing of the working man, The Middleman was a huge success, and Jones was now considered a serious playwright by a large audience. Thus in his next play Judah, he had a reasonably free hand to write whatever kind of play he wished. What he did was to write his first mature play, one in which he manages to find a form for his own view of human life. In Judah, we find him choosing to construct a complicated, skillfully crafted but rather artificial plot with many characters, that is, he chooses to write a play more like The Middleman in form than like Wealth. We also find, for the first time fully formed, the three characters which Jones will use repeatedly throughout his playwriting career: the raisonneur, the idealist and the "fallen" woman.

Jones always admired reason, and during most of his career, he put a raisonneur character in his plays. The raisonneur figure is seldom directly involved in the plot but comments upon it and usually interferes to set matters right or at least supply the more human and emotional characters with sound, common sense advice. In Judah, Professor Jopp is the raisonneur. Jones describes him in his stage directions as "a man about sixty, keen, alert, intellectual; bald, very high forehead, bright deep-set eyes, genial Voltaire type of face."⁹ The raisonneur represents the cerebral and unemotional point of view, wisdom tempered by age and experience and eternal truths like honesty and duty in which Jones continued to believe throughout his life. The raisonneur is also Jones's way of paying homage to French drama and French thought. His attitude toward the raisonneur changes

and this type of character actually disappears from his plays--for the better--after 1912.

A raisonneur is unworldly and undramatic and needs someone to reason with. For the first time in Judah and for many years to come, Jones writes about a particular kind of male-female relationship which will become almost obsessive with him. He has a high-principled young man fall passionately in love with a woman who is clearly not worthy of his adoration.¹⁰ The title character here, the Reverend Judah Llewellyn, is such a young man. In his stage directions, Jones describes him in this way: "about twenty-five, dark complexion, shaggy clustering hair in thick curls over his forehead. Quick, nervous step; glowing, enthusiastic manner. Slight Welsh accent which becomes more noticeable in excitement" (I, p. 209). Certainly what Jones is describing here is a sexually attractive, almost animalistic young man rather like Heathcliff in Wuthering Heights. He is also an earnest and idealistic young minister who, as Jopp remarks, is "just the man to give England a new religion, or make her believe in her old one" (I, p. 203). To Jones, he is perfect.

But what keeps the Reverend Llewellyn from saving mankind? He is infatuated with a young faith healer named Vashti Dethic whose situation is ambiguous and highly problematic. She does seem to have a genuine power to cure psychosomatic illnesses, or what Jopp calls "nervous diseases," but her power to do good is based on a lie. She claims to draw her strength from fasting for inhumanly long periods. The trick is that her father, the inventor of this pretense, smuggles food to her. He justifies himself in the following way:

We've always given out that fasting is the secret of your

power, and people look for it. The general public are such fools. They'll never let you do'em good in a plain, honest, straightforward way. We're bound to deceive'em for their own good. We must throw'em the fasting in. (I, pp. 214-5)

Jones's entire play revolves around two paradoxes then: that healing comes through a lie (that is, good comes out of evil) and that Judah, when he learns that Vashti's father smuggles food to her during her "fasts," loves her so deeply that he compromises himself and lies to keep her and her father out of jail (that is, evil comes out of good). In these two paradoxes, we can see the beginning of two dramatic patterns which will appear again and again in Jones's later work. In almost every play that Jones will write from this point onward, a lie will figure somewhere in the plot. His attitude toward lying is probably best expressed in these words he wrote about himself in 1923:

I have never been able to tell a lie without feeling the greatest discomfort and reluctance. This has been a serious disadvantage to me in my extensive dealings with people who are not hampered by the superstitions of an outworn moral code.¹¹

Jones seemed to feel that he lived in a world of lies and often that he was one of the few moral men left in a completely immoral world. This led him to two types of behavior: idealism and arrogance. He sincerely believed that he knew the secret of a good and happy life-- abide by the eternal truths that man should be honest, selfless and dutiful. This was his favorite dramatic theme. But he also lived in and wrote about the real world, a world of lies, selfishness and vanity. His idealism, his belief that there was a right way and a wrong way to live, often led him into arrogance, a belief that he was the only one who knew which was the right way and which was the wrong way to live. Further, his belief in the eternal truths was not based

on any religious or cultural values, but merely on his own personal intuition or interpretation of the human condition, and throughout his career, his interpretation changed. Sometimes lies are confessed as in Judah or Michael and His Lost Angel or The Hypocrites. At other times, they are rooted out and punished as in Mrs. Dane's Defence or Chrysold. At still others, they are treated lightly as in The Liars or Joseph Entangled. Jones examines the lie from almost every conceivable angle in his plays, and he never solves his moral dilemma. He died clinging to the beliefs of his Fundamentalist Baptist childhood. He died a reactionary, yet he was an idealist to the end.¹²

The second dramatic pattern which appears in Judah and which will reappear many times in Jones's plays is the playwright's rather bitter view of the relationship between men and women. He generally finds women irresistible but disappointing. Why isn't the idealistic young Judah not working to save mankind? He shirks his duty because he is passionately in love with a beautiful woman, that is, with Vashti Dethic. The idealist passionately in love with a worthless woman is another recurring paradox in Jones's plays. It is partly based on his essentially Victorian attitude towards women which was bolstered by his reading in Herbert Spencer and partly based on the women in his own life. As with his portrayals of liars, his attitude towards women changes depending on his own experience. In general, he was disappointed in the women he knew most intimately: his sickly, neurotic mother, his harried but dutiful wife and his spoiled and capricious daughters. But more important, his male and female characters come to represent two sides of his own complex personality: his idealistic, intellectual, strict "male" side and his cynical, sensual,

tolerant "female" side. Later, in Michael and His Lost Angel, Jones seems to be trying to bring all these elements together. The Reverend Michael Feversham doubts and whimpers but he seems to truly love Audrey more than himself. In Mrs. Dane's Defence, on the other hand, the male and female characters remain polarized and tear at each other. Felicia Hindemarsch's weakness is found out by Sir Daniel (Justice) Carteret and neither is the better for it.

But Judah is an early Jones play and the young hero puts his faith in a "fallen" woman who is still basically good. The ending is happy. The play is set at the country home of Lord Asgarby whose only child, Lady Eve, is dying. It is she whom Vashti Dethic has been asked to come and heal. The philosophical Professor Jopp, a family friend, is on the scene by chance. He has made a career of exposing fraudulent spiritualists and although he is willing to accept Vashti's power to cure the diseases of the mind, he tells her that he "can and will prove that you can't live without eating" (II, p. 244). Trapped by Judah's belief in her honesty and by her desire to keep herself and her father out of jail, she agrees to a three week fast under the watchful eyes of Jopp and his daughter Sophie. But they are foiled in their plans to expose the humbugs when Judah lies to protect them. The second act ends with the honest Judah swearing a false oath.

But Jopp cannot let the matter rest. He feels compelled to learn the truth. He returns to Asgarby Castle a year later with the whole sordid history of the Dethics. But since it would be dangerous to Lady Eve to expose Vashti, Jopp consoles himself with sending her father into exile. He is revenged, though, when Vashti and then Judah themselves confess that they lied and vow "to build our new

church with our lives, and its foundation shall be truth" (III, p. 278).

Judah then was an important play for Jones in many ways. The play itself was a success and in writing it, Jones found a form and a group of characters that the public wanted to see. Then his serious and high moral tone--Judah is a play where conscience wins out--was important in attracting a better educated audience into the theater. Finally, Jones had found characters, a conflict and a theme which were satisfying to him psychologically. Jones had thus found his means and his voice in the theater. He had arrived.¹³

With three serious and successful plays to his credit, Jones was now a name to be reckoned with in the British theater. He had a solid technique, especially for managing complicated plots and melodramatic emotion, he had the attention of a more serious audience, and he had more ideas for plays than he knew what to do with. His next play, The Dancing Girl, suffers from an overabundance of plot, characters and thematic variations, and from the fact that Jones had no intimate knowledge of the kinds of people he chose to write about. He did not understand the psychology of aristocrats, "pagan" women or Quakers at all as well as he understood the psychology of the businessman.

In quantity if not in variety, The Dancing Girl resembles the kind of triple bill commonly offered to mid-Victorian theater audiences. Jones uses three different kinds of characters to tell three different stories, that of the Duke of Guisebury, that of Drusilla Ives and that of John Christison.¹⁴ All three stories are variations on one theme: the conflict between duty and erotic desire. Both Guisebury and Christison desire Drusilla. Guisebury neglects his

responsibilities to his tenants and Christison to his family and friends. Drusilla desires sensual pleasure and power over men. She disdains her family, her religion and her responsibilities to the men who love her.

The Guisebury plot is the simplest, and the character of Valentine Danecourt, the Duke of Guisebury and the Earl of the Island of St. Endellion, dominates the play. The part was written for Beerbohm Tree, the by now well-established actor-manager who produced the play at the Haymarket on January 15, 1891. Jones's view of Guisebury the aristocrat is a stereotyped working class one. He draws Guisebury as a dissolute nobleman who enjoys all the advantages of his class, such as great wealth and a good education, but who shuns the duties which his high position entails: he has refused to help his Quaker tenants on St. Endellion build a breakwater they desperately need to survive and, even after he promises to build it during a visit to the island, he fails to keep his word. He continues to live the life of a libertine and squanders his money. This makes him indirectly responsible for the death of one of his tenants, Mark Christison, the subsequent insanity of Christison's wife and the supposed deaths of a dozen more of the islanders who are forced by Guisebury's neglect to go on a dangerous Arctic expedition to support their families. Why does the Duke of Guisebury act so shamefully? Caught in a conflict between duty and sensuality, he neglects his work because of his desire for Diana Valrose, a dancer on whom he lavishes all his time and money.

Valrose should be the dark soul of the play, a magnetic personality and a free spirit. She should be exciting, sad and wise. Instead Jones draws her as a temptress straight out of the Old Testament.

She is cynical, empty-headed and empty-hearted. To make matters worse, Jones uses her to connect his three "plots" together. Guisebury's mistress Diana Valrose is really Drusilla Ives, the daughter of David Ives, a staunch Quaker tenant on St. Endellion, the island Guisebury is supposed to be ruling. Further, Jones gives a very unsatisfactory reason for Drusilla's behavior. He suggests that she loves to dance because of the sensual deprivation she underwent as a child as an inhabitant of the harsh island of St. Endellion and as the child of a strict, fanatically puritanical father. She escapes the boredom of her home island by coming to London and living a life of pure sensuality. But Drusilla's sister who is deeply religious, dutiful and humble is as cold-hearted and empty-headed as Drusilla in her passion. The characterization of both girls clearly shows that Jones lacked both a knowledge of female psychology and a respect for women as human beings. The Dancing Girl lacks warmth and the sense of real life for which Jones always claimed he was striving.

Why did Jones feel the way he did about women? Why did he feel compelled to divide the sensual and the emotional sides of the female personality and put them in separate characters? For one thing, Jones did not merely divide women in this way; he divided his male characters in this way also. In The Dancing Girl, he uses the two sisters, Drusilla and Faith Ives, as examples of the two types of female personality. Drusilla is completely sensual, a "pagan" siren who tempts men away from duty, while Faith is asexual and pure and powerless to do anything but wait for her man to learn his lesson and come home to her. The male personalities are divided likewise. The Duke of Guisebury is a sensualist and cynic while John Christison is

pure, idealistic and deeply religious. All of this division in personalities occurred because Jones was used to writing melodrama where the characters come in simple, contrasting pairs, one good and one villainous. The good characters are always pure and innocent while the evil ones are sensualists. Self-control is valued above all else. The problem is that Jones was aware of all this, and he wanted to create well-rounded characters with real personalities. He did succeed with his male characters to some extent, especially with those who find the strength to reform themselves. The question then is what held him back, especially when he was writing about women? Part of the explanation is the culture that the theater represented, and that culture was Victorian in the traditional sense. But a more satisfying explanation is to be found in Jones's own life. His own experience with women gave him no grounds to question Victorian beliefs or Herbert Spencer's theorizing. His home life can be used to explain why the sensual-emotional separation persisted so long in his writings and continued to reappear even after the turn of the century.

The only female influence on Jones in his early years seems to have been his mother. She was highly emotional, sickly, neurotic and fanatically religious. He lost direct contact with her at the age of twelve when he was sent away from his country home to work for his father's brother in a draper's shop. Because he worked long hours and spent his spare time reading and writing, Jones apparently knew no other close female companionship until he met and married Jane Eliza Seeley when he was almost twenty-four years old, following a courtship of about five years during which Jones worked tirelessly as a commercial traveler to earn enough money to support a wife.

Although a wife who grew increasingly deaf after their marriage and a household full of children were a financial burden to Jones, the playwright was by all accounts a happily married man and a loving parent. His wife was not beautiful, but a generous, kind and understanding woman. She also had "an unshakable sense of duty" and worked constantly to serve her husband and her children.¹⁵ The problem was that between 1879 and 1896, the entire formative period of Jones's dramatic career, he and his wife both bore an extra emotional burden-- their eldest son was an invalid from birth. Jones's daughter Doris describes her parents' attitudes to her brother Philip in these words:

The unremitting care and tenderness she lavished on him called forth the deepest wells of love and devotion in her nature; but to my father, perhaps almost unconsciously, he was not only a disappointment, but almost a source of reproach. He was kind to Philip always, but he did not bear easily the frustration of being unable to take any pride in his eldest son.¹⁶

No matter how long-suffering Jones was, he must have resented the fact that his weakling son received the warmth and emotional sustenance that he needed so badly during his early career. The situation was further aggravated by the fact that between 1879, when Philip was born, and 1896, Jones wife gave birth to five other children: Winifred Amy in 1880; Ethelwyn Sylvia in 1883; Gertrude Mary in 1884; Jenny Doris in 1888; and Lucien David Sylvanus in 1893. A sixth child, another son, Oliver Stacy Arthur was born in 1899.

Thus Jones never experienced the kind of passionate love he tries so hard to portray in his plays. He falls into stereotypes when he writes about women until he is influenced by his own daughters and until he and his wife lose their invalid son to pleurisy and double pneumonia during the run of Michael and His Lost Angel in 1896.

The third story connected to the main plot of The Dancing Girl through Drusilla, that of the idealistic young John Christison, is as unconvincing as the other two. Christison is one of St. Endellion's deeply religious inhabitants, and he had also sworn to his father on his deathbed that he would work to build the breakwater which the Duke had neglected to do. This story follows the pattern established in Judah. Christison is an idealist like Judah Llewellyn, and he is, like Judah, irresistibly attracted to a woman. But in this case, the idealist is not attracted to a woman of both beauty and conscience, but to one without scruples. Christison neglects both his religion and his duty to St. Endellion to build the breakwater. He follows Drusilla to London and attempts to save her reputation back home by lying about her activities. Drusilla couldn't care less about Christison's moral scruples. Her whole life is a lie and she accepts her own dishonesty, ironically enough, with complete honesty. For this reason, she is an insoluble problem for Jones. He opts for the usual melodramatic solution and has her leave England and go to America to continue her dancing. She finally dies in New Orleans. Drusilla Ives is a powerful and enigmatic figure. She haunts the imagination in the same way that the characters in Wilde's Salome do. She lacks completely the capacity to love, and she is incapable of either ideas or ideals--only self-indulgence. It is easy to kill her off but not to forget her. Such unreal and distasteful women will appear again and again in Jones's plays throughout the rest of the century. Their presence above all else is probably responsible for the fact that Jones's plays are today considered little more than historical curiosities. No woman and no man who knows women can

accept for a moment that Jones's female characters reflect real life.

Once temptation in the person of Drusilla is gone, both men in The Dancing Girl reform. When Drusilla leaves the scene, Guisebury considers suicide, but his "better nature" is appealed to by a young crippled girl named Sybil Crake. Her sharp tongue and her sexless body set him on the right path. He builds the breakwater and actually comes to like being respectable. Jones blesses this change of heart by returning the tenants who had been presumed lost on the Arctic expedition to their homes at the end of the play. Christison, meanwhile, returns to St. Endellion to help build the breakwater and to marry Drusilla's sister Faith.

Regardless of what we today may think of The Dancing Girl, Jones's audience loved it. The play ran for 310 nights, the Duke of Guisebury's pug became a celebrity and a satire called The Prancing Girl appeared.¹⁷ But Jones was not satisfied. He wanted to be free of the restraints imposed on him by actor-managers, and he wanted to have a play produced that would reflect his own point of view and one that was not merely manufactured to suit the audience's taste. With these things in mind, he decided to rent the Avenue Theatre and produce a play on his own using his profits from The Dancing Girl. Appropriately enough, Jones called his play The Crusaders, but, oddly, the play is about the futility of trying to reform anything. It was a magnificent failure.

Writing finally with a free hand, Jones produced a play that was a mixture of satire and romance which in its spirit resembles Byron's Don Juan.¹⁸ Jones's imaginative world is a world of confusion, a colorful and crazy enigma. No one's motives are pure, and everyone

muddles along as best he can. Jones again uses the theme of the dreamy idealist forced to face reality--a romantic theme--but he presents it as a satire on reform movements. The Crusaders is a serious comedy which ends more or less unhappily. The only constant element in human nature, says Jones, is its inconstancy, and any attempts to change human nature through organized reform movements, religious or secular, are futile if not downright insane.¹⁹ The supreme irony, of course, is that Jones himself was a reformer and the writing and production of The Crusaders was meant to be a concrete step in his attempt to reform the theater of his day. In writing this play, Jones the cynic is mocking Jones the idealist and Jones the comic writer mocks Jones the writer of romance. Regardless of the quality of the writing in The Crusaders, the play does do exactly what he wanted it to do--it reflects his own paradoxical personality. Under the cover of a satiric-romance, Jones exposes his deep sense of his own inferiority and frustration. Jones knew full well that he was a self-educated country boy, yet he was intelligent and sensitive and he had a dream. Always there was self-doubt behind his bluster and seeming self-confidence. Only an idealistic fool would have tried to reform the English theater, and yet Jones succeeded. Unfortunately, his deep-seated sense of inferiority kept him from probing deeply into his own personality and experience and writing a great play. This sense of unworthiness insured his place in history as a major theatrical reformer but a minor playwright.

When Jones produced The Crusaders at the Avenue Theatre on November 2, 1891, he lavished infinite pains upon it. He commissioned William Morris to design the scenery, and he cast even the minor roles

with the greatest care. The central character, Philos Ingarfield, played by Lewis Waller, is an idealist whose Quixotic vision is to make "London beautiful, London happy, London honest, London healthy, London sober, London clean, London free" (I, p. 23). Sadly, his only strategy is an appeal to common sense. Because of his honesty and naiveté, he has become head of the London Reformation League. The League is financed by a rich, coquettish widow named Cynthia Greenslade who is backing the young "Shelley from Peckham Rye" only because she is infatuated with him. Although Philos truly has ideals, he has accepted Mrs. Greenslade's money partly because he is also attracted to her. He, in turn, is loved by his fellow reformer Una Dell, the daughter of a Chartist poet. Even though Una gives some stirring speeches on idealism in the play, her motives are just as mixed up as everyone else's and even though she is the woman most suited to him, Philos rejects her.

Jones surrounds this cockeyed triangle with a complete set of loonies. First, there are the amateur reformers, all of whom are aristocrats. They are led by a bored society matron to whom reforming London means little else than the job of ordering a programme for the League to be done up in blue satin with gold lettering. Also present in this "democratic movement amongst the aristocracy" is the reluctant President of the League, Lord Burnham, a cynical old politician without any ideals at all but with a sharp view of reality. Also a member is Burnham's married son who has joined the League merely because he is bent on committing adultery with Cynthia Greenslade.

The professional reformers are of three types. First, there is Philos and Una who are idealistic and sincere. Then there is the

shallow puritanical voyeur Mr. Palsam who derives intense pleasure from hearing tales of wickedness and delights in punishing the transgressors. Finally, there is the pessimistic Burge Jawle and his assistant Figg. Jawle's fundamental precept is the "immorality of marriage" because he objects on principle to any "method of perpetuating the human race" since anything that perpetuates the human race perpetuates human misery (I, pp. 31-2). No people, no problems.

Jones has Philos dream up two silly schemes to further his plan of reform. First, he has taken 500 poor seamstresses out of East End sweatshops and set them to growing roses to help beautify London on Mrs. Greenslade's land near Wimbledon Common. Mrs. Campion-Blake has provided all the girls with titles because "a title is such a powerful incentive to good conduct" (I, p. 15). Thus two of the worst behaved of the group are called the Queen of the Marshal Niels and the Lady Gloire de Dijon. The other Quixotic plan is meant to reform London's "ne'er-do-wells." In the name of the League, Philos has contracted to have 760 of such people transported by ship to Costa Rica so that they can begin a new life. Naturally, the inhabitants of Wimbledon Common object as do the inhabitants of Costa Rica. The roses develop blight because of the smoke in the London air while the invasion in South America causes so expensive a revolution that the British government, of which Lord Burnham is a part, must add two pence to the income tax and call a general election.

Obviously Philos is disheartened by his failures, but he is not as hurt by them as he is by the realization of the flightiness of his benefactress Cynthia Greenslade. When Dick Rusper grows bold enough to invade Cynthia's bedroom, he is spotted by both Palsam and Philos,

but Palsam believes it is Philos who is guilty. Mrs. Campion-Blake contrives to throw the blame on Victorine, Cynthia's French maid, and the idealistic Philos agrees to go along with the lie. But both Dick and Cynthia refuse, and after much negotiation, Palsam agrees to keep quiet if Lord Burnham pledges to give up both racing and drinking. The play ends in a hopelessly contradictory fashion. After his initiation into real life, Philos despairs and both Una and Cynthia try to help him. Una excitedly urges him to continue to try to reform London, an idea which she agrees is "madness" when she talks to Lord Burnham: "But our madness keeps the world alive! Your sanity stagnates! Our madness breeds your ideals; and you're dead, you're dead without ideals!" (III, pp. 114-5). Philos agrees, yet an idealist to the end, he chooses Cynthia, his ideal, who claims that he has "saved" her, and not the realistic and truly sincere Una who goes off "hopelessly."

The critical reaction to The Crusaders was similar to Una's attitude. The Era said sadly that "as it stands it is a jumble and a mixture, aggravating, irritating, and, we fear, altogether hopeless."²⁰ Many of the other critics agreed, and some even advised Jones to get a good actor-manager to straighten the play out.²¹ Jones felt defeated. He lost four thousand pounds on the production and chose never to venture into management on such a grand scale again. This decision was probably the biggest artistic mistake of his career. Because he never had complete control of the productions of any of his plays again, he never dared to experiment as boldly a second time.

Like his contemporary and friend Pinero, Jones spent 1892 studying and writing. But whereas Pinero studied Continental masters like

Ibsen and wrote The Second Mrs. Tanqueray which has kept his name alive even to this day, Jones used his time in quite a different way. He did not understand Ibsen, and, furthermore, he wanted to be a poet. Thus he first completed a made-to-order play for the actor-manager Charles Wyndham called The Bauble Shop, and then he wrote an ambitious historical play in verse called The Tempter which turned out to be yet another of the nineteenth century's ill-fated returns to verse tragedy.

In The Bauble Shop, Jones seems to be trying to write a serious study of the psyche of the modern politician much like his study of the modern businessman in Wealth, but he fails dismally for several reasons. First, he did not have the same intimate knowledge of the political mind that he had of the business mind. He had met politicians, but he had actually been a businessman. While writing the play, he did a great deal of research on the workings of Parliament, but this only led him further away from reality and into a fascination with externals.²² Jones's second problem was that he was writing for Charles Wyndham and that meant that he had to write in the melodramatic style which suited Wyndham's tastes. It is important to remember that the failure of Jones's last play, The Crusaders, was blamed by many, including Jones himself, on his refusal to put his play in the hands of an actor-manager for production. Unfortunately with The Bauble Shop, Jones seems to have gone too far in the opposite direction.²³

Lord Clivebroke, the hero of The Bauble Shop, is a typical stereotyped aristocrat. He has, for instance, spent his youth sowing wild oats, and only now, in order to go into politics, has he reformed. He

claims women bore him, yet he falls in love with the purest but also the most colorless and insipid one of the lot, Jessie Keber, whom Jones gives an alcoholic father for the sake of the plot. Keber is a toymaker who ekes out a living making dolls which are nasty caricatures of politicians for a power hungry and puritanical member of Parliament named Stoach. When Lord Clive meets the father and daughter, he is taken with Jessie and begins to pay her nocturnal visits. It is here that Jones's plot gets out of hand. He expects the audience to believe that Clivebroke visits Jessie nineteen times within a month and each time with his face hidden by a thick ulster and that nothing amiss happens. What is even more far-fetched is that Clivebroke is sponsoring legislation to regulate public morality which his rival Stoach feels is not strict enough, and Stoach is able to defeat him because he knows all about the midnight visits. Jones seems to be asking who should legislate morality, the puritan or the reformed scapegrace, but unfortunately in the play this becomes a choice between a ruthless man and a fool, neither of whom is fit to rule.

Strange as it may seem to us, The Bauble Shop enjoyed a respectable run of 135 nights, apparently the result of the popularity enjoyed by Wyndham and his leading lady Mary Moore. Jones later claimed that this was the only play he had written expressly for the Wyndham company. This statement seems absurd considering the kind of relationship Jones had had with actor-managers for whom he tailor-made many plays. As a matter of fact, Jones's relationship to Wyndham closely resembles the one he had with Barrett.²⁴ After the failure of The Crusaders and his outspoken attacks on the actor-manager system, Wyndham was probably one of the few managers who would even look

at any of Jones's plays. After 1896 and the failure of Michael and His Lost Angel, Jones was even more dependent on Wyndham for the production of his plays, and Wyndham seems to have taken full advantage of the situation. The result of the collaboration was often an enormous theatrical success like Mrs. Dane's Defence which today we judge "morally repellent" and an artistic compromise.²⁵ Certainly all the blame cannot be piled on Wyndham's shoulders. His style was quieter and perhaps even somewhat subtler than Barrett's.²⁶ But with his eye always on the box office and his stern sense of morality, the Jones-Wyndham relationship was often a stormy one.²⁷ Both men, interestingly with similar backgrounds, wanted success but each sought success for a different reason and by different means. On the whole, their working relationship was destructive for Jones as a serious artist.

Regardless of the tenor of the Jones-Wyndham relationship in 1893, Jones had little time to spend on The Bauble Shop anyway. He was writing a play which we can see today as one of the colossal blunders of Jones's career, The Tempter, a four act tragedy in verse and prose. Jones disliked the verse-plays of Bulwer-Lytton and Sheridan Knowles, feeling that they were "fustian literature," and so he decided to write one himself.²⁸ He rightly criticized the others as being good poetry but amateurish theater. Jones's verse tragedy was just the opposite--good theater but amateurish poetry. Then, the excitement and controversy about the theater which Jones himself had generated with plays like Saints and Sinners and The Crusaders proved to be his undoing. Critics and intellectuals had begun to take a serious interest in the theater, and giving them The Tempter was like urging a return to the Middle Ages or the bad old days of early nine-

teenth-century drama. Believing perhaps that Jones was turning away from the proper path, which was the one that led from Ibsen, William Archer ruthlessly attacked The Tempter, and in anger Jones wrote a vitriolic reply which ruined their relationship for several years.²⁹ In a letter to Jones, Shaw called the play "a most amazing freak."³⁰ The audience apparently liked the spectacular production Tree gave it when he produced and starred in it at the Haymarket, with its opening storm and final scene before Canterbury Cathedral. In fact, Maud Tree later claimed that the play was taken off not because it was unpopular but because the production costs were too high.³¹

But today we can look at The Tempter in a less emotional light. To Archer and the other liberal critics, Jones's play must have seemed like an attempt to outdo the spectacular Shakespearean productions common in the Victorian theater. To Jones, the play was an experiment and an ambitious attempt to make the English theater more literary. Oddly enough, Jones's major problem is not the verse, uninspired as it often is. Even though it is highly derivative and sometimes crude, it often works fairly well on the stage.³² Jones's major problem is the story-line which seems to be straight out of the fourteenth century where the play is set. Jones opens with a grandiose storm at sea. Prince Leon of Auvergne is traveling to England to marry Lady Avis of Rougemont to whom he was betrothed in childhood. Their marriage would cement an alliance between England and France and end the Hundred Years War. But the Devil himself arrives on board and sinks the ship, saving only himself and Leon. Why? The Devil wants war and not the peace that Leon and Avis's marriage would bring. He then takes the Prince to an inn where Lady Avis and her uncle, on the way to Canter-

bury for the marriage, have stopped for the night. With them is Lady Avis's cousin Lady Isobel of Carmayne, who has lost her lands by papal decree to her hypocritical uncle and is soon to be disposed of in a convenient nunnery. The Devil contrives to have Isobel and Leon fall in love and spend the night together and then after their first flush of excitement, to destroy them. The Prince of Lies first convinces Isobel that Leon has spread the news of their liaison by bragging about it. He convinces Leon, in turn, that Isobel seduced him only in order to gain Avis's place. The couple argues and Isobel stabs Leon. The final act takes place before Canterbury Cathedral. As Leon waits before the cathedral mortally wounded seeking forgiveness, Isobel, who is with him, stabs herself in remorse. Finally, the cathedral doors open and as the priests emerge to accept the contrition of the couple, the Devil vanishes.

The Tempter was certainly not the right play at the right time, and one of its worst faults is that there seems to be no correlation between Jones's own day and his rather artificial version of the past. The Devil's appearance was particularly attacked.³³ It is easy to see why the progressive critics of the day like Archer hated this anachronism. Certainly The Tempter, although good theater for its time, shows no sign that Jones had a real sense of tragedy nor is there any hint that he could have turned his romance with the past into anything more meaningful than he did here. Perhaps then it was a good thing that Archer and his colleagues jolted Jones back into the present and, in a sense, forced him to set his next play, The Masqueraders, in the nineteenth century.

In The Tempter, Jones's idealistic side had predominated.

Scorned and defeated, Jones's cynical side emerges in The Masqueraders, a play full of disgust with modern London fashionable life. There Jones finds a world of cynical hedonists who spend their time gossiping, that is telling lies about each other, gambling, drinking and committing adultery. In the midst of this cold and calculating world of soulless society people which Jones treats satirically, he focuses on four major characters: Dulcie and Helen Larondie, Sir Brice Skene and David Remon. The Larondie family has fallen on hard times, and the sisters, Dulcie and Helen, must earn their own livings. Helen has a strong sense of duty and has chosen to work selflessly as a nurse. Dulcie, meanwhile, is attracted by the glitter and excitement of London life and has taken a job as a barmaid at the Stag Hotel where she feels she has the best chance of finding a wealthy husband. Helen, of course, is forgotten by the opposite sex while Dulcie is pursued by two men, Sir Brice Skene, a fabulously wealthy roué, and David Remon, a serious but poor astronomer. Since Dulcie has, in effect, deliberately invited men to treat her as a piece of property and she seeks to buy a place in London society with a wealthy husband's money, Jones treats her accordingly. In Act I, Dulcie is trying to raise some money from her aristocratic patrons for the widow of a man for whose death she feels responsible. She has already degraded herself by taking a job as a barmaid in an obvious bid to marry into the upper classes and, knowing this, the "swells" decide to humiliate her further by proposing to raise money for her "charity" by auctioning off one of her kisses. The bidding soon becomes a heated contest between her rival lovers, Remon and Skene, and the wealthier Sir Brice wins, eventually paying three thousand guineas for her services.

When she refuses his check, he boldly announces their marriage and she proudly accepts him. But Jones puts this sale in perspective in a short dialogue between Dulcie and David at the end of the act:

Dulcie. You wouldn't have really given two thousand guineas for a kiss from me?
 David (nods). Why not? Sir Brice gave fifty thousand for the pleasure of losing the Leger.³⁴

As Jones suggested, Dulcie soon learns the price of being aristocratic chattel. The second act is set at one of the now Lady Skene's receptions. All of London comes to her home as she had predicted that they would to her sister in Act I, but they come not out of respect or affection for her but because of the gossip and scandal that is traded there. Dulcie, now that having a child has softened her a little, is utterly miserable and her husband is utterly contemptible. In the meantime, Remon has become the toast of London because of his work on sunspots, and he has also come into a considerable fortune by chance. As soon as he arrives at the reception, Dulcie begins to cultivate him in preference to her husband who is now both morally and financially bankrupt. Having realized that what she had longed for so much, money and position, are worthless and that Remon has remained faithful to her throughout the years of her marriage, she is tempted to give herself to Remon now. But she hesitates because she loves her daughter and feels a sense of duty towards her. Sir Brice returns from his club, and realizing that Remon is attracted to his wife, he demands that she ask him for money. Remon overhears and leaves her an open account. She protests that she will not take it, but nine months later in Act III, she and her child are living comfortably on it, and she is supporting her husband's gambling with

it. She is effectively bought just as Pinero's Agnes will be bought in The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith the following year.³⁵

Finally Dulcie has enough. She refuses to take any more of Remon's money and so Sir Brice, as lawful husband, threatens to take her child away from her. Jones brings the play to a climax by putting Dulcie on the block again. Act III ends with Sir Brice and David playing cards for Dulcie and her child. When Sir Brice loses, David gloats that he has won all--money, Dulcie and her child. But his triumph is short-lived, for in the fourth act, David must face the harsh realities of the situation. In a short, terse scene with only four characters, Jones shows that he feels that there is no solution for Dulcie and David's problem. Remon feels that the love between himself and Dulcie should win out, but her sister Helen and his brother Eddie make a strong case for duty, and Dulcie herself hesitates. She cannot forget the humiliation of her life as Lady Skene and she tells David that "to live with you seems more horrible than the other. I cannot" (IV, p. 265). He is then confronted with Dulcie's sister. Helen reminds him that divorce would mean that Dulcie would lose the custody of her child, and both she and Eddie argue that it is his duty to his profession to go to Africa as planned to prove his scientific theories instead of staying with Dulcie. As a final psychological pressure, Jones has Dulcie send David in to look at her baby daughter. If Jones were still writing melodrama, David would probably have returned full of the moral courage to do his duty. Instead he returns "very calm, very bitter, very tender" and speaks in a tone of quiet despair. He agrees to go to Africa even though he knows he may never return and then continues:

I've played this great game of love like a fool, as men would say. Perhaps I've played the great game of life like a fool, too. 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. Right--wrong--duty--they may be all shadows, but my love for you is real. (IV, p. 269)

He gives Dulcie his mother's wedding ring and repeats the words of the marriage ceremony to her. They drink wine together, and he smashes the glass on the floor. He is finally ready to leave, and it is here that Jones leaves the outcome of the play open to the censor's and the audience's own interpretation:

David (to Dulcie). In six months from now, come to meet me, my wife, and bring our child. Or, it may be a little later--but come and meet me--my wife--a little later.
 Dulcie. Where?
 David. In that little star in Andromeda. All's real there. (IV, p. 270)

Jones never chooses the exciting and safe expedient of suicide in his plays as Pinero does in The Second Mrs. Tanqueray. He felt such an end was unreal and dishonest. He tries rather for nobility and self-sacrifice and sometimes, as in this case, he succeeds. Shaw's reaction was predictable. In a letter he sent to Jones after reading the play he wrote:

Hang it all, Regent's Park, with all its drawbacks, is better than Andromeda. Why don't you chuck up these idiotic moral systems according to which human nature comes out base and filthy? It's the systems that are wrong and not we. I believe in the good old Molière-Labiche-Sheridan line; they would have been very well contented with myself and Walker and Morris and the rest of us, and not have sighed for any Andromeda.³⁶

Jones probably would have answered this argument in the same way as he wrote to his daughter in 1912 after seeing Fanny's First Play: "Shaw's world would march allright if there were no children in the world, and only men and women."³⁷ Jones's large family did influence

his thinking as we will see later in his career, and often he wrote out of a sense of duty to them. Still Jones apparently took Shaw's words to heart and in his next play, the comedy The Case of Rebellious Susan, the characters are much more lovable--and they are childless. Jones is also again uncompromisingly honest, but unfortunately he had the iron will and the steadfast morality of the actor-manager Charles Wyndham to contend with.

Because The Case of Rebellious Susan is a comedy, Jones can more openly flirt with dangerous ideas than he could in a "serious" play. Clearly he is out to be provocative and to express openly some of the more liberal ideas of his day represented by Shaw and Wilde and even Pinero. In The Case of Rebellious Susan, he tells the story of a high-spirited young wife who threatens to commit adultery to teach her unfaithful husband a lesson. Jones borrowed this idea from Francillon, a three-act play by Alexandre Dumas fils, which he saw in Paris and which was also available in translation in England as early as 1887, when the play was first produced.³⁸ But The Case of Rebellious Susan is no mere adaptation of Francillon; there is a radical difference between the two plays.³⁹ Dumas kept his aristocratic heroine pure and felt it necessary to stage a scene in which she is tricked into admitting that she is not guilty after all. Jones does just the opposite. His heroine, Lady Susan Harabin, does commit adultery even though he deliberately works out the play so that the question of her guilt or innocence is left open. Because Wyndham was fifty-seven in 1894, Jones had to provide a prominent male role for the actor-manager which was not the young romantic lead. This was not an easy task in a play about a young wife committing adultery. Jones's problem was

further complicated by the fact that Wyndham's leading lady and future wife, Mary Moore, was just thirty-three in 1894, and Jones was obliged to link the two in an intimate relationship in which Wyndham could have an emotional bond with her which was strong yet neither that of a lover, husband nor father. Thus by necessity Jones wrote the part of Sir Richard Kato for Wyndham, Lady Susan's loving uncle and guardian, a character loosely based on the adulterous husband's father in Francillon, the Marquis de Riverolles. Kato has no sexual interest in his ward. He is sophisticated and urbane, the kind of personality Wyndham doted on playing, yet fatherly in an affectionate and disinterested way which is not at all sentimental. Such a part was perfectly suited for Wyndham, but unfortunately there was a snag. Jones was a serious playwright, and he wanted his play to be more than a vehicle for Wyndham. He wanted the raisonneur character to represent one point of view in the play but not the only point of view. He did not want reason to predominate but rather to have many different ideas play off one another. Thus he demanded that Lady Susan be an adulteress, and he refused to make the play any more ambiguous than it already was. Wyndham finally agreed, but he personally assured everyone that Lady Susan was innocent, thus getting past the censor and making it acceptable to his own large following.⁴⁰

Jones was satisfied because he did not have to change a word of his play and because to him the adultery was not the important issue. In his "dedicatory preface" to the play, a burlesque letter to Mrs. Grundy in which he mocks British morality as being both arbitrary and petty, he says that the morality of his play is "intrinsic and not extrinsic," and further that his comedy "isn't a comedy at all" but

rather "a tragedy dressed up as a comedy," that is, that his play is really a serious one. He depicts life as it is, confused and multifaceted. For Jones, money is not the root of all evil, lies are. Thus his moral here, he says when comically pressed in his introductory letter, is "that as women cannot retaliate openly, they may retaliate secretly--and lie!"⁴¹ The tragedy in the case of Lady Susan Harabin is not that she commits adultery, but that she cannot openly admit that she has and be honestly reconciled with her husband. She is surrounded by people who put pressure on her not to follow her conscience but to cover up her affair for the sake of saving face and preserving the status quo. And so Jones hedges. Although she flatly refuses to lie and claim innocence, she never openly admits to adultery either. Since her husband refuses to admit his affairs, she refuses to admit hers and she demands that he take her back on those terms. In this way, Jones strikes a balance between the sexes which makes them equals in theory but which does not force anyone to accept that equality as a fact in the real world. Lady Susan seems to conform yet she is in reality an adulteress. Jones thus cleverly manages to satisfy everyone--and leave a bitter taste in the mouths of posterity.

Jones's desire to stand above the fray and look down upon the human condition is made obvious in The Case of Rebellious Susan by the complicated, web-like plot he constructs to connect four pairs of men and women, each of which represents a different point of view. These are Pybus and Elaine, young and radical; Admiral and Lady Darby, old and amoral; James and Lady Susan Harabin, young and foolish; and, Sir Richard Kato and Mrs. Inez Quesnel, older and wiser. Pybus and Elaine and the Admiral and Lady Darby represent extremes. Elaine is

a New Woman engaged to an ineffectual male, and Lady Darby is a long-suffering Old Woman married to a crusty amoralist. Seeking a safe balance, Jones rejects these extremes. Both couples are ridiculed throughout the play. In the middle, Jones places Mrs. Quesnel, a widow who is for him a "liberated" woman, and she holds her own against the arrogant raisonneur Sir Richard and actually teaches him a lesson which he then, like a good lawyer, applies to the case of rebellious Susan.

The trouble in The Case of Rebellious Susan begins when Lady Susan learns that her husband has been unfaithful. The fiery young wife refuses to forgive her erring spouse when he tells her that he had an affair because he was bored with their marriage and when he cannot give her his word that it will not happen again. She wants to teach him a lesson, and she threatens to have an affair of her own. Sir Richard tries to dissuade her by pointing out the flaw in her argument:

Sir Richard. My dear Sue, what do you want?
 Lady Susan. I want somebody to show me some way of
 paying him back without--without--
 Sir Richard. Without losing your place in society
 and your self-respect. (I, pp. 7-8)

Sir Richard immediately recognizes the fact that Sue cannot have what she wants--no one can who wishes to live in society. Again Jones's paradoxical personality appears here. He obviously admires Lady Susan's courage but he also feels that she will get nowhere. It is this pessimism which leads Jones to his clever but depressing ending where Lady Susan does not openly declare her adultery, but where her husband is forced to respect her secret as he wishes her to respect his own.

Lady Susan can do nothing. She is too much of an idealist and a rebel. But results are achieved in a quiet way by the realistic and unemotional Mrs. Inez Quesnel. Neither a reactionary nor a romantic, Mrs. Quesnel is a widow who is experienced, flexible and reasonable, and it is because of her maturity and her clear-headedness that Sir Richard is attracted to her. But she is a free spirit who lives by her wits and although Sir Richard romances her, he never quite convinces her to surrender and marry him. Her feelings are never that strong. Unconvinced by Sir Richard's arguments against adultery, Lady Susan goes off to Egypt with Mrs. Quesnel. Although Mrs. Quesnel advises Sue to return to her husband early in the play, she does it out of expediency rather than any deep conviction. The following exchange with Sir Richard is typical of her point of view:

Inez. Perhaps. It's very absurd to make a fuss about other people's love affairs.
 Sir Richard. But when a husband and wife have quarrelled--?
 Inez. Then it's clearly one's duty to advise them to make it up. And one does it, the same as one goes to church, because it is one's duty, not because there's any result from it. (II, p. 39)

Thus when Mrs. Quesnel and Lady Sue go off to Egypt, Mrs. Quesnel allows the younger woman the same freedom she herself enjoys, and Sue promptly has an affair with a young man named Lucien Edensor. But this romance, begun without either love or conviction, soon ends. Although Lucien had promised to wear Lady Susan's ring until his "last breath," he marries a mere three weeks after leaving Sue for a job in New Zealand. When she receives this news, Sue sees her position clearly, but still she does not wilt into submission. She does not choose to leave her husband but rather to repair their relationship at the same time as she demands the same freedom to keep her own

"affairs" private as her husband insists on doing with his.

Before Jones can resolve his play, he must soften Sir Richard's position and ally him with Sue. Throughout most of the play, Sir Richard has made a strong case for submission to her, but now Jones uses Sir Richard's romantic interest in Inez Quesnel to modify his point of view. He begins to do this in the following exchange with Mrs. Quesnel:

Sir Richard. Mrs. Quesnel, what was the exact nature of Sue's acquaintance with Lucien?

Inez. What does it matter? You needn't trouble about Sue. We women know the value of appearances. We are awful cowards, and have terrible leanings towards respectability. Sue won't shatter Mr. Harabin's family gods on his family hearth, or burst up Mr. Harabin's family boiler with any new-fangled explosive. And so long as Mr. Harabin's family boiler remains intact, why should you meddle with Sue? (III, pp. 89-90)

Inez is about to hold her own in the battle of the sexes as cynically and dispassionately as any man. The desire to dominate in Sir Richard is readily apparent in his question. He wants to know everything--to be father, confessor, judge and jury. Inez's reply is not a confession of weakness or a desire to submit but rather a defense. Women like herself aren't stupid or helpless; she says, "we women know the value of appearances." Women like herself and Sue see the way society is set up just as men do. And, she goes on, so long as Sue sees this with objectivity, "why should you meddle with Sue?" In other words, why should he wish to take away Sue's privacy, her personal freedom, since she is just as levelheaded as any man?

Initially Sir Richard is greatly attracted to this woman's logic. Within a few lines, he has actually asked Inez to tend his "family boiler" for him. But Inez, being perhaps even shrewder and more

cold-hearted than Sir Richard, sees danger:

Sir Richard (taking her hand). Stay. Would you really undertake the charge--of--(pointing to hearth)--my family gods and my family boiler?

Inez. That depends. First of all I should like to know a little bit about the previous engineers. You are terribly concerned about Sue. How about yourself?

Sir Richard. Won't you trust me?

Inez. No, I won't. (III, pp. 90-1)

She sees that, being the kind of man who desires to know all Sue's personal business, he will desire to know hers--and she is not about to stand for that. She attacks first.

Now this scene is important because it both logically and psychologically prepares Sir Richard to accept Sue's reconciliation with her husband, Jim, on her own terms. Although for Jones Sue cannot reform or change society, she can carve out a place of personal freedom for herself if she demands it and is strong enough to live with it. For Jones, radical changes, the kind proposed by the Fabians and the feminists, are madness. Sue's victory is small in a political and social sense, yet it is real. Jones has succeeded with this play in putting a heroine on the stage who is an adulteress and, even if she is not allowed to confess her adultery before all the world, she is allowed to keep her secret in the same way as her husband is allowed to keep his. The adultery is not argued because, frankly, Wyndham would never have produced such a play. Jones's and Sue's small victory is obvious, and it gave Jones the courage to fight Mrs. Grundy.

The Case of Rebellious Susan was a great popular success.⁴² In Jones's next play where he was free of Wyndham and the necessity to chop logic, his vision grows both bolder and bleaker. Entitled The

Triumph of the Philistines, it was, appropriately enough, the play George Alexander chose to replace The Importance of Being Earnest with at the St. James's when the Wilde play had to be withdrawn because of the notoriety of Wilde's trial for sodomy.⁴³ In The Triumph of the Philistines, Jones attempts to show how art and the artist are stifled by English puritanism and how the country as a whole becomes the poorer for this senseless oppression. Jones's thesis is that prudery and the thwarting of "natural" human instincts often result in bizarre and uncontrollable behavior. The Puritan tries to cover up this natural behavior with lies and deception. The truth eventually comes out, but in the meantime, lives are ruined, culture deteriorates and art flees or dies.

Jones's moral for this play is "Be not righteous overmuch: why shouldst thou destroy thyself?"⁴⁴ He sees the England of his day controlled by a malevolent puritanism which he, following Matthew Arnold, labels philistinism. Specifically in this play, the philistines drive the artist Willie Hesselwood and the man of culture Sir Valentine Fellowes out of the country. They leave a cultural wasteland behind, peopled by the puritanical Mr. Jorgan and the prostitute Sally Lebrune.

Jones sets his play in a banal English town, Market Pewbury, which is unique only because it unwillingly harbors an art school which the leading philistines are about to close down ostensibly for debt but really because they fear they are harboring lewdness and temptation in their midst. The school had been endowed by a Mr. Suleny and his son, both of whom are dead when the play opens, and it is being run by the son's widow. The Suleny plan was to take any

shiftless boy who had an apparent talent for drawing and help him to develop that talent. The result has been "some few hundreds of good-for-nothing boys turned into indifferent painters and drawing masters, and one genuine artist painting Bacchantes for Mr. Jorgan and Market Pewbury to cavil at" (I, p. 14). Mr. Jorgan is the leading and most puritanical businessman in Market Pewbury and so, for Jones, he is the man most subject to "natural" pressures or, as the philistines would put it, sexual temptation. Because he is so volatile, he is irresistably attracted to the French artists' model and opportunist Sally Lebrune. Jones paints their real relationship in bold, Swiftian colors and many in the audience found the satire distasteful and well they might in an age of light drawing room comedy.⁴⁵ But Jones is deadly serious, and his satire is skillful and appropriately vulgar. Jorgan feels guilty about the perfectly natural attraction he has to Sally, and he punishes himself not for doing anything as healthy and understandable as making love to her but because he has bought her two gaudy, expensive and enticing dresses in London. Money is not only his cheap way of showing affection, but it is also the way in which he atones for his supposed sins. Whenever he feels tempted, he tells his fellow philistine Pote, he pays a large "fine" as "moral compensation" by giving a donation to charity. The donation is as large as the temptation is strong. This, of course, does no real good and Jorgan is always on the verge of losing control. Jones makes this plain several times in the play, but nowhere more skillfully than at the beginning of the second act. The boot merchant explodes when his fellow philistine Pote notices Sally stroking his horse:

Pote (who is standing opposite the door, looks off).
 There's that Bacchante person. She's gone up to
 stroke our pony.
 Jorgan (alarmed). How dare she stroke our pony? How
 dare she stroke our pony?
 Sally (outside). Woa, woa, pretty, pretty! (Whistling
 continued.) Pretty, pretty, woa, woa, woa!
 Jorgan (much frightened, bursts out). Now, are we to
 be kept here all day? (Stamping and shouting.) My
 time's precious! I want to see over this building.
 (II, p. 63)

Soon Sally is treating Jorgan like the pony:

(Jorgan walks up and down distressed and perplexed.)
 Sally (watches him and follows his motions with her
 finger). Ah, that is ver' amusing when you show your
 pace! (He stops.) Woa, woa, pretty-pretty! Woa,
 woa! That is right. Woa, woa! (He begins again
 walking desperately, she still follows his motion
 with her finger.) Gee up! Gee up! Pretty-pretty!
 (Imitates horse's action of walking.) Ah, I love
 you when you gee-up so beautiful like that! (II,
 pp. 64-5)

He is helpless and when she knows she has him at bay, she tells him
 what she wants. She will expose him in Market Pewbury "if you will
 not expose me plenty money" (II, p. 68). Unfortunately for him, Sir
 Valentine Fellowes, a man whose life abroad has made him more toler-
 ant and worldly--and so easily suspect in Market Pewbury, stumbles on
 the scene at this point and Jorgan, instinctively recognizing in
 Sally a ruthless mercantile mind similar to his own, tells the French
 model that she can not only have plenty of money but also become
 Lady Fellowes if she lies and says that Sir Valentine bought her the
 salacious dresses and not Jorgan himself. It is this dirty trick
 which eventually makes Sir Valentine decide to abandon Market Pewbury
 and return to the continent.

When Sir Valentine learns that he is being blamed for a "devil-
 try" which he has not even had the pleasure of committing, he boldly

decides to retaliate. He calls Sally's bluff and then tells her that he will finance a three-year period in which her sole occupation will be to scandalize Market Pewbury and paint the town "one universal blazing red" (III, p. 92). But his plan is thwarted by the mock-raisonneur Lady Beauboys. This chameleon-like woman spends six months of the year in Market Pewbury, three or four in London and two or three abroad and takes up "whatever manners, morals, habits, and religion" suit the place in which she is staying (I, p. 8). This amoralist runs Sally out of town, and this precipitates Sir Val's flight to Europe with the former Mrs. Suleny, the woman he has had his eye on throughout the play. These two people seem to make up the nearly ideal couple for Jones. Their relationship is just the opposite of that of Jorgan and Sally who are like beasts preying on one another. The Suleny-Fellowes match is based on mutual worship and mutual trust. By the end of the play then, the philistines have succeeded in driving all the representatives of culture and civilization into exile. But as the curtain falls, Sally puts her arms around Jorgan's neck and takes possession of him since he is all she has left. As the townspeople look on in surprise, the audience is left to wonder if indeed the philistines have triumphed after all.

Jones's strong and very funny satire on contemporary English life revolted the public and critics alike.⁴⁶ The critic for the conservative journal Theatre wrote that he did not know whether to condemn the play more for "its improbability or its unredeemed vulgarity."⁴⁷ GBS, on the other hand, found Jones's attack on British lower middle-class hypocrisy "courageous, uncompromising, made with sharp weapons, and left without the slightest attempt to run away at

the end."⁴⁸

But Jones seems to have had enough of comedy with The Case of Rebellious Susan and The Triumph of the Philistines, and he decided next to write a serious play in which he openly and freely revealed his own personality, his frustrations and his doubts. The idealist and the truth-teller, Jones finally indulged himself in total honesty. His subsequent rejection at the hands of critics and public alike was something he never recovered from completely either artistically or personally.

In Michael and His Lost Angel, Jones is again concerned with his three favorite dramatic themes. First, he uses the relationship of the idealistic young man infatuated with a "fallen" woman. Jones creates a pair of characters who are similar in temperament not only to Judah Llewellyn and Vashti Dethic and John Christison and Drusilla Ives but also to Jorgan and Sally Lebrune. In other words, the Reverend Michael Feversham and Audrie Lesden are as complicated as Jones could make them. In Michael and His Lost Angel, not only does puritan meet pagan but also ascetic meets sensualist. The Reverend Feversham is a scholarly young clergyman who lives under a self-imposed vow of chastity and worships the memory of his dead mother before whose picture he used to pray as a child. Because his life has been sheltered and austere, he does not understand either love or passion. At the beginning of the play, he callously compels a young girl to confess her guilty love affair publically in his church, and then paradoxically, he himself meets temptation in the form of a beautiful millionairess named Audrie Lesden, and he falls madly in love with her. What results is much more than a struggle between two

people, one repressed and one uninhibited. Audrie is the opposite of everything the Reverend Feversham has valued all his life. She is worldly, mercurial, irreligious and cynical. She is an elementary force of nature, and Jones makes clear that once Michael and Audrie come together, they can never truly be separated again. The attraction between them is not only physical but also spiritual. Together they are whole, but apart each one is only half alive. In The Dancing Girl, once Drusilla is dead, Christison is free. Not so in Michael and His Lost Angel, and Jones points out that Michael needs Audrie's sensuality at the same time as Audrie needs Michael's self-control for balance. This is the daring and revolutionary aspect of the play, and, of course, it is a mirror image of Jones's own personality.

The second conflict Jones mixes in Michael and His Lost Angel is that between idealism and reality by suggesting that the idealist can only exist if he retreats from the real world into an ivory tower, or, as in Michael's case, to an uninhabited island. But life is such that reality will intrude, and it does in the central episode of the play when Audrie comes to Michael's island and is, by chance, stranded there with him all night, and they give in to their passion for one another. Both guilty and elated, Michael makes plans to repent and then to marry Audrie. But the real world deals him yet another blow. He cannot marry Audrie because her husband is still alive. She had lied to him. Michael is torn, but he feels the weight of guilt and his commitment to his calling. He tells Audrie:

Go back to your duty and to deep repentance. Have strength, dearest. These are not idle words--duty, purity, holiness. They mean something. Love is nothing without them. Have courage to tread the hard road. Leave me.⁴⁹

Audrie does go and Michael is so consumed by guilt that he finally confesses his adultery and hypocrisy publically in his newly restored church. It seems by the end of the third act that duty has triumphed over love as happened in The Dancing Girl and other treatments of this Jones's third favored theme, but there is yet a final act. Here Michael confesses his own deep doubts and fears. In his search for peace, he has done what he was brought up to believe would help him-- he confesses his sin before his congregation--but he does not find peace. The war which erupted within him between ideals and instinct and between moral ideas and emotions continues. In the end, he still loves Audrie. His very last words in the play are these:

Do what you please with me! I'll believe all, do all,
suffer all--only--only persuade me that I shall meet
her again!⁵⁰

This open proclamation of the failure of religion to triumph over sin and doubt was flatly rejected by critics and public alike.⁵¹ Michael and His Lost Angel was the greatest failure Jones ever was to have. It ran for only ten days in London and for eleven nights in New York.⁵²

It is easy to see Michael and His Lost Angel, a play written by an idealist about another idealist's defeat, as a kind of essay in prophetic self-destruction. Certainly Jones suffered a resounding blow here, but it was dealt in good measure by chance and not by forces within Jones's own control. Jones originally wrote the play for Mrs. Patrick Campbell, but she found this profoundly disturbing play profane and gave up the part of Audrie, which then fell to an actress who was not at all suited to the part, Marion Terry.⁵³ The rehearsals were stormy, and Forbes-Robertson, who was producing and playing the role of Michael, even objected to the title.⁵⁴ Jones's

daughter openly suggests that Mrs. Campbell may well have had something to do with what Jones always saw as the premature withdrawal of the piece.⁵⁵ At this crucial time, Jones himself was busy elsewhere: his eldest son was dying of pleurisy and double pneumonia.

Jones always felt that Michael and His Lost Angel was his best play. Certainly he is most sincere here about his vision of an innocent and well-meaning mankind caught up in, as Audrie puts it, a "not quite well-arranged world." This vision of a darkling plain full of blind chance and deceit and the implied futility of existence is a profoundly modern vision. But even his stalwart supporter Shaw deserted him. In his notice in the Saturday Review, Shaw opted for a more classical type of tragedy and a more optimistic view of humanity. He says that he would have had Michael defy his conscience, choose love and become a real hero.⁵⁶ But Jones, of course, is a fatalist and cannot even choose suicide, which he felt was an unrealistic and insincere ending. He would agree more with Ibsen's solution in The Wild Duck than in Rosmersholm. Not that Jones himself does much better by having Audrie die of fever in the last act, leaving Michael a broken toy at the end of the piece. But that is Jones's view, man cowed and defeated by an unseen and unknowing universe. The philosophy, rooted in puritansim, is akin to Hardy's pessimism. It also reflects the neurotic/erotic relationship between the sexes of the fin de siècle.⁵⁷ It echoes the Wilde of Salome and foreshadows Lawrence. But Jones could find neither a suitable language nor form for his profound pessimism. He sensed the new ideas in the air in the Nineties, and the split in his own personality suggests a conflict between Victorian strictness and morality and modern cynicism. But

it would be left to others to express the new vision in a new way.

Notes

Chapter II

¹ Jones argued for more truthful portraits of businessmen in the theater as early as 1885. See "Religion and the Stage," pp. 29-31.

² Two versions of Wealth are cited here: Enthoven MS and British Library MS. ADD 53426. The Enthoven MS is Jones's original text; the British Library MS (referred to as TS in text) is the version approved by the Lord Chamberlain and performed on the first night. All references to MSS cited in text. Jones made two alterations at subsequent performances (MS. 622, fol. 21, 33 of Henry Arthur Jones-William Moy Thomas Correspondence, Joseph Regenstein Library, Univ of Chicago).

³ Comparison of Enthoven MS and British Library MS.

⁴ British Library MS. ADD 45292, fol. 284.

⁵ "Mr. Jones and Mr. Willard," 21 August 1891, p. 2.

⁶ Jones deliberately structured his play on "the thread of a development of character in relation to a distinct purpose, in place of a thread of mechanical situations" (Regenstein Library MS. 622, fol. 21).

⁷ Notes, p. 4.

⁸ Jones was to say many years later that it was not until 1918 that he "offered the public any reasoned and consistent body of political doctrine" (Notes, p. 29).

⁹ Judah: A Play in Three Acts, rpt. Vol. I of Representative Plays, I, p. 201. All further references to this work appear in the text.

¹⁰ Jones describes this kind of play as "essentially a man's love story" in Notes, pp. 6-7. In it, "the passion of a man's love" is "possessive of a man's whole nature, the dominant motive of his conduct, and the arbiter of his fate." Aside from Judah, he cites The Crusaders, The Tempter, The Masqueraders, The Liars and The Heroic Stubbs as examples of this kind of play.

¹¹ "In the Days of My Youth."

¹² Jones always believed that ultimately man must accept moral responsibility for his actions, regardless of circumstances. See Notes, pp. 37-42.

13 William Dean Howells wrote that Judah has "a freshness of story, a strength and symmetry of design, an intensity of passion, a variety and accuracy of character, a naturalness and simplicity of action, and above all a fealty to the eternal verities which at once made me sensible of a masterpiece, and without which there can be no masterpieces" ("On Reading the Plays of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones," North American Review, 186 [September-December 1907], 207).

14 Jones mentions this himself in an interview in the early Nineties: Raymond Blathwayt, "Lions in their Dens: Henry Arthur Jones," Idler Magazine, 4 (August 1893-January 1894), 73.

15 Thorne, p. 51.

16 Thorne, p. 50.

17 The critic for the Era (28 November 1891, p. 11) reported that "the expectations were great, the results nil."

18 Jones himself invited this comparison in a letter to Moy Thomas shortly after The Crusaders opened (Regenstein Library MS. 622, fol. 41).

19 The following passage from Emerson's Essays appeared on the playbill for the first performance: "Rely on the laws of gravity. Every stone will fall where it is due. The good globe is faithful and carries us securely through the celestial spaces. We need not interfere to help it on. We need not assist the administration of the universe." Playbill reproduced in The Crusaders: An Original Comedy of Modern London Life (New York: Macmillan, 1893), p. xiii. All references to this work appear in the text. Rpt. Vol. II of Representative Plays.

20 7 November 1891, p. 11.

21 Both Era critic and Cecil Howard in Theatre, 1 December 1891, p. 275.

22 Thorne, p. 132. Wyndham had the Prime Minister's Room at the House of Commons copied exactly for the Criterion production which opened 26 January 1893 (Lady Wyndham [Mary Moore], Charles Wyndham and Mary Moore, privately printed, 1925, p. 110).

23 William Archer wrote that "in The Crusaders he [Jones] had well-nigh achieved intellectual distinction; in The Bauble Shop he has relapsed for the moment into commonplaceness, not to say commonness" (Rev. dated 1 February and rpt. Theatrical 'World' for 1893 [London: Walter Scott, 1894], p. 37). Many years later, Jones wrote that he was always "prouder of the failure of The Crusaders than of the success of The Bauble Shop" (Notes, p. 9).

24 Thorne (p. 168) insists that aside from "The Silver King and one or two early plays and The Bauble Shop," her father never wrote a play "to order." Jones himself (Notes, p. 55) is much more ambiguous, but apparently he also feels that there is a subtle distinction between writing plays "to order" and writing plays "so as to get them performed by a popular manager at a popular theatre."

25 James Ellis, "A Great Reckoning in a Little Room: English Plays of the Nineteenth Century," Nineteenth Century Theatre Research, 5, No. 1 (1977), 31.

26 J. T. Grein called Wyndham the "incarnation" of "a perfect gentleman" on the stage and reported that "he commands also some powers of pathos and passion," yet "his method is more gentle than vehement, more persuasive than ebullient" ("Sir Charles Wyndham," 29 June 1902, rpt. Dramatic Criticism [London: Eveleigh Nash, 1904], IV, 271).

27 George Rowell has thrown some light on the Jones-Wyndham relationship in "Wyndham of Wyndham's," The Theatrical Manager in England and America: Players of a Perilous Game, ed. Joseph W. Donohue, Jr. (Princeton: Univ Press, 1971), pp. 189-213.

28 Jones published his ideas in the Nineteenth Century Review at the same time as Tree's production of The Tempter opened on 30 September 1893 ("Dr. Pearson on the Modern Drama [October 1893]," Renascence, pp. 132-45). In 1912 Jones attacked Browning's verse-plays specifically when comparing the work of two literary critics. See "Mr. Birrell and Professor Lounsbury as Dramatic Critics (1912)," Foundations, pp. 263-6.

29 Archer wrote two columns on The Tempter (27 September; 4 October) in the course of which he declared that the time for "elementary Manicheism" had passed (rpt. The Theatrical 'World' for 1893, pp. 213-22, 224-30). Jones's reply did not appear immediately, but as a preface to the edition of the play published by Macmillan in November 1898. In it, Jones said he knew "of no other critic who can safely be trusted to arrive at a wrong effect with so much precision and honest painstaking effort" as Archer (Thorne, p. 149). Jones apologized to Archer in a letter on 26 June 1899 (British Library MS. ADD 45292, fol. 322) for his "very illnatured and egotistical attack."

30 Thorne, p. 152.

31 "Herbert and I: A Trivial, Fond Record," Herbert Beerbohm Tree: Some Memories of Him and of His Art Collected by Max Beerbohm (London: Hutchinson, [1920]), p. 84.

32 Shaw called Jones's blank verse "a model of speakability" (Thorne, p. 152).

33 Archer reported (Theatrical 'World' for 1893, p. 216) that the Devil acted as a kind of chorus: "And what a chorus! How trivial! How obtrusive! How vulgar! How nauseous! And, withal, how pretentious!" The critic in Theatre (1 November 1893, p. 284) called the Devil "merely a loquacious busybody."

34 The Masqueraders: A Play in Four Acts, rpt. Vol. II of Representative Plays, I, p. 215. All further references to this work appear in the text.

35 The Masqueraders was first performed at the St. James's Theatre, 28 April 1894; The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith at the Garrick, 13 March 1895.

36 Thorne, p. 158.

37 Enthoven MS dated 18 November. Fanny's First Play was first produced 1 January 1912 at the Little Theatre.

38 London: Bean, Webley, 1887. First produced at Théâtre Français, 17 January 1887. Jones described his reaction to Francillon in Blathwayt, p. 79. Pinero also saw the play at this time and wrote about it in a letter to Jones from Venice dated 17 April 1887 (The Collected Letters of Sir Arthur Pinero, ed. J. P. Wearing [Minneapolis: Univ of Minnesota Press, 1974], p. 92).

39 Jones put his view on adaptation succinctly in a lecture at Yale in 1906 ("Literature and the Modern Drama," Foundations, p. 64). He felt a modern play should be adapted "when its scheme, or some part of its scheme, suggests to a foreign dramatist that it may be so altered and strengthened as to be made into a better, that is into what is virtually an original play."

40 Goodenough, pp. 38-9. The letters to Jones from Wyndham at this time are available at the Brotherton Library, Univ of Leeds. Parts of them have been published in Thorne, pp. 162-6, and in Rowell's "Wyndham of Wyndham's."

41 The Case of Rebellious Susan: A Comedy in Three Acts (London: Macmillan, 1897), pp. v-x. All references to the play itself appear in the text. The preface was reprinted in Renascence, pp. 325-30; the play in Vol. II of Representative Plays.

42 The critical reception to the first performance at the Criterion, 3 October 1894, was tepid and occasionally tetchy, but the play ran 164 nights (Thorne, p. 167).

43 A. E. W. Mason, Sir George Alexander and the St. James's Theatre (London: Macmillan, 1935), p. 92. Jones's play opened 11 May 1895.

44 "Preface" to The Triumph of the Philistines and How Mr. Jorgan Preserved the Morals of Market Pewbury under Very Trying Circumstances: A Comedy in Three Acts (London: Macmillan, 1899), p. x. All references to the play appear in the text.

45 Shaw reported that "when Mr. Jones appeared before the curtain several persons howled piteously, like dogs who had been purposely run over" (Saturday Review, 18 May 1895; rpt. Our Theatre in the Nineties [London: Constable, 1932], I, 123).

46 The play ran for only 44 nights (Thorne, p. 169).

47 1 June 1895, p. 356.

48 Our Theatre in the Nineties, I, 123.

49 Michael and His Lost Angel: A Play in Five Acts, rpt. Vol. III of Representative Plays, III, pp. 56-7.

50 p. 85.

51 The Stage critic (23 January 1896, p. 12) called the play "tedious"; Theatre (1 February 1896, p. 97) called Michael himself "contemptible." Archer was one of Jones's few supporters. He called the play "a beautiful love-story" and "a piece of true dramatic poetry" (22 January 1896; rpt. The Theatrical 'World' for 1896 [London: Walter Scott, 1897], p. 16, 23).

52 The play opened on the same day, 15 January 1896, at the Lyceum in London and the Empire in New York (Thorne, p. 175, 178, 180).

53 In her memoirs, Mrs. Campbell calls the part of Audrie "vulgar" and says that there was something in the play she "could not stomach" (My Life and Some Letters [London: Hutchinson, 1922], p. 109).

54 Thorne, p. 174. Forbes-Robertson feared the play would be misunderstood because "'a lost angel' has been a term for a lady of pleasure for many years."

55 Thorne, pp. 177-9. Jones suggested the same thing to William Archer in a letter dated 14 February 1896 (British Library MS. ADD 45292, fol. 314). The manuscripts of Jones's letters to Forbes-Robertson are held at the Enthoven.

56 Our Theatre in the Nineties, II, 16-9.

57 The play bears a strong resemblance to Anatole France's novel Thais (1889) in this respect.

Chapter III

Disillusion

1896-1906

Both The Triumph of the Philistines and Michael and His Lost Angel had been the wrong plays at the wrong time. They were too strong and too outspoken for the days when the Wilde scandal was at its height. Jones attacked and called into question the fundamental beliefs of nineteenth-century society, and he did so in Victorian terms. He used recognizable philistine businessmen, clergymen and aristocrats, all familiar stage types, but he made them real and he made the best of them doubt. Unfortunately, Jones often seemed to be pleading more for hedonism than for freedom, and in his tone, he was often as intolerant as any philistine. Jorgan is so much mocked in The Triumph of the Philistines that he actually becomes a sympathetic character when his world falls apart. The Reverend Michael Feversham does nothing in the end but whimper. Jones often did not appreciate the irony in the situations he copied from life, and he had no sense of tragedy. He had no higher values to replace the ones he was attacking nor could he face the black pit of despair with courage and nobility. He merely threw their worn-out values back into the faces of his Victorian audience. He did his best between 1879 and 1896 to open the way for modern theater in England, but he could give no hope nor could he face the truth with courage. He was himself spiritually bankrupt and unsure.

Jones's personal defeat was not complete until later in 1896 with the failure of his next play, The Rogue's Comedy. It is a play written by an idealist turned cynic, and it marks the beginning of

Jones's retreat into the forms and half-buried ideas of his past. After Michael and His Lost Angel, Jones's themes no longer develop and grow more complex. At his worst, he tends to repeat himself and to return to a kind of melodramatic emotion which is even more hysterical and overwrought than that in his earlier serious plays. At his best, he indulges in self-parody and a genial tolerance of humanity and its foibles in "light" comedies.

In The Rogue's Comedy, the return to the past has begun. First of all, Jones had to flee back to his old partner, the actor-manager E. S. Willard, and tailor a play to his liking.¹ He needed the money, and he had lost his audience. Willard had helped make Jones's name in the theater with play like The Silver King, The Middleman and Judah. In his present mood, Jones takes these plays and debases their essential morality. Just as in Judah, Jones writes a play about confidence tricks. In the early play, Vashti Dethic and her father are bogus faith-healers who extort money from the rich. Vashti's powers may or may not be real, but they are based in a lie, that is, that her powers come from her inhumanly long periods of fasting. When their dishonesty is discovered by the Reverend Judah Llewellyn, he first lies for them and then later exposes them and his own lie in a public confession. Of these three characters, Jones chooses to make the most immoral one, a man like Vashti's unscrupulous father, the central character. He is Bailey Prothero, a fortune-teller. His knowledge of aristocratic scandal comes from his wife who, as Miss Jenison, has infiltrated London society by becoming a companion to a Lady Dovergreen. His knowledge of the future comes from sheer luck. Prothero is a fraud and a humbug, but Jones neither

chastises him nor does he have him chastise himself. Apparently he no longer has the heart to portray men like Judah Llewellyn and Michael Feversham who have strict consciences. Whenever Prothero's wife wavers in one of their designs, he always tells her to shut up her conscience in a box, and she always does very neatly. Suddenly a man even more unscrupulous than Captain "Spider" Skinner of The Silver King is a hero. And certainly no one in The Rogue's Comedy resembles the selfless Cyrus Blenkarn. But most telling of all, Jones allows a lie to go unpunished, something he has never done. Not only is Prothero allowed to escape the consequences of his own lies, but they also materially benefit his son.

As The Rogue's Comedy opens, Lady Clarabut and the young lawyer George Lambert plot to expose the fortune-teller Prothero. Lambert, meanwhile, wishes to marry Nina Clarabut, but her parents object because Lambert does not know who his parents are and the well-connected Clarabuts fear a hidden scandal. But it soon becomes apparent that The Rogue's Comedy is not going to resemble The Importance of Being Earnest. Lambert's ancestors are indeed shady, and his parents are none other than Mr. and Mrs. Bailey Prothero. During the course of the play, Prothero wins and loses a fortune in business speculation and is exposed by Lambert. In the final scene, he lies to his son, telling him that his mother was honest and that his father was an old swindler friend of his, the late Jack Burton, and Jones allows the lie to stand. Perhaps Jones could finally sympathize with this con man down on his luck. Lambert is given permission to marry Nina, and Prothero and his wife are allowed to escape to the continent to avoid the law.

Although essentially amoral, Prothero does show some human feeling when he does not seek revenge on his son for exposing him but rather tries to insure a future for him. But in this bleak new world created by the cynical Jones only one character is left triumphant, the haughty aristocratic mother of Lambert's fiancée, Lady Clarabut. She speculates in Prothero's bogus company but draws her money out before the collapse. Business here is not hard work but only speculation, that is, gambling. She feels she can preach morality to her nephew, a fellow-speculator, because she has won by chance and he has lost and:

because I have invested my hard-earned winnings in railway bonds and Consols for the benefit of my family. Because now I have secured a snug little fortune, I don't intend to risk another farthing as long as I live. If that doesn't give me the right to preach against the evils of gambling I should like to know what does.²

Cynicism has appeared before in Jones's plays, but never before has it been allowed to triumph.

William Archer wrote that he was not sure of the morality in The Rogue's Comedy, but he did know that the rogues were more interesting and sympathetic than the "(more or less) honest" people.³ The play lacks morality because Jones has lost his idealism. There is only a little fellow-feeling left for the rogues. Perhaps this was what prompted the audience to boo Jones steadily for twenty-five minutes at his curtain call on opening night, or perhaps they were just still angry for his use of a Church as a setting in Michael and His Lost Angel. Nevertheless this rough treatment made the broken playwright retreat even further. He vowed never again to take a call,⁴ and he likewise withdrew his soul from public exhibition.

Between 1896 and 1900, Jones earned the major part of his living and regained some of his popularity by retailoring old material for the actor-manager Charles Wyndham, upon whom he was now as dependent for the production of his plays as he once was on Wilson Barrett. This must have been a truly bitter pill for him to swallow. In his next play, The Physician, Jones not only chooses a clinical subject but also a clinical approach. First of all, having seen the frenzy that Barrett could stir up in an audience, Jones must have realized that Wyndham had a similar ability to command, only the style was different. What Barrett had done with crude bombast Wyndham did with a subtler mixture of pathos and worldly wisdom. Thus he knowingly tailored a new kind of "hero" play for the younger actor-manager, where the moral dilemma was as taxing as the physical feats of Lord Harry Bendish.

When The Physician opened at the Criterion Theatre on March 25, 1897, Wyndham played the strong but sensitive Dr. Lewin Carey, a world-weary physician. Carey is torn between his duty to his professional code of ethics and his desire for a woman. Mary Moore, Wyndham's usual leading lady, played the untouchable object of his desires, the sweet, innocent, countrified Edana Hinde. At the beginning of the play, the famous London doctor who specializes in the treatment of nervous disorders is himself close to a breakdown. He tells his friend the country practitioner Dr. Brooker why:

I've stood here an open receptacle for all the nervous diseases of the age to be poured into. And the mischief is, Brooker, I'm so sympathetic I've caught them all.⁵

Certainly we can hear Jones himself speaking here.

Along with overwork, Carey has another problem. He is deeply

in love with a sophisticated, citified aristocrat, the "flaming, intellectual coquette" Lady Valerie Camville. Lady Val bears an uncanny resemblance to Audrie Lesden, the adulteress in Michael and His Lost Angel, and both parts were played by the same actress, Marion Terry. But this time, in order to pander to the audience's taste, Jones cynically draws the "fallen" woman as totally bad. She has a quicksilver wit and in the abstract she is, like Audrie, a pitiable, rootless creature. But, unlike Audrie, she is not allowed an ounce of sympathy in the play. Jones says in his stage directions that she is "without spirituality."⁶ For him this means that she is devoid of compassion and she remains this way throughout the play. This makes her completely inhuman and unbelievable, merely a foil in the melodramatic tradition for Edana and nothing more. In Michael and His Lost Angel, Jones had tried to bring this type of personality together with her opposite and join them in a male-female relationship similar to the kind later attempted by D. H. Lawrence. But he had been hooted out of the theater. Still Jones has set up a highly dramatic situation here. He has a man divided within himself in love with two women, each representing one-half of his nature. Lady Val symbolizes his disillusionment and loss of faith while Edana symbolizes his "healing instinct," that is, his idealism. But rather than pit the two women against each other so as to loose the forces within Carey to do battle for his soul, Jones has Carey reject Lady Val and choose Edana immediately. No more controversy for Jones now. Scorned by the city slickers connected with the theater, he returns to praise the country innocence he had known as a child.⁷ At the same time, Jones's intellect is twisting traditional melodramatic

devices in ways that border on the sardonic. First of all, there is Carey, a modern super-hero. Then Carey is torn between Lady Val who symbolizes the corrupt city while Edana symbolizes country goodness. He sets Act I in London but the rest of the play in rural Fontleas where Carey goes to regain his emotional health to underline this theme. But with all this Jones has a sterile contrast and no way to move his plot along and unite Carey and Edana so he adds a character solely to provide some action in the story, Walter Amphiel. Amphiel is Edana's fiancé and Jones's private joke, a gesture slightly more sardonic than his allowing Marion Terry to be cast as Lady Val. Edana believes that Amphiel is the leader of an important temperance movement, and she hires the good doctor to look after his failing health which she believes is caused by overwork. But Carey soon learns that Amphiel is secretly a hopeless drunkard who began to drink heavily after he ruined a young country girl who abandoned their child and took to a life of debauchery and prostitution in, of course, the city. Jones himself was completely against temperance societies, prohibition and teetotalism in all its forms and with Walter Amphiel, he slyly mocks both some of his contemporaries and the melodramatic convention.⁸ Carey is repelled by Amphiel whose appetites are totally out of control, and yet he feels it is his duty to help him in spite of the fact that he is in love with Amphiel's fiancée and it would be much more convenient just to let the patient die. Carey controls his desire for Edana for four acts during which Jones introduces some simple country bumpkins who court and wed in a natural, uncomplicated country way. Eventually Edana overhears a conversation between Carey and Amphiel by which she learns the truth and unlike the

earlier heroine Nellie Denver of The Silver King who is faithful to her husband and whose constancy inspires him, Edana grows sick with loathing and disgust. Luckily Amphiel's health breaks, another melodramatic convention, and he dies of pneumonia far from Fontleas. As Carey gives her the fatal news, a wedding hymn plays in the background and Edana falls into the arms of the good doctor. Charles Wyndham is again united with Mary Moore.

Contemporary critics were quick to point out the artificiality of The Physician. William Archer considered it a very good theatrical piece and "little short of a masterpiece in the art of exciting and sustaining interest."⁹ Theatre's critic called it a play full of "theatrical dexterity" rather than "genuine dramatic instinct."¹⁰ To us it is an interesting play as a source for Shaw's The Doctor's Dilemma and as a way for Jones to make a living and to have his little joke in the days of his darkest despair as a playwright.¹¹

To see how Jones's art changed after the failure of Michael and His Lost Angel, how he battled back to popularity, and further what a burden the theatrical system was upon him, we need only look at Jones's next two plays. First, hungry for success and pressured by Wyndham, he wrote the clever and highly successful comedy The Liars with a heavy moral ending.¹² Free of Wyndham and flushed with success, he wrote the kind of play he himself wished to write, The Manoeuvres of Jane, a comedy without a moral at all, which chides all moral codes, even Jones's own. Ironically, The Liars is the play by which Jones is remembered while The Manoeuvres of Jane is almost totally forgotten.

The Liars was first produced at the Criterion Theatre on

October 6, 1897, with Charles Wyndham playing the role of the all-wise, unemotional raisonneur Sir Christopher Deering. The Liars is one of Jones's best known plays, probably because it is written in two styles. There is Deering, the young idealist Edward Falkner and Gilbert and Lady Jessica Nepean. These are the serious, rigidly moral, Wyndham-style characters. They reflect one side of Jones's personality, and they are the characters which made the play appealing to the Wyndham audience. But there is another group of characters which reflect Jones's other side, and they are the characters which would appeal to us today. These are Freddie and Lady Rosamond Tatton and Archibald and Dolly Coke. They are flawed and warmly human, and they are the children of Jones's flexible, comic, tolerant side. It is obvious in any reading of The Liars that these are the characters which give the play life and that these lovable liars are the characters in which Jones is really interested. The disillusioned playwright is groping. He is searching for a new voice. It is through the Tattons and the Cokes that he will find that voice and go on to write his best plays.

In The Liars, Jones focuses on three ordinary upper middle class couples: Gilbert and Lady Jessica Nepean, Freddie and Lady Rosamond Tatton and Archibald and Dolly Coke. The Cokes are the least significant of the three, but they are probably the most in love. He is a fuss-budget who constantly worries about his empty-headed wife catching influenza. She renders such services as accompanying him to the dentist because he is afraid of the gas. The Tattons are a bit livelier mainly because Freddie, whom Lady Jessica describes as "a poor little pocket-edition of a man," is always trying to prove his mas-

culine superiority by attempting to control his wife's actions.¹³ She baits her squeaky-voiced husband with fine farcical results. The Nepeans are the most seriously locked in conflict, and it is around their marital difficulties that the plot centers. Gilbert Nepean is a coarse businessman who neglects his charming wife. She complains of his dullness:

I don't care what she said, so long as she didn't say he could understand a joke. That would be shamefully untrue. I've lived with him for five years, and I'm sure he can't.¹⁴

Bored and discontent, Lady Jessica slips into a flirtation with the heroic, manly, idealistic and rather stupid Edward Falkner. Sir Christopher Deering, Falkner's best friend, is the raisonneur of the play. He is not moral but merely the only rational being among a crowd of irrational and over-emotional humans. He coldly and clearly outlines the courses of action open to them at any given time. His Wyndham wisdom brooks no softness. He is shrewd, patriotic and "romantic" about women who meet his high standards. He is smug or a savior depending on one's point of view.¹⁵

The plot of The Liars turns on the usual kind of unfortunate coincidence. Flattered by the attentions of Falkner, Lady Jessica agrees to meet him accidentally on purpose for dinner at a country inn called the Star and Garter. She is discovered with Falkner there by her husband's brother George and for the rest of the play, her friends try to construct any number of lies to give her an alibi for being there. Honesty is never even considered, and confession seems like something out of another world.

The action moves almost flawlessly. Jones even hustles the

fourth act along by having Deering packing hastily for Africa throughout. He proposes to Beatrice Ebernoe in five minutes (he times himself) and spends most of the act looking at his watch. He manages to accomplish everything though. He wins Beatrice, reconciles Gilbert and his wife and convinces the brokenhearted Falkner to come to Africa with him.

Jones and Wyndham made a great deal of money on The Liars, and during the run of the play, Jones had the time to write a "dramatic fragment" called The Goal which throws much light on Jones's attitude toward himself at this point in his career. It is the story of the last hours of a stalwart, wealthy English engineer, Sir Stephen Famariss, and Sir Stephen's reconciliation with his son Daniel. It is the story of the end of an era, and it is the story of the death of Jones's old personality, the rugged, idealistic one, and the birth of a new one, symbolized by Sir Stephen's son Daniel. It shows Jones's determination to continue to build bridges or to write plays in whatever way he can to suit the new age.

Knowing he is about to die of angina pectoris at the age of seventy-five after a hardy and active life, Sir Stephen can speak his mind to everyone and reveal his true feelings. First, he talks to his doctor and reminisces about his parents and his love life. This reflects Jones's tendency to romanticize his past. Next he has a mild flirtation with his eighteen year old neighbor Peggie Lovel. She fusses about her dress in an empty-headed way, and he, admiring her youthful charms, muses that young love will last well beyond his own lifetime. Thus Jones takes his usual cynical view of women as pretty and worthless creatures meant for man's pleasure and admiration.

He also gives her some grandfatherly advice about choosing a healthy husband. Here we see Jones's preoccupation with eugenics and his inability at times to love or even to tolerate the ugly, the weak or the lowly. Finally, he is alone, waiting for his son. He mocks religion to his nurse and says he will be judged by railways, canals and bridges he has built and not by his sanctity or his human character defects. Here Jones reveals his lack of spiritual values. He was a materialist who believed in the gospel of hard work. He did not see himself as an artist but as an engineer who constructed plays rather than wrote them. He had the empty values of a philistine businessman without the puritanism and he hid his essential hedonism very carefully. Finally, Daniel arrives and Sir Stephen and his son reconcile their engineering differences, but there is no talk of love except in the most sentimental way. He even begs his son to lie to him to give him hope and he advises any means, even bribery, to get an engineering job done. At the last, he tries to outline yet another engineering project, a bridge between England and America which he wants his son to build. He dies dreaming of this impossible goal.

The Goal gives a last portrait of Jones as an energetic and determined idealist. The self-portrait is both shallow and pathetic. Jones's materialism and insensitivity show through clearly, and his struggle to communicate, that is, to build bridges, is pitiful. The fact that Jones allowed this play to be produced in 1914 and that he saw it as prophecy shows his continued lack of self-knowledge.¹⁶

But The Goal is also a turning point. Jones does try to bury the past and he does try to make a new beginning. He does write better and generally more sympathetic plays. He becomes wiser and

more tolerant as he grows older. But because he never sees Sir Stephen as anything else but a hero, the past will return to haunt him. He will write better plays, but he will also write some of the worst plays of his career, ugly and neurotic ones.

Writing The Goal seems to have helped Jones to quiet some of the demons within him for awhile, his self-doubts and his secret feelings of inferiority. The enormous success of The Liars bolstered his self-confidence. He left Wyndham and wrote an entirely different kind of comedy, a light, amoral one called The Manoeuvres of Jane for Cyril Maude. Maude apparently did not attempt to dictate changes in the play text itself as Wyndham generally did, but, as we shall see, he took liberties in the actual production. We have here the play Jones himself wished to write even though the play that the contemporary audience saw was quite different in tone than what Jones had intended.

The Manoeuvres of Jane centers around a relationship identical to the kind Jones had used early in his career, the father-daughter relationship. In plays like Elopement, the father-daughter conflict is conventional and can be found not only in the theater but in novels such as Mary Barton and Sybil. It became almost obsessive in the middle of the nineteenth century for several reasons. First of all, it is a perfect vehicle for the theme of love and duty. The daughter, young and innocent, is full of natural and untamed passion and she must be convinced to follow duty not love by her older and wiser and more civilized parent. The choice of a male parent and a female child, of course, reflects the paternalism in Victorian society and the supposed personalities of women, all of whom were considered to be basically passive, docile, yet heroic when necessary. Then the

father-daughter relationship is one through which the playwright can stir up a great deal of emotion between a man and a woman and still keep the relationship innocent, without any troubling erotic overtones. This kind of "safe" relationship is akin to the use of the clergyman as a male; he could enter into a relationship with a female and yet it could be innocent and safe. Jones forced the eroticism to the surface in Michael and His Lost Angel and it revolted his audience.

The Manoeuvres of Jane is written around a heated battle between the generations and, in a veiled way, between the sexes. Precocious Jane Nangle has her heart set on the poor but honest George Lambert, but her stubborn father, a tyrannical businessman, objects. Because Nangle is always making money, he has neglected his daughter as much as George Nepean neglected his wife in The Liars. Because Jane has been continually expelled from the very best young ladies' schools, her desperate father arranges for her to live with a kind but not very bright woman, Mrs. Beechinor. A failure at running her own school, she is also a failure at bringing up her own daughter, the horrid little meddler Pamela. Of course, Mrs. Beechinor's good natured incompetence allows Jane to do whatever she pleases with very little effort.

Jones has also provided Jane with a suitable companion, one who will conspire readily in any adventure, Constantia Gage. Her presence and her machinations are probably the major reasons why this play was labelled amoral by the critics. Constantia is a poor girl with one goal in life, to snare a rich husband. She coolly sets her sights on the rich but prissy fool, Lord Philibert Bapchild, whom

his relatives wish the wealthy Jane to marry. Her reasoning runs thus:

The next best thing to having a strong, wise man for a husband, is to have a weak easy fool. I'm not sure whether it isn't the better of the two.¹⁷

She shamelessly snares the puritanical momma's boy with her back hair, and one cannot help but agree with this minx who resembles Becky Sharp that their engagement is "the wisest thing Lord Bapchild has ever done" (IV, p. 115). She may be a liar without a conscience, but Jones seems to feel that Philibert deserves her since some men just cry out for clever managing. Obviously, Jones is willing to tolerate a few lies here.

Because of the imminent return of her father in the third act and her adamant refusal to allow her boyfriend George to take a job "among Californian Girls" for two years without her, Jane plots to elope. Thereafter complication follows complication. The plot is twisted so that Jane is prevented from running off and her father is finally persuaded to give his grudging approval to her marriage:

Nangle. Now, understand me, miss, I do not give my consent to this marriage. (They all look grave.)
But if you are determined to get married, I shall most likely be present at the ceremony. And I see no reason why you should go abroad, because I shall provide for you very handsomely over here.
Jane. Dear daddy! I knew you would let us obey you.
(IV, pp. 122-3)

Jane is able to get her way with luck and perseverance. In this refreshing play, she civilizes herself and accepts her duty in spite of, rather than because of, the guidance of her elders.

Understanding Jane's victory is important for understanding the new Jones. In many ways this play is even more contrived and arti-

ficial than The Liars. Certainly there is more incident and coincidence.¹⁸ Yet The Manoeuvres of Jane is a warm, human comedy where nothing seems forced. There are several reasons for this. First of all, the morality here is natural. There are no puritans nor a Wyndham to insist on rigid rules. Secondly, Jones had daughters of his own about Jane's age. In 1898, the eldest of his four daughters would have been eighteen years old. It seems very likely that she and her sisters exerted an influence on him, warming his attitude towards women. Certainly his closest personal relationship seems to have been with his daughter and biographer Mrs. Thorne.

A third new dimension is Jones's critical thinking on the problem of realism in characterization. In a lecture he gave in 1897 called "The Drama and Real Life," Jones talks about creating character.¹⁹ He says the playwright's problem is to try to make "distinct individuals" while trying to make them "types" too. In fact, Jones is far more successful at maintaining the balance in The Manoeuvres of Jane than in any of his earlier efforts. Earlier he seems more interested in ideas and, therefore, in types. Now he is more interested in people.

But The Manoeuvres of Jane, a comedy of wit and pluck and almost flawless comic pacing, was roundly booed on its first night and received, according to Mrs. Thorne, the "worst reception in the Press" of all of her father's plays.²⁰ Walkley, in a particularly vitriolic review in the Speaker, called the play a comédie rosse, that is, a play full of characters with no "moral sense," and he labelled Jane herself "thoroughly detestable."²¹ Max Beerbohm gave Jones a sympathetic hearing while Archer called the play "at least inoffensive"

from a "literary point of view."²² Years later, Clayton Hamilton could not even find room for this unfairly maligned play in his Representative Plays, and the highest tribute paid it was probably Cyril Maude's in his reminiscences. He could not understand why such a delightful piece was never revived.²³

Jones obviously did not mean his play to be taken too seriously. After all, he was dealing with young love. Had Jane been married already when she met George Lambert, Jones never would have treated the rebellion so lightly. He deliberately chose the situation as he did the epigraph from Byron which appears on the title page of French's edition of the play:

There is a tide in the affairs of women
Which taken at the flood leads--God knows where.

Jones meant to write a comedy of manners, a light one indeed, but still one of substance. The public, however, could not accept a comédie rosse--unless it was played as a farce. After the first night, Cyril Maude had his company do just that, and he rescued the play. With his doctoring, it ran 281 nights.²⁴ Maude recounts in his reminiscences how he decided to play The Manoeuvres of Jane more broadly and how Jones objected. The actor-manager remedied the situation by posting "sort of spies in front of the house." When Jones was spotted entering the theater, Maude would "modify" his "farcical business."²⁵ It seems Jones never could win, but at least we must be grateful to Maude for allowing the playwright to write in his own way and taking liberties with Jones's play only in performance.

Unfortunately after the financial success of both The Liars and The Manoeuvres of Jane, Jones decided to go back to being serious

again. He subsequently produced two dismal failures, Carnac Sahib and The Lackey's Carnival, and managed to reduce his circumstances to the point where he was forced to tailor a play for Wyndham once again.

Just as Shaw implied that Arms and the Man was an answer to The Masqueraders,²⁶ Carnac Sahib seems to be meant as an antidote to the kind of anti-heroism in the Shaw play. The stage directions, if nothing else, seem to suggest that Jones meant his play to be taken seriously as depicting men and women of high passion involved in noble intrigue. Unfortunately, the core of the piece, the emotional life of the characters, is hollow. Colonel Stacy Carnac fights Colonel Arthur Syrett for the much kissed hand of Mrs. Olive Arnison. Because the hero pursues such a trivial woman, he himself seems to be a man of trivial sensibility, especially when the pure and passive Ellice Ford wins the brave man's heart. The problem here is similar to that in Jones's short "tragedy" Grace Mary. He lavishes so much care and attention on the Cornish dialect in that play that he neglects to present characters that are more than stick figures and a plot that is less than skeletal and absurd to boot. Similarly, in Carnac Sahib there is little else to interest the reader or viewer than details of English life in India. Jones read on India for two years before writing Carnac Sahib, and he even had special help on Indian names and military etiquette from Sir Evelyn Wood.²⁷ Then Jones cannot write true tragedy because he sees himself as Sir Stephen Famariss in The Goal. He is a materialist without a moral center. The result is a mayhem filled plot laced with adultery and sentimentality which is unconvincing because it is the result of Jones's reading and not his observation of real life as had been the

case, for instance, with The Manoeuvres of Jane. Jones even includes a drunkard wallowing in self-pity and a host of the kind of one-dimensional characters which he used to draw for routine actor-manager melodramas. Jones himself tended to blame the dismal failure of the play on Beerbohm Tree,²⁸ but clearly no one could do anything with this amoral tragedy and the audience was right this time in rejecting what is really only a lurid Anglo-Indian melodrama.²⁹

Jones seems to be floundering in his next play, The Lackey's Carnival. The playwright had begun to think seriously about political and social issues, and the confusion in this play reflects the confusion in his mind. Jones had a classic revolutionary's mentality. He despised the system as it was originally set up. He worked tirelessly to tear down the system in the name of freedom. But once he had his freedom, he had nothing better to offer in place of the old values and ways he had worked so hard to displace. Jones had not yet realized this when he was writing The Lackey's Carnival. He was also unable to see that even if he was careful to give all points of view in a play, that is, to put in good and bad aristocrats and good and bad servants, he could not help but reveal his own personality and his own bias in the end. Jones, in fact, has a kind of love-hate relationship with the central character in The Lackey's Carnival, Thomas Tarboy. He disapproves of his behavior as a blackmailer and a hedonist, yet he rather admires his pluck. When Tarboy is sent off to prison at the end of the play by his aristocratic employers, the solution does not ring true and we have an unsatisfying ending to a very confused play.

Jones had written a comedy-drama based on the class system once

before in his career in 1887, Heart of Hearts. There Jones views the system from a working class and have-not point of view. The butler in the piece, James Robins, is a humble, docile servant who has secretly married into the aristocracy through his employer's spinster sister. His niece is also about to marry into the aristocratic family he serves because she is good and kind and better educated than James himself. All this, of course, is wishful thinking on Jones's part, the kind of fantasy easily written by a naive young man who has worked hard as a clerk and who has high hopes of being a literary man in London. But by early 1900, Jones's situation has radically changed. He was a wealthy man and an established "serious" playwright with confused values who would rather not remember his lowly origins. The following section of a letter to William Archer at this time is revealing:

I took a great deal of pain and a great deal of delight in drawing the servants' characters, and I think I have done them rather well. But it seems to me the better I have drawn them the more vulgar they appear, and I am not sure whether this vulgarity may not be imputed to me personally.

Jones has a horror of being thought vulgar, and that is probably why he feels compelled to paint the central character in The Lackey's Carnival so darkly. He must act like an aristocrat and put these upstart servants in their places. This would also explain Jones's rabid opposition to the Compulsory Education Acts, or, as it was known at that time, "popular education."³⁰

Although Jones had indeed turned into a snob, he was ironically still a socialist at heart, and he feels obliged to tell Archer that he does not focus on the upper classes in comedy for "snobbish

motives":

The passions, humours, and follies of mankind are best shown in people of leisure, who, if they are not more highly developed as human beings, are yet greater adepts in the art of expressing themselves.

He continues by citing a concrete example:

The butcher boy whose gal has been untrue to him feels all the pangs of Othello, but cannot express himself.... put him on the stage in his blue clothes and let him express himself in his own language--Nothing can save him from being ridiculous.³¹

This is certainly quite a different Jones from the young man who, sixteen years earlier, called for a movement in the modern drama comparable to that begun by Wordsworth in early nineteenth-century poetry, a call for "naturalness, simplicity, thoughtfulness, sincerity" and a "sheer, hard, straightforward devotion to nature and truth in the language of the theater."³²

Thus Jones fears Thomas Tarboy and yet he feels a sympathy for the hero-villain-valet. Certainly Tarboy is the closest thing to a believable human character in The Lackey's Carnival. But Jones's own insecurity compels him to punish Tarboy's hypocrisy ruthlessly even though Bertie Oglander, the youngest son in the aristocratic family that employs Tarboy, is as much of a cad and a hedonist as Tarboy himself. Jones is disgusted by Tarboy, yet he rather likes him while he despises Bertie Oglander, yet he panders to him and feels rather sorry for the rest of his family who at least try to do their duty as best they can. Nowhere is this confused vision more obvious than in the scene where the cocky valet is finally trapped by the stuffy lawyer Sir George Carcy. The following exchange takes place:

Thomas. (Has been lolling insolently in easy chair.)
It's this corrupt, aristocratic age that has floored me!

Preyed upon by rapacious parents and paramours (glancing at his mother and Sarah), I have still held up my head; surrounded by cads and snobs (Looking at Bertie, Sir George and Sir Richard), I have dared to be a man and not a menial--and what is my reward?

Sir George. Two years, at least. I shall do my best to make it five.

Thomas. Thank you.³³

Tarboy's vision is cloudy, but some of what he says here is true. He labels his mother and Sarah "rapacious." His mother is decidedly a shark, but poor Sarah, his "paramour," is a naive girl who only wants Tarboy to do his duty by marrying her and caring for their baby son. Mrs. Tarboy, on the other hand, uses the baby to extort more money from her son.

Tarboy is again unfair when he assesses the aristocrats. Bertie Oglander is indeed a cad--as much of a cad with women as Tarboy himself. But he is able to get away with his arrogance because he is well-born. Sir George is not entirely a snob. He is reasonable, and he uses the gifts his position in society has given him for good purposes if not self-sacrificial ones. Indeed he is smug, but it is unfair to discuss Bertie and Sir George in the same breath. Finally Sir Richard Oglander is thrown in, and he is one of the most inoffensive of men in the play. He is henpecked by his second wife and as put upon in his own way as his unfortunate butler Jowers whose key to the wine cellar is stolen so that Tarboy can have the best champagne at his "carnival."

Finally, Tarboy claims he has "dared to be a man and not a menial." Now indeed this is true. He has dared, but not in an honest forthright way. He never defies openly and instead weedles and cheats and blackmails an innocent woman and lies on any convenient occasion.

And for what purpose? To give a party! With the blackmail money he extorts from Mrs. Stephen Oglander by threatening to publish some compromising letters she once wrote him, Tarboy gives his fellow servants the most riotous and outrageous dinner party that London has ever seen, a real "lackey's carnival." In this way, he apes his "betters" and becomes both silly and lovable to us, a kind of Falstaff or Robin Hood. When the nasty Bertie traps Tarboy in the midst of the festivities, we actually feel sorry for him. Justice in the last act indeed seems to be blind and heartless.

Just as Tarboy stupidly lumps the innocent together with the guilty, so does Jones. The playwright makes the valet's bravado into cowardice--or tries to. To Jones who now has his own position to defend, the anarchy that can result from the daring of a half-right Tarboy is what he feared above all else because to him the universe was neutral and only might made right. A misguided force like Tarboy could lead to the destruction of everything, of all order, and Jones now has a stake in seeing that order remain in tact. Thus he silences Tarboy and chastises him, but the justice meted out is disquieting because it is enforced by a group of aristocrats who are often no better than Tarboy himself.³⁴

The audiences at the turn of the century must have sensed Jones's confusion. They rejected The Lackey's Carnival, a play whose views are too strong and contradictory for comedy. It is impossible to decide what Jones intended to be laughed at here. Jones the artist apparently sensed the coming chaos in the new century, but Jones the man feared the change in values. What in Heart of Hearts was a comic mask on a servant is now a sign of malevolent hypocrisy and what was

a stolid defense of goodness by a servant when he confronted his master has now become shirking responsibility and cheek.

After the dismal failure of Carnac Sahib and The Lackey's Carnival, Jones was forced to flee back to the stultifying good sense of Charles Wyndham and together they concocted yet another hit, Mrs. Dane's Defence. Like so many other of Jones's plays, Mrs. Dane's Defence is the story of a search for truth, a quest to dispel all doubt. The principal characters are three: Mrs. Lucy Dane, a beautiful "widow" with a terrible secret; Sir Daniel (Mr. Justice) Carteret, a skillful lawyer whose duty it is to ferret out that secret; and Lady Eastney, another widow who tries to temper Sir Daniel's sense of justice with mercy. Mrs. Dane arrives in the village of Sunningwater quite independently and charms most of the men in town, making their wives jealous. Among those smitten is Sir Daniel Carteret's foster son Lionel who promptly deserts his girlfriend Lady Eastney's niece Janet Colquhoun and proposes to Mrs. Dane. But Sir Daniel refuses to give his consent until he knows more about Mrs. Dane, especially as it is rumored in Sunningwater that she is really Felicia Hindemarsch whose scandalous affair with her employer in Vienna some years before left a wife dead, a husband insane and a love child. Using all the legal tools at his disposal such as detectives, depositions and witnesses, Sir Daniel sets out to prove not only that his son's fiancée is not Felicia Hindemarsch but also that she is indeed Mrs. Lucy Dane, formerly of Montreal. He pursues the truth, and in a scene of relentless questioning, tears apart the web of lies and half-truths that Felicia Hindemarsch has woven to create the illusion that she is Lucy Dane when in reality she had merely

assumed her dead cousin's identity. Sir Daniel thus learns what he has really been trying to find out--not factually who Mrs. Dane is but what kind of woman she is. She fails the test. She has lied and played the hypocrite to her future husband and to all those who have tried to be generous and kind to her. But worst of all, she tells Sir Daniel that she would not hesitate to lie again. Thus she cannot marry Lionel even though she is not totally banished. Lady Eastney, the Portia of the piece, takes pity on her since she holds that Felicia Hindemarsch is more a victim of circumstances than of any inner corruption. She insures that an apology for spreading rumors about "Mrs. Dane" is obtained from the town scandalmonger Mrs. Bulsom-Porter. Because of this, Mrs. Dane could continue to live in Sunningwater, but without Lionel. She chooses to leave and return to her child.

Mrs. Dane's Defence was an extremely popular play.³⁵ Wyndham knew what his audience wanted to hear and Jones provided it. The playwright himself did not much care for the play. He labelled it a "drawing-room melodrama"³⁶ and the highly theatrical and provocative third act in which Sir Daniel relentlessly hounds Mrs. Dane for the truth was deliberately written for theatrical effect.³⁷ The character of Mrs. Dane herself is the most important part of the play. She is a woman who is a liar and a hypocrite, and she is punished ruthlessly for her faults. But like Thomas Tarboy, she is also the most sympathetic character in the play. Her cynicism and lack of sentimentality give her a nobility and courage in the face of suffering that the rest of the characters lack. It must have been comforting for the audience to believe that in a world where neither religion nor reason could

provide an answer, there were still strong champions of honesty and truth who could force their will upon the lawless. Yet in the end, it is Mrs. Dane who wins the audience's sympathy and not Sir Daniel Carteret.³⁸

Jones's days as the leading "serious" playwright in London were numbered. Mrs. Dane's Defence was his last truly big theatrical success, and beginning in 1904, his star would be eclipsed by the enormous popularity of Shaw. After the turn of the century, Jones's plays become more obviously personal, and we can detect the symptoms of a depressive personality in his work. Jones's daughter Mrs. Thorne finds the reason for the series of nervous breakdowns her father suffered during his lifetime but especially after 1900 in the kind of life he was forced to lead professionally:

He paid the severe penalty of his temperament, which compelled him to live his life, not on an even plane, but in irregular periods of great intellectual activity, accompanied by intense nervous energy, excitement, and high spirits, to be followed by an appalling reaction of stagnation and misery, with very occasional intervals, which never lasted more than a few months, when he sailed along, so to speak, on an even keel.³⁹

Obviously the tension-filled life in the theater would take its toll on any man and, along with his professional problems, Jones bore heavy financial burdens and family obligations which in themselves were enough to break many men. But the fact that these changes of mood affect the plays he was writing very drastically suggests that the root of the problem lay deeper than life's pressures or even in Jones's artistic temperament. Jones's mind and sensibility were always divided, and the two sides were often in conflict. The signs of this division are first apparent as early as 1879 when Jones was

neatly separating his dramatic output into serious and comic modes with Hearts of Oak and Elopement. In the Nineties, this conflict took the form of the idealistic versus the cynical view of life. In general, the male characters are associated with duty, strict morality and honesty while the females are seen as pleasure-loving, lax and dishonest. Obvious examples of this division at work appear in The Dancing Girl and Michael and His Lost Angel. After 1900, Jones's view evolves further. His ideas about men and women become more complex and the conflict is now one of sensibility, his Victorian ideas versus his Edwardian ideas. His Victorian side was strict, serious, intolerant of weakness and rigid in its morality. His Edwardian side was tolerant, generous, forgiving and freer in its view of morality. His Victorian side generally emerged in his serious, sometimes bitter plays and in his political and social writings. His Edwardian side emerged in his comedies and often in his personal life. Sometimes he was cynical and at other times genial.

By 1902, Jones's days of experimentation and growth were almost at an end. In this year, H. B. Irving and Irene Vanbrugh starred in the last play in which Jones could claim to have written anything original, The Princess's Nose.⁴⁰ Henceforth, he would enjoy popular success, but usually abroad and then by repeating himself. He also wrote parodies of his own popular successes, usually by twisting an old formula slightly. He also wrote some of his most humane and charming social comedies during this period.

The Princess's Nose received generally poor notices and failed to attract an audience.⁴¹ It is set in the highest of high life into which Jones ever ventured, and it is mainly an excuse for him to write

some society comedy and for the audience to be enthralled by an array of gorgeous costumes, including some for the extravagant tableaux vivants which takes place in the play. In a rather artificial plot, Jones tells the story of a penniless young girl with a warm, loving character who is married off by her titled aunt to an egotistical and lecherous French prince. While Norah Langrish, now the Princess de Chalençon, is confined with her first child, her foreign-born husband is seduced, not unwillingly, by her frustrated old schoolmate Mrs. Malpas, the wife of an ineffectual brewer. When the play opens, Norah has just found out what has been going on in her house while she has been busy in the nursery. She seeks the advice of her uncle, one of Jones's red-blooded English country gentlemen types. He advises her to fight fire with fire and seduce her husband back. She does just this and, as Shaw put it in a letter to Jones, she "turns whore and does a seduction scene which puts her far below the other woman."⁴² Armed with a fetching new negligee and some tears, she cheapens herself by using her feminine wiles to persuade her worthless aristocratic husband to stay at home instead of joining Mrs. Malpas in Paris. Unfortunately, she is too sure of herself and orders her husband's carriage put away even before she begins her seduction scene. When the Prince finds this out, his male ego is bruised, and he heads off to the train station after Mrs. Malpas just for spite. Because the plot is based on simple-minded assumptions about human behavior, Jones has created a situation impossible to resolve. What he finally does is change the mood from comedy to farce, or, to follow Max Beerbohm, to "fantasy."⁴³ Jones uses a kind of deus ex machina device, the machine being literally a new motor car with a

French chauffeur on the wrong side of the road at night in the English countryside. The inevitable accident results, and Mrs. Malpas, the unfortunate passenger, suffers a bruised nose which renders her unattractive to the wayward husband.

The Princess's Nose is a disquieting play, and it is already symptomatic of the decadent sexuality which appears in Jones's later works. The caddish behavior of the Prince, excused by Jones for the silly reason that he is French, his wife's whore-like behavior and the tasteless horsewhipping of the effeminate producer of the Princess's tableaux vivants because he has bragged about seducing the lady of the house--all this smacks of decay and crumbling values. Jones's next play, Chance the Idol, is even more neurotic. The play itself, the last written with Wyndham in mind, is a twisted melodrama where the amoral characters are crude in their pettiness.⁴⁴

Chance the Idol resembles an early Jones play about gambling, Hard Hit, which had been produced in 1887. In the latter play, he uses gambling as the reason for a momentary setback in the life of a young man. It is not a serious threat to happiness; it is merely a plot device.⁴⁵

As Hard Hit opens, Geoffrey Calvert, the wastrel son of a wealthy man, momentarily cripples his chance for happiness with his secret bride Bertha Saxon by his gambling. Because his father will not recognize the lowborn Bertha as a suitable mate for his son, Geoff becomes impatient and to pay his debts, risks what little money he has on one last race. The horse he backs does not even show. The prospect of hopeless poverty with which the first act ends makes the audience sympathetic towards the newlyweds and makes the young couple

vulnerable to the machinations of the villains in the second and third acts.

There may be no heroes and villains in Chance the Idol, but neither is there any love or romance. As in Hard Hit, the problem is parental opposition to a marriage, but in Chance the Idol the love chase is reversed. Instead of a healthy young Englishman with good instincts who just happens to squander his money due to youthful extravagance and who pursues a middle-class lass for love, Jones writes about a weakling son of selfish aristocrats who is himself being pursued by a young woman who wishes him to marry her to legitimize their natural child. Gambling is no longer a frivolous pastime, the indulgence in which presents merely a temporary obstacle on the road to wedded bliss. In Chance the Idol, gambling is a deadly serious pursuit, the last desperate means by which a young woman can buy herself a husband and thereby a respectable place for herself and her family in society. Love is neither felt nor spoken about in this play.

Appropriately, Chance the Idol is set in Monte Carlo. Ellen Farndon has followed Alan Leversage, the weak, effeminate father of her child, there. She is soon informed by his family that he will marry her only if she can find enough money to support him comfortably. Using a small inheritance as a stake, she attempts to win enough money to pay off her lover's debts and buy his hand in marriage. Although she begins by winning easily, she has lost all by the fourth act, including Alan. Both the object of Ellen's affection and her means of obtaining him are distasteful. Only her own desperation is in the least attractive. When this desperation turns to

despair, Jones reaches for what he probably considered the only solution, the same one he had provided for Lady Susan Harabin, silent suffering. Throughout the play, a Wyndham type of raisonneur has appeared as the suave and cynical Cyril Ryves. A stroke has partially paralyzed Ryves and his affliction conveniently keeps him out of the plot action and deep into worldly wisdom. He is thus in a position to comfort Ellen with the usual Wyndham philosophy without becoming romantically involved with her. Just as with Sir Christopher Deering and Lady Susan Harabin, Cyril Ryves can look into Ellen Farndon's eyes and say, "You and I can say that we have suffered. That is to say we have lived!"⁴⁶

Although Mrs. Thorne reports that both Shaw and his wife liked Chance the Idol "enormously," it appealed to neither critics nor audiences and it failed.⁴⁷ Ironically, it does not mirror Jones's real state of mind when the play was actually produced in 1902. His mood had already changed. During the summer of that year, Jones wrote a play that was not a serious and dreary repetition of an old play but a laughing comic parody of his own output. The first in what was to become a series of these comedies was Whitewashing Julia, a play which had a sizeable success when it was first performed at the Garrick Theatre on March 2, 1903, with Arthur Bouchier and Violet Vanbrugh in the leading parts.

In Whitewashing Julia, Jones seems to say "what if" I could write a play where the lovers are good and reasonable and everything comes out right for a change. Thus he created a play which is no closer to real life than Chance the Idol but which is much more pleasant. He does not mock his own cliché characters but merely

makes the lawyer in the case, Samways, easy-going instead of a figure of stern justice like Sir Christopher Deering in Mrs. Dane's Defence. The Mrs. Dane of the piece, Julia Wren, is not a hardened liar but merely confused and charming. She resembles Lady Eastney more than Mrs. Dane. The greatest surprise, though, is Mrs. Wren's fiancé William Stillingfleet. He is tolerant and understanding and has none of the masculine vanity which is so much a part of the personality of men like the Prince in The Princess's Nose. In many ways this play full of wishful thinking resembles Jones's early piece, The Deacon, where a philistine businessman becomes a rabid theater lover after attending only one performance of Romeo and Juliet. There is no satire and no arrogance--just a little joke.

Mrs. Julia Wren is the title character, the woman who might--or then again perhaps might not--have a past. She has been involved with the Duke of Savona and had contracted a morganatic marriage with him the circumstances of which Jones leaves deliberately vague. No one in the play ever quite manages even to define the term. Jones seems to be teasing the audience about its desire to know absolutely everything about the characters' private lives. The fact of the matter is that, regardless of her legal status, Julia did love the Duke as she reveals to her fiancé William Stillingfleet. A sophisticated man of the world, Stillingfleet does not react with jealousy or anger, and he even refuses to read the account of her life which Julia has prepared for him so that he might know the whole truth. He burns it and vows to trust her--to the audience's great disappointment according to the critic Max Beerbohm.⁴⁸

Julia is also tolerated on a social level. Because of the

rumors about her past, she is being snubbed by the inhabitants of her home town, including members of her own family. The haughtiest among these people are Lady Madge Pinckney and the Honorable Bevis Pinckney and his wife. Jones smooths the path here also. Since Julia understands the ways of the world, she is able to save Lady Pinckney's son Edwin from a marriage to the fortune-hunting Rosie Benbow with a little bit of strategy and five hundred pounds. Stillingfleet then learns that brother Bevis had also been victimized by Rosie and her mother, but it cost him five thousand pounds to free himself. With a little gentle reasoning, the embarrassed Bevis is persuaded to forgive the possibly tarnished Julia her past and recognize her before everyone. In a kind of turnaround on The Triumph of the Philistines, Jones ends the play with a show of prosperity and good feeling, pointing out how this act of tolerance has benefited the entire town of Shanctonbury.

Max Beerbohm called Whitewashing Julia "perhaps the slightest comedy that has ever been seen on the English stage."⁴⁹ There is really no conflict and, therefore, no drama, and the play is talky but not witty. There is little individuality among the characters; they are either eminently reasonable or unreasonably silly, and since they are not convincing human beings, the audience has little sympathy for them and is not apt to pay much attention to Jones's lesson in tolerance. Still we must remember that this is really Jones's first genial play in many years, and he will write better gentle parodies in the future.

Jones's next play was written between October 1902 and January 1903 and has the unhappy distinction of being the first Jones play since the Eighties to remain unproduced on the stage, although he did

base a film scenario on it many years later.⁵⁰ It is again a highly derivative play with Jones giving full-length treatment to the same basic situation he had used in 1879 in his successful one act play A Clerical Error. In James the Fogey, the older man in love with the young girl is not a clergyman but a wealthy fifty-two year old lawyer who has led a life of "self-discipline and self-repression." Because Jones was free of Wyndham, he was free of the necessity to make the middle-aged man a hero and to pair him with a younger woman. Consequently Jones returns to his original ideas about May-September romances. When James Agar, the "fogey" of the title, falls in love, his passion is almost uncontrollable and decidedly unnatural. Betty Yelverton, his twenty-year old intended bride, spends most of the play trying to avoid setting a wedding date because she is in love with a man of her own age, the twenty-five year old Hubert Richmond. At first Agar showers Betty with gifts and tries to thwart his rival, but since he is basically a decent man, he accepts the inevitable after he is told the plain truth by the slightly mad Johnny Tatum. He generously agrees to leave England and to provide the money to set young Richmond up in business.

The thematic material here was generally expressed more successfully at this time in German opera where Hans Sachs gives up Eva to David and where the Marschallin gives up Octavian to Sophie. This highly charged material with its pattern of frustration and then acceptance of Nature's law seems to need a more stylized form for its best expression. This might well explain why James the Fogey never reached the stage but was made into a successful silent film, a medium akin to both melodrama and opera in its mimetic acting style

and use of music.⁵¹

About a month after his success with Whitewashing Julia in March 1903, Jones began to write another gentle parody, this time entitled Joseph Entangled.⁵² First produced at the Haymarket on January 19, 1904, it is a light, fast-paced comedy, "an amusing little episode with a happy ending."⁵³ It is such an obvious reversal of a conventional Jones morality play that this time the comedy takes on the tone of self-mockery. Jones had had his greatest successes with plays like The Liars and Mrs. Dane's Defence where the plot grows wild or complicated, depending on whether the mode is comic or serious, because the characters try to save face by lying about what really happened. Here Jones has Sir Joseph Lacy and Lady Verona Mayne trapped by circumstances into a compromising situation. The basic idea is one that Jones used in Michael and His Lost Angel where spending the night together results in adultery and disaster. In Joseph Entangled, two people trapped in the same house together overnight merely results in both of them getting a good night's sleep. Being completely innocent, they do not choose to lie about anything, and they tell the absolute truth right from the beginning. Of course, neither their society friends nor Lady Verona's jealous husband will believe such an absurd story. Jones maintains the farcical pace as the situation grows more and more entangled. Finally he has Lady Verona's husband Hardolph eavesdrop on his supposedly erring wife and her supposedly guilty lover, and Hardolph finds out for himself that he was totally mistaken.

Jones cannot resist mixing social satire into this innocent romp. He has scandal spread, for instance, by the amoral Jermyn Pyecroft, a

representative of what to Jones was the social disease called "gossip." Then he has the innocent Joseph lectured to by his pompous Uncle Tofield, a Jobsonian Professor of Moral Philosophy. Jones puts his opinion of all such pompous intellectuals in the mouth of Pyecroft who claims to be pleased to meet the Professor because he has "never before encountered anyone who supposed there could be any relation between British theory and British practice in the sphere of morals."⁵⁴ Jones will continue to mock such intellectual snobbery in the next few years, most notably in Dolly Reforming Herself.

Since Jones is in his Edwardian mood, he stays away from heavy moralizing and weighty thought in Joseph Entangled, three pleasant acts without earnestness. Unfortunately, the Victorian side of Jones's nature begins to reappear in his next play, The Chevaleer, a comedy produced at the Garrick Theatre on August 27, 1904. First, Jones re-uses a situation which has now begun to take on the character of an obsession with him: a woman is suspected of spending one night with a man to whom she is not married in innocent but easily misinterpreted circumstances. The next morning her situation frightens her, and she decides to tell an elaborate lie to protect herself from any hint of scandal. In a play like The Crusaders, lying in similar circumstances takes on the form of a spiritual crisis for an idealistic young man. In The Liars, the woman in the compromising situation behaved as she did for an understandable reason: her husband, obsessed with money and his business, neglects her. But in The Chevaleer, the woman is merely spoiled and bored and her supposed paramour totally worthless. Jones's Victorian disgust at Edwardian softness and laxity is growing. His Victorian anger is beginning to reappear. He obviously despises

the comfortable, lazy upper class people in his play. He mocks Sir John and Lady Anne Kellond, Charlie Inskip and Mrs. Fulks-Meesom for being petty and inflexible and interested only in keeping their places in society safe. He plays these conventional and narrow-minded people, who resemble his puritanical philistines in the Nineties, off against an expansive, "polyhippic" showman named the Chevaleer Mouteagle who is free from all restraint save that of the limits of his imagination. Unfortunately, the Chevaleer is not an artist or a man of high culture. He is only a man of the theater, an entertainer and not a creator.

The Chevaleer opens at 5 a.m. at the Wolfpack Hotel where the Chevaleer Mouteagle and several other showmen have been drinking and enjoying themselves all night. They are gathered in Grandbury because Sir John Kellond has advertised for a Master Showman to organize a centenary fête in honor of his ancestor General Sir Robert Kellond. Since the other showmen know that it will be impossible for them to win the contract if the Chevaleer applies, they tie him up in tarpaulin and stow him under a table, hoping that he will sleep through the interviews. When they leave for Kellond Park, Lady Anne Kellond and Charlie Inskip emerge from their rooms. Lady Anne had left her husband's house after they fought over the expense of the fête and had been tricked by Inskip into missing the train for Mrs. Fulks-Meesom's house. She was thus forced to spend the night in the same hotel as Inskip and this has put her in a socially precarious position. After she and Inskip decide precisely how they will deceive her husband about the incident and Inskip leaves to put their plan into action, the Chevaleer emerges from under the table. He has just awakened, but the distraught Lady Anne becomes convinced that he has

overheard all.

From here, the plot wends a hectic path between the mediocre marrieds and their guests, all of whom fear an exposure of their missteps, and the shrewd, flamboyant Chevaleer who manages to suggest to them all that he is aware of their follies even though he possesses no hard facts. The small-minded Kellonds waste all their time trying to keep their reputations spotless and holding back their emotions. These warped and frustrated individuals are an easy prey for the Chevaleer who is neither idealistic nor cynical but who always does the natural thing and so is more in tune with reality and is able to use intuition even if he does not know the facts. He is a fascinating, expansive personality, an exciting one, full of life. He triumphs because he is open-hearted and not a morbid egotist. Jones is clearly on the side of this man who follows his instincts. But, as is the case with Jones himself as an artist, freedom leads to nothing because the Chevaleer has no artistic sensibility. He is often merely a show-off.

The Chevaleer is a difficult play to stage and Arthur Bouchier, who played the title role, had little success with it. Max Beerbohm wrote that Bouchier showed a "grim determination to be funny at any price, however cheap."⁵⁵ Perhaps as farce the play could succeed, but the ideas behind it are too disturbing and the portrait of the artist too shallow to allow for healthy laughter. It is easy to see in The Chevaleer the seeds of the breakdown that Jones was about to suffer, but perhaps that breakdown might not have occurred except for two personal crises Jones endured at this time. The first concerned his youngest and favorite daughter Doris, later Mrs. Thorne, and the

second her older sister Ethelwyn Sylvia, always called "Sue."

In her autobiography What a Life! Mrs. Thorne describes herself as an "unhappy spoilt child,"⁵⁶ and when she was fifteen, her health broke from "too many parties and late nights, mostly as my father's favourite partner at Bridge."⁵⁷ During the rehearsals of The Chevalier in the summer of 1904, Doris married secretly. She was just sixteen. In her book, she describes at length her father's "considerable revulsion of feeling" at the incident. His reaction bordered on hysteria.⁵⁸

Another and more curious account of Jones's state of mind at this time is given by an even more acute observer, W. Somerset Maugham, in his preface to Mrs. Thorne's book. Jones and his wife were on good terms with a Mrs. George Stevens, and just after their marriage, Jones brought his daughter and her new husband to meet her. Maugham happened to be present on that Sunday afternoon, and he recalls that Jones spoke to him about the marriage. He describes Jones's attitude in this way:

I do not think he took the young things' rashness as seriously as he pretended. The indignation he showed was a tribute he paid to his sense of decorum. Like many of us who are concerned with writing he found a certain satisfaction in behaving as a person in his situation might be expected to behave, and he was half-humorously conscious that he was play-acting when for a little while he assumed the rôle of the outraged Victorian parent.⁵⁹

Was Jones play-acting or was his attitude towards liberal ideas beginning to change? Judging from the plays Chrysolid and The Sword of Gideon, which he was about to write, he felt directly responsible for his children's unconventional lives.⁶⁰

Maugham's recollections of Jones at this time would also

probably be colored by the fact that he himself was partially responsible for the second crisis in Jones's family life at this time. He began an affair with Jones's married daughter Sue, probably in 1904 and perhaps on the very Sunday afternoon which Maugham described in Mrs. Thorne's book. The affair was to last eight years until 1913 when Sue married for the second time. Robert Lorin Calder describes the relationship in this way: "She clearly would have liked to marry him, but he was reluctant because of her promiscuity, which he [Maugham] is careful to point out was simple and artless amorality."⁶¹ Sue was apparently the embodiment of her father's "moral" ideas. She was unfaithful to her husband, but completely honest about it. She was Lady Susan Harabin come alive. She must have been a deep embarrassment to Jones in his social contacts, the subject of gossip and, because she was an actress, easily taken as typical of the immorality of theater people. If all this was not enough, 1904 was the year of Shaw's immense success at the Court Theatre, and suddenly the radical Shaw had become a threat to Jones's position. Both Jones's personal and professional life turned sour at the same time. Is it any wonder then that he suffered an artistic breakdown in 1904 and 1905?

Jones's next play Felisa is plainly neurotic. It resembles an earlier short play called Grace Mary which Jones wrote in 1895. Both Felisa and Grace Mary are exotic plays in Jones's often prosaic output. Grace Mary is set in Cornwall and it is written entirely in a very lyrical Cornish dialect. Felisa is Jones's only play set in Spain, and it is a series of short scenes calling for some strange stage effects.

Both Grace Mary and Felisa are plays about a young girl who suf-

fers pathetically. Grace Mary is a young woman pining away for a young man named Nick Pentragon. Her father, a staunch Methodist, believes that Nick is from a tainted family and he makes his daughter vow never to speak to the young man again. Nick, for his part, swears to become a drunkard and a vagabond if she refuses to marry him. He taunts her from outside her window and torn between her duty to her father and her desire for her lover, she dies. Her wraith appears to Nick and vows to stay with him forever, and Nick and her father are reconciled.

The suffering woman, religion as a motivation and a vision are also a part of Felisa; only here the religion is a kind of hysterical Catholicism and not a stern Protestantism. Again an innocent girl is involved in a "tragic" situation. Felisa, a deeply religious young woman, loses her sister, her infant niece and her boyfriend Miguel, an unwilling soldier, in quick succession. All of this suffering shakes Felisa's faith in God and her favorite Saint-Justa. The local padre rationalizes the situation and convinces the young girl that her loved ones are happier where they are. She lies down to rest and has a vision in which her favorite saint turns into her sister Elena holding her dead baby while angels appear with Miguel as one of them.

Felisa is clearly a play about a world falling apart. It is the product of a deeply troubled mind. The heroine is deeply religious and sees visions, perhaps like Jones's own mother. Her boyfriend, a soldier who deserts but later redeems himself, may well be Jones himself. The authority figure, the priest, perhaps representing Jones's father, is ineffectual and useless. The padre's reasoning is unconvincing, but Felisa accepts it out of desperation. Felisa's

suffering leads to a kind of hysterical emotion which can only be described as mystical. It borders on madness. This kind of hysteria, complete with visions, will re-appear in Jones's last years of play-writing (another time of crisis) in the plays Loo Vallance and The Lifted Veil.

Having cleansed himself of some of his hysteria by writing Felisa, Jones was now able to try to work out his problems more reasonably and calmly in a play called Chrysold which he began in late 1904 and finished in 1905.⁶² In this play which, of course, focuses on a father-daughter relationship, Jones tells the story of the banker Richard Ingram. Ingram is basically an honest man who loves his daughter Chrysold too well. In order to save his banking business and thereby keep Chrysold from a life of poverty, Ingram juggles the accounts of a dead friend whose heirs he cannot locate even with the help of a detective. Feeling reasonably safe and egged on by one of his employees, he compromises himself. This sacrifice of his personal honor for his beautiful daughter's material well-being is typical of his attitude towards her, which Jones clearly shows is not a good one. He has sheltered her too much from the world and the harsh realities of life. Chrysold at twenty has an unnatural innocence which leaves her open to the influence of characters in the play like Polly Kennings and Harry Casbred. Polly is a servant girl who is the product of what Jones would call popular education. Taught to read, she is only interested in "cheap modern literature," and she urges Chrysold to rebel against her father only because of the misguided notions she has picked up in trashy novels and not because she has any strong convictions of her own. Chrysold's rebellion takes the

form of a secret marriage to a vain and arrogant young provincial actor named Harry Casbred whom she chooses over her father's favorite, the sturdy but shy Albert Falmer who also happens to be heir to the securities which her father had manipulated for her benefit. Jones's working out of this plot seems forced and more like his own wishful thinking than real life. Through Casbred's rashness, Ingram's swindle is exposed and he is sent to prison. All of her father's suffering and the emotional support that Falmer gives her during her father's trial makes Chrysold appreciate both men and despise her false husband. But instead of allowing Chrysold to get a divorce, something of which Jones did not personally approve, or instead of rehabilitating Harry, Jones has Ingram's alcoholic son-in-law run over and killed so that the now older and wiser Chrysold is free to marry the faithful Falmer and be reconciled with her father. Jones makes the ending of the play seem even more vindictive and full of his own insensitivity when he allows Ingram to be forgiven, rehabilitated and re-accepted into society after he serves his prison term.

It is quite obvious why Chrysold was never produced: the play is too personal and the ending too forced.⁶³ Jones has turned against the theater--Harry Casbred is the only evil actor in the entire Jones canon--and he has turned against himself and his own liberal views on parenting. This becomes even clearer in his next play, another one rightly unproduced, The Sword of Gideon. In a situation similar to the one in Chrysold, Jones comes down strictly on the side of duty and makes the father of the bride, a country farmer, a strong-willed and rigid moralist who literally forces his ideas of morality on the young people in the play. The conflict is complex and the play is

not badly written, but Jones is clearly out of touch with both the real world and the theater of his day.

The plot of The Sword of Gideon centers around the penniless aristocrat Edmund Tyrell who is loved by two women, Eunice Hirons, the daughter of Gideon Hirons, a wealthy corn merchant who chooses to live as a simple farmer, and Mrs. Kate Sandal, a painter with whom Tyrell is having an affair as the play opens. Both women are rich, but because Mrs. Sandal is not free, Tyrell arranges to marry Eunice so that her wealthy father will pay his debts. But the new bridegroom soon grows bored with life in the country and angry about his father-in-law's control over his wife's income; he is only too eager to resume his affair with Mrs. Sandal when her husband dies.

The War between Puritan Conscience and Aristocratic License rages for three acts. Ned is confronted with a situation to which there is no easy solution. Mrs. Sandal is a witty, attractive woman while his own wife is gentle and kind. By the fourth act, Tyrell seems to have chosen Mrs. Sandal, but only because she is the last person to speak to him at the end of the third. It is here that Jones's own puritan conscience and his hatred for aristocratic parasites intrudes. Ned's father-in-law Gideon Hirons threatens to expose Mrs. Sandal's adultery in front of her adolescent son. Rather than face this confrontation, she chooses to send Tyrell back to his wife.

Clearly Jones admires the strong-minded Gideon Hirons, and he makes it quite clear that Gideon does not enjoy what he has to do to Mrs. Sandal. He is not a voyeur like his puritanical friend Job Banbury, but he does his duty nonetheless. Jones obviously meant this play to convince the audience that strict adherence to moral

standards is the only solution to the problems of the Edwardian world, but he is too good a playwright by this time to write such a simple polemical play. What a modern reader admires in The Sword of Gideon is Jones's realization that Tyrell faces a real dilemma. Both of the women in his life are attractive. The problem with the play is that Jones is sympathetic to all of the characters except for the clergymen and Tyrell's grasping aristocratic parents. Although his solution is obviously distasteful to him emotionally, he feels he must have Hirons force his will on the confused and chaotic world around him and punish adults as if they were children. Here is Jones at his most divided. He understands the modern dilemma only too clearly. He sees it in his own family, but he cannot accept the new freedom which he himself is partially responsible for encouraging. This feeling of guilt will eventually grow beyond his belief that he had failed his children and become a belief that he had failed all of England. Here lie the roots of his rabid attacks on Shaw and Wells and of most of his other reactionary political and social writings.

We can see in his next play, The Heroic Stubbs, an artistic pattern that Jones had already established before the turn of the century with The Liars. While he could not heal the split in his own personality, he could cover the turmoil with a blithe comic surface. There are no children in this next play. It is a facile comedy, mocking his own earnestness. In it, he tries to straighten out the confusion in his own mind among the terms puritan, philistine and idealist.

The Heroic Stubbs is subtitled "a comedy of a man with an ideal," and clearly Jones is trying to create a new type of hero for the modern audience. He is thinking small. Stubbs is a philistine in

the sense that he is a successful businessman without much culture and with a puritan conscience, yet he is open-hearted, self-sacrificing and honest unlike the typical philistine who is stingy, self-centered and dishonest in both his business and personal life. Jones's newest Don Quixote is a gentle bootmaker, a passionate idealist who upholds the old values of duty and chivalry towards women. Jones loves him, but he cannot make us believe in him. The problem? Stubbs's ideal is not an idea but a charming aristocratic woman named Lady Hermoine Candlish whose kind remark to him as a young shop boy has been the inspiration for his success as a London bootmaker. Ironically, the remark was mere chance and Lady Hermione is merely human and certainly no more worthy than a thousand other women of the adoration Stubbs lavishes upon her. She is an ordinary, kind-hearted but rather bored upper class wife who, as so often happens in Jones's early Edwardian plays, has decided to flirt with danger by spending some time with another man for want of anything better to do. Here the rake is the notorious Willie Dellow who is nicknamed Fido because he is "faithful" to so many different women. Her idle curiosity and Dellow's persistence lead her to arrange to meet Fido on his yacht off Yavercliff, but Stubbs hears of the rendezvous when she comes for a fitting for some new boots, and he is determined to save his lady from disgrace. He rushes to the seaside via a special train and through persistence and chivalry, manages to assist her in preserving her reputation. Unfortunately, Jones makes clear that Lady Hermione was quite capable of preserving her honor on her own which makes Stubbs look even more foolish. Still he allows the bootmaker first to save her from drowning and then from scandal in the press by con-

vincing a young journalist who specializes in sensationalism to keep silent for the rather weak reason that his fiancée would not approve of his actions. Only the inimitable and "heroic" Stubbs could have managed such a thing.

Here certainly Jones is proposing quite a different view of idealism than he did in The Crusaders. Roland Stubbs and Philo Ingarfield are the same kind of men, energetic and idealistic, but Ingarfield is crushed by harsh reality and Stubbs is not. Ingarfield dared too much--he tried to reform all of London--and he failed. But Stubbs is quite a different kind of idealist, a realistic one. He is happy in his rather limited sphere of influence, his own bootmaking shop, and because he thinks small and is only out to save Lady Hermione Candlish, he succeeds. In the last act, Stubbs finds himself the center of attention of the fashionable crowd at a party at the Candlish home. They bait and mock him, trying to ferret out the identity of the "unknown fair" whom he saved from the clutches of Willie Dellow. They are horrible people, egotistical and loveless, and by placing Stubbs in their midst, the playwright shows the true worth of his resilient young hero. The gentle and humble Stubbs suffers some momentary sadness at the end of the play, but he has accomplished his goal and preserved his "ideal" and he suffers none of the cynicism and self-awareness that plagued the over-reacher Philo Ingarfield--and that other over-reacher Jones himself.

The mood of The Heroic Stubbs is rather like the mood of James Barrie's The Admirable Crichton (1902). The point of view in both cases is a Socialistic one: there are no inner differences among the members of the various social classes. But for Barrie who seems to

agree with Shaw, it is society which corrupts the individual. Jones is more cynical. He implies that the working class is happy to worship its betters. Stubbs's plucky sister is a far more charming character than the world-weary Lady Hermione, but Stubbs does not appreciate her. He must worship someone above him, about whom he does not know the real truth. Jones suggests that this worship is a good thing. It is this flaw, and Jones's and Stubbs's lack of self-awareness, that keep the play from becoming a great comedy. Stubbs accepts the social order and so does Jones now. He values innocence and a return to the past.

Although he had the famous comedian James Welch to portray Roland Stubbs, the same actor who had a major success as Walter Bohun in You Never Can Tell, Jones's play failed.⁶⁴ Jones's ideas were too pessimistic and reactionary; he had lost touch with the London audience. His next move was to sail to America, a country where his more conservative ideas could still hold an audience. Jones's plays had always been successful there, and now the theaters were booming in New York and American universities needed a serious playwright to lionize. Between 1906 and 1912, Jones lectured at Harvard and Yale, wrote plays especially for American actor-managers and even penned new plays in New York hotel rooms. He was out of touch, but he prospered.

Notes

Chapter III

¹ First performed under Willard's management at the Garrick Theatre, 21 April 1896.

² The Rogue's Comedy: A Play in Three Acts (London: Macmillan, 1898), III, p. 101.

³ Review dated 29 April 1896 and rpt. The Theatrical 'World' for 1896 (London: Walter Scott, 1897), p. 126.

⁴ Thorne, p. 181.

⁵ The Physician: An Original Play in Four Acts (London: Macmillan, 1899), I, p. 7.

⁶ I, p. 12.

⁷ In an interview in 1893, Jones explained that he was an optimist because "I was brought up in the country; pessimism is the outcome of city life, and I think that city life is the curse of our modern existence" (Blathwayt, p. 74).

⁸ Jones believed in moderate but regular wine-drinking, and he often chided William Archer and Shaw for their teetotalism. He was for temperance but against temperance movements, especially American Prohibition.

⁹ Review dated 31 March 1897, and rpt. The Theatrical 'World' for 1897 (London: Walter Scott, 1898), p. 82.

¹⁰ 1 May 1897, p. 287.

¹¹ Martin Meisel has sketched a comparison in Shaw and the Nineteenth-Century Theater (Princeton: Univ Press, 1963), pp. 239-41. F. Marjorie Northend notes the similarity in "Henry Arthur Jones and the Dramatic Renaissance in England," MA Thesis Univ of London 1940, pp. 456-7.

¹² Originally called The Triflers according to Lady Wyndham in Charles Wyndham and Mary Moore, p. 128.

¹³ The Liars: An Original Comedy in Four Acts (London: Macmillan, 1904), I, p. 15. Rpt. Vol. III of Representative Plays.

¹⁴ I, p. 16.

15 In Sir Charles Wyndham (London: John Lane, 1908), p. 43, Florence Teignmouth Shore describes Wyndham's impersonation of Sir Christopher Deering as "tolerant, polished, full of common sense and worldly wisdom" and as "the friend of all."

16 Jones believed he had foreseen the First World War (Notes, p. 11). The play was first produced at the Princess's Theater, New York, 26 October 1914, and published in 1915. It is included in Vol. IV of Representative Plays.

17 The Manoeuvres of Jane: An Original Comedy in Four Acts (New York: Samuel French, 1905), II, p. 37. All further references to this work appear in the text.

18 In his Introduction to Vol. III of Representative Plays (p. xx), Clayton Hamilton calls the plot "excessively elaborate."

19 Rpt. Foundations, p. 143.

20 Thorne, p. 201.

21 5 November 1898, p. 542.

22 Beerbohm review appeared 5 November 1898 and rpt. More Theatres, pp. 72-7; Archer review rpt. Stage and Study: A Year-Book of Criticism (London: Grant Richards, 1899), p. 144.

23 Behind the Scenes with Cyril Maude by Himself (London: John Murray, 1927), p. 117.

24 Thorne, p. 201.

25 Behind the Scenes, p. 118.

26 Thorne, p. 156.

27 Thorne, p. 132, 206.

28 Notes, p. 10. First produced at Her Majesty's Theatre, 12 April 1899.

29 J. T. Grein called the play "a huge mistake" and the plot "unclean" (Review dated 16 April 1899 and rpt. Dramatic Criticism [London: John Long, 1899], I, 273-4).

30 Jones later wrote an entire book on this subject: Patriotism and Popular Education (London: Chapman and Hall, 1919).

31 British Library MS. ADD 45292, fols. 325-6. Letter dated 26 September 1900.

32 "The Dramatic Outlook (1884)," Renascence, p. 190.

- 33 The Lackey's Carnival: A Comedy in Four Acts (London: privately printed, 1900), IV, pp. 103-4.
- 34 Max Beerbohm described this confused situation in his review (6 October 1900; rpt. Around Theatres [New York: Taplinger, 1969], p. 108). He reported that because of the Compulsory Education Acts, servants in his day "are seething for rebellion; yet they know well that, though they are too good to be servants, they are not quite good enough to be anything else."
- 35 Thorne, p. 209. First performed at Wyndham's Theatre, 9 October 1900, the play ran for 209 nights.
- 36 Cordell, p. 162.
- 37 Jones had some trouble fitting in the "big scene" (Thorne, p. 208, 434).
- 38 J. T. Grein made this comment in his review (rpt. Victorian Dramatic Criticism, ed. George Rowell [London: Methuen, 1971], p. 247): "Although in the play the judge scores to the detriment of the Magdalen, our sympathies are not with him, but with the sinner."
- 39 Thorne, pp. 245-6.
- 40 First performed at the Duke of York's Theatre, 11 March 1902.
- 41 Thorne, p. 210. The play ran only for a few weeks.
- 42 Thorne, p. 212.
- 43 Review dated 22 March 1902 and rpt. More Theatres, p. 451.
- 44 Thorne, pp. 169, 218-9.
- 45 See pp. 38-39 above.
- 46 Chance the Idol: A Play in Four Acts (London: privately printed, 1902), IV, p. 89.
- 47 Thorne, p. 218, 220.
- 48 Review dated 7 March 1903 and rpt. More Theatres, pp. 542-3. J. T. Grein praised Jones for not going along with the "conventionality of revelations" in his review dated 2 March 1903 (rpt. Dramatic Criticism [London: Eveleigh Nash, 1905], V, 34).
- 49 More Theatres, p. 541.
- 50 Dating from autograph manuscript at Enthoven. The film scenario manuscript, also at the Enthoven, is dated September 1920.

51 Thorne, p. 210. According to Jones, the film adaptation was entitled "The Call of Youth" (Notes, p. 62).

52 Dating from autograph manuscript at Enthoven.

53 Joseph Entangled: A Comedy in Three Acts (New York: Samuel French, 1906), III, p. 139.

54 II, p. 73.

55 Review dated 10 September 1904 and rpt. Last Theatres 1904-1910 (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1970), p. 87.

56 Doris Arthur Jones (Mrs. Thorne), What a Life! (London: Jarrolds, 1932), p. 25. Hereafter referred to as What a Life.

57 What a Life, p. 34.

58 What a Life, p. 37-8.

59 What a Life, p. 13.

60 Thorne (pp. 195-6) reports that Jones's children seldom received any "truly wise or helpful" counsel from their father.

61 W. Somerset Maugham and the Quest for Freedom (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972), p. 268.

62 Dating from autograph manuscript at Enthoven.

63 Jones claimed (Notes, p. 62) that he "was not satisfied with the third act" and had not had "time to alter it."

64 Thorne, p. 231. First performed under Welch's management at the Strand Theatre, 24 January 1906.

Chapter IV

Maturity

1907-19

Although Jones had written almost fifty plays by the middle of 1906 and had had a great many theatrical successes, he had not written a great play, one which would make him immortal. Jones had suffered his first artistic breakdown in 1904. In the unproduced play Felisa, we see him in a morbid and mystical mood. By 1906 and the production of the comedy The Heroic Stubbs, Jones's personality is back in balance again. Between 1906 and 1912, Jones wrote twelve new plays. Four were first produced in America and are generally reworkings of old formulas done with substantially more skill and understanding. Four were first produced in London, among them Dolly Reforming Herself, one of his most genial comedies. Four went unproduced during his lifetime, and one of these, Loo Vallance, is the product of his second artistic breakdown. As the conflict within his sensibility went on, now complicated by poor physical health, Jones's output fluctuated wildly with some periods of calm reason and others of lurid hysteria. In 1912, Jones's health broke down completely and he underwent cancer surgery in England. No one expected him to survive, but this remarkably resilient man did and went on to write some of his finest plays.

The first of Jones's American premieres was The Hypocrites, produced at the Hudson Theater in New York on August 30, 1906. As is clear from the title, The Hypocrites is yet another treatment of one of Jones's favorite themes, but this time the conflict within the minds of the characters is very real. Jones presents two idealistic,

sensitive, truth-seeking characters, the Reverend Edgar Linnell and Helen Plugenet. The other characters are more worldly and are willing to compromise principle for financial and social gain.

The Reverend Linnell is a typically good Jones clergyman, but this time the playwright makes him more self-aware and believably human. He is indeed an idealist, but not a paragon of virtue. He states his philosophy for the cynical, amoral town lawyer Viveash:

I resolved I would always fearlessly say what I thought to be true, always fearlessly do what I thought to be right, and never think of consequences.¹

But Jones places him in circumstances where he cannot blindly follow his convictions. Unlike the Reverend Michael Feversham, Linnell is neither rich nor chaste. He is a poor clergyman who is the father of two children, and because his wife appears on stage, her influence is very much a part of the play. She is generous yet a woman of common sense with an attractive personality. She is probably modelled on Jones's own wife. Linnell's wife, a mother and a homemaker, is keenly aware of the family's precarious financial position, and she is constantly reminding her husband that he cannot really afford to be an idealist on a hundred and twenty a year. When Linnell is forced to write a note of apology to a local brewer because he supported a working men's club for his parishioners which would serve pure beer, he first composes his own version full of bitterness: "Mr. Pelly, you are a rich brewer; I am a poor curate; therefore I apologize to you."² Since he is neither a romantic hero nor a scholarly ascetic, Linnell's predicament can draw genuine sympathy from the audience, especially when his pastor is the successful and obese Reverend Everard Daubeny. This clergyman is only interested in

recipes for quail dishes and in giving successful dinner parties.

Helen Plugenet is a female idealist but not a crusader. She is a rich heiress who is willing to give up all she has for a faithful husband. Unfortunately, she has become involved with a family of aristocrats, the Wilmores, through their son Lennard. Predictably enough, Jones makes them snobbish and acquisitive. The Wilmores are deeply in debt and a rich marriage is their only hope for both their own future security and their son's future career. The father is "violent" and "shallow" according to Jones's stage directions and full of prejudices against anything and everybody. His wife, the chief manipulator in the play, is a much more sympathetic character. She is quite charming and well-bred except when her son's future is at stake. Then she is merciless. With such parents, it is predictable that Lennard will not be as sensitive or as upright as the Reverend Linnell. Just as he is about to marry his wealthy fiancée and secure his family's financial future, his past returns to haunt him in the person of the pregnant Rachel Neve. He loves her, but she is poor and he had promised to marry her before it had become his duty to his family to marry the wealthy Helen. When his parents find out about Rachel, they lie outright about the past and they force Lennard and Rachel to join in with them. It is only Linnell who knows the truth and who cannot bear to see the good-hearted Helen cheated. He accuses them all of hypocrisy even though it means his personal ruin. In an emotional scene which climaxes the third act, Lennard can finally stand the pressure no longer. He betrays his parents and chooses Rachel.

If one is interested in the war between deceit and honesty

in a small town, The Hypocrites is an interesting play. Jones does finally work out a satisfactory ending to the kind of play he had written over and over again throughout his career, and the play was a great success in America.³ But if one finds the divisions between truth and hypocrisy in human life not as clear cut as Jones did, the play is judged well-written but unrealistic. It was found to be so in London where the audience had been watching Jones manipulate the same types of characters for years. They wanted new ideas and paradox, not earnestness. The Hypocrites failed dismally there.⁴ It was only with comedy that Jones could succeed in London at this time.

Because of his reception in America, another play of Jones's was produced there in September 1907. When he began work on The Evangelist in 1906, he seems to have set out to write a serious play about the usual woman trapped in a loveless marriage who chooses her duty to her child over her personal desire to escape her responsibilities by running off with a family friend, Dr. Rex Allen, or off on an evangelical crusade with Elijah Becker.⁵ By early 1907, Jones had decided to change his focus and ended by writing a "tragi-comedy of religious life in England."⁶ In his attempt to combine drama and serious satire, he writes one of the heaviest and dullest plays he ever was to pen.

In The Evangelist, Jones includes all the attitudes towards religion it was possible to find in a typical English factory town in his day. Sir James Nuneham, who controls Trentistown because he owns the ironworks there, encourages religion because it keeps his workers in line and prevents labor strikes from damaging his business. His son Philip is an intellectual and a scientist. He considers religion

useless and only fit for women. This is perhaps why his wife finds him cold and why she has had an affair with the idealistic Dr. Rex Allen. Also present in town are several representatives of organized religion: the Reverend Mark Shergold, Church of England; the Reverend Joseph Cushway, Congregationalist Chapel; and the Reverend Maltman Taddy, Baptist. The caricatures are presided over by yet another caricature, the Bishop of Trentchester, who must spend most of his time mediating the squabbles among the various sects. For Jones, established religion is so full of internal dissension that it has no time for compassion or its priestly duties.

There are two voices of dissent if not revolution in Trentistown, and both are thinly disguised parts of Jones's own personality. The first is the highly emotional and idealistic Sylvanus Rebbings, who is selflessly dedicated to preaching the Gospel. He is invited to Trentistown by Sir James because he and his daughter are able to work miracles in quieting dissident workers and Sir James is in the middle of critical labor negotiations. Rebbings is highly principled but also naive and easily used by Sir James and alcoholic hangers-on like Ben Possiter for whom he is a perpetual soft touch. Rebbings, for all his goodness, faces imprisonment by the forces of established religion at the end of the play even though he has been instrumental both in keeping labor peace and convincing Philip's wife Christabel to stay in England to face the consequences of her adultery and to take care of her child. Rebbings seems happy to go to jail at the end of the play and become a silent martyr for his God.

The second voice of dissent is that of the completely passive Richard Fyson, the father of Christabel Nuneham. He is the exact

opposite of Sylvanus Rebbings although he does sympathize with him. The physiologist Fyson sees much too clearly, and it has turned him into a helpless cynic. An intellectual who is yet open-minded and sensitive and a man of high principle, Fyson feels that his free thought and refusal to tell lies has resulted in the tragic predicament of his daughter. It is easy to imagine Jones himself having the same argument with his daughter Sue that Fyson has with his Christabel in the play after she has admitted her adultery and is waiting for her husband to decide how he wants to take care of their child Ione:

Christabel. If he parts me from Ione I think I shall kill myself.

Fyson. How can you speak so wickedly?

Christabel. Wickedly? How can anybody speak or act wickedly when there's no religion, and no future life?

Fyson. Who taught you that?

Christabel. You did. Didn't you?

Fyson. No. I taught you that we can't be sure of a future life. That's the more reason for living this one nobly--every moment of it!

Christabel. But if you had taught me some religion as a child-----

Fyson. What religion? Something I didn't believe myself?

On the chance that it might save you from murder, from theft, from this? Besides, when you grew up, you chose your own religions; one after the other you tried them all! Did any one of them snatch you back in the moment of temptation? Will any one of them help you now, comfort you, raise you, save you? If it will, for God's sake accept it, believe it, live by it! I won't hinder you! But don't blame me for not feeding you on lies!⁷

Fyson's reaction to his daughter's problems is only one of anguish and despair. He does nothing except accept responsibility for the custody of his granddaughter so that his daughter can be near her.

Here in The Evangelist we can see the root cause for the often bitter quarrel between Jones and Shaw which erupted ten years later in 1915. If we compare this play with one that Shaw wrote at this time, Major Barbara, it is quite clear that both Jones and Shaw are

dealing with the same types of characters and situations with one crucial difference. In Shaw, there is no Sylvanus Rebbings and the cynics are clever enough to gain power. There is hope even if a slightly absurd one. Andrew Undershaft and Richard Fyson are basically the same type of man but Undershaft is an energetic, fascinating figure who seizes the day and attempts to master the situation while Fyson is depressed into impotence. Of course, even if Shaw could not get his audience to agree with his politics, at least he could make them laugh. Jones, who at this stage of his career took everything too seriously, took even Shaw too seriously and eventually equated Shaw's popularity with the dissolution of the British Empire--and the end of civilization.⁸

The Evangelist was a dismal failure, and Major Barbara a success.⁹ Almost immediately, Jones began to write a farce called Dick contrasting two cousins of opposite temperaments, Tom and Dick Slinfold. Tom is a prominent London physician while Dick is a down-on-his-luck actor. Setting the facile Dick against the stolid Tom is a sound farcical idea, but Jones was never able to complete the play satisfactorily. He plodded along on Dick twice, once in late 1907 and once in the summer of 1908.¹⁰ In between he produced, almost miraculously, one of his best light comedies, Dolly Reforming Herself, where he managed to bring all his disparate themes together, forget his troubles and write a charming play.

When Jones was on form, he wrote quickly. He completed Dolly Reforming Herself in the space of five weeks, and it was produced in London within six months after he completed it.¹¹ Jones had a natural feel for stylization and a love for both the rational form and

the rational philosophy of classicism and neo-classicism. Here he builds his play around a classic comic device, a bet on human behavior, and he deftly combines artifice with domestic comedy to produce a beautifully balanced light satire after Voltaire.

Dolly Reforming Herself takes place on New Year's Day in 1907. Dolly and Harry Telfer and their guests have just returned from a rousing Watchnight Service; the spirit of moral self-reform is afoot and they decide to make some New Year's Resolutions. They are visited by the Reverend Pilcher who suggests that every time any one of them indulges in one of his failings such as swearing or losing his temper, they fine themselves and contribute to charity. He provides them with a donation box for this purpose. Jones here is gently mocking this old philistine reform technique which was used most conspicuously by Jorgan in The Triumph of the Philistines.¹² In order to make the situation even more challenging, Matthew Barron, Dolly's cynical father who is a comic version of Richard Fyson in The Evangelist and likewise of Jones himself, wagers four sovereigns that neither Dolly nor Harry nor their cousin Captain Lucas Wentworth nor their house-guest Renie Sturgess can conquer their pet weaknesses by the following New Year's Day. For the next two acts, Jones laughingly takes up one of his favorite themes, the futility of reform, by chronicling the remaining events of January 1, 1907 at the Telfer home which are complicated by the fact that Lucas and Renie are on the verge of having an affair and that Dolly cannot manage her bills because she is a spendthrift. The fourth act is set exactly one year later so that the audience can see how ineffective the attempt at reform has been. The characters decide to accept themselves for what they are

and discard the donation box.¹³

During the play, Jones presents two kinds of comic characters in this blend of old and new. There are the natural, warmly human, domestic characters such as Dolly, Harry and Mr. Barron and there are the cold, artificial, theatrical poseurs such as Lucas, Renie and Renie's husband, Professor Sturgess. Each human character has failings, usually contradictory ones. They are real people, even if they are not terribly exciting individuals. They are lovable. Dolly Telfer is a fool with money and just cannot find the discipline to curb her wild expenditures on clothing and other personal items. But when she finds out that her cousin Lucas and her best friend Renie are about to consummate an affair in her house, she is scandalized and quickly finds the shrewdness to devise the means to separate them and keep them separated. Her husband is a thoroughly good-natured Englishman, yet he has a short temper which keeps him in constant conflict with his mercurial wife. He lacks both the intellect and the strength of character to bend her to his will, if indeed anyone could. Her father is alternately amused and bemused by his daughter's antics. His genial cynicism makes him seem the master of most situations, yet there is a point where his open-mindedness makes him an easy victim for other people's reforming ideas.¹⁴ It leads him, for instance, to try Professor Sturgess's health food Pableine, which only gives him an upset stomach and the opportunity to give Harry the sage advice not to change any of his bad habits when he gets "over fifty." He is also kept up most of the night by Harry's and Dolly's squabbling.

To contrast with the warm, "natural" characters, Jones creates a

worldly satiric eternal triangle made up of human beings who have mutated into caricatures. They are people possessed by an idea or an artificial personality to the exclusion of all else. First, there is the classic stage rake, Captain Lucas Wentworth, who sees himself as so thoroughly a rascal that he does not care whose wife he seduces or where he does it. Then there is the usual willing victim, in this case Renie Sturgess, who likes to play the part of the unhappy, bored and neglected stage wife. She loves to act the martyr and indulge in fits of weeping. Still Renie has good reason for what she does in Jones's view, for she is married to the third caricature Professor Sturgess.¹⁵ The professor believes that human life should be controlled and regulated by science and reason alone, and his life by "weight and measure" has driven his wife to distraction. He is obsessed with collecting data to prove that all behavior, criminal or otherwise, is "entirely dependent upon the condition, quantity and arrangement of certain atoms in the grey matter" of the brain.¹⁶ He ignores his distraught wife's wilfulness and continually advises her to take brisk walks in the fresh air. When he learns of her affair, he is forced to forgive her because to punish her would mean modifying the theory for which he has spent ten years collecting supporting data.

In Dolly Reforming Herself then, Jones mocks those who believe that mankind can be perfected by artificial means. He mocks intellectuals like Professor Sturgess, author of Man, the Automaton, who cannot account for his wife's deviant behavior and can only suggest more regulation "to the most minute point" when any dullard can see that it is his coldness and blindness that have frustrated her. Jones

also mocks silly religionists like the Reverend Pilcher whose strategy of shaming and fining leads to nothing but unnecessary guilt. What Jones advocates is tolerance and forgiveness for small faults and a balanced relationship between men and women like that between Dolly and Harry Telfer. Regulation and self-flagellation are madness as far as Jones is concerned. He says it all in a short exchange between Dolly and Renie early in the play when Renie is lamenting the fact that her married life is so well regulated that she and her husband never quarrel at all:

Renie. After all, your husband isn't a machine. He
is a human being!

Dolly. Oh, Harry's a perfect dear in most things,
but he has got a temper!

Renie. My husband never even swears at me! Oh,
Dolly, you are lucky!¹⁷

Dolly Reforming Herself shows the resilience of Jones's character. Theoretically this play is the successor to his first "amoral" comedy, The Manoeuvres of Jane, and both lack a connection to larger ideas and serious themes. That connection will come in Jones's finest comedy, still five years in the future, Mary Goes First.

After completing Dolly Reforming Herself in May 1908, he returned to Dick and half-heartedly gave it an ending in August 1908. He was then occupied with the production of Dolly Reforming Herself until November. Jones had a much needed success with the play in London, and he received very good reviews and a rave from Max Beerbohm.¹⁸ He wrote a short, unproduced play, Her Tongue, in February of 1909 about a young woman who loses a good catch for a husband because she talks too much. It is a slight play, clever but not at all witty.¹⁹ During the summer that followed, he wrote

another play, The Knife, which was specifically designed to be played in a music hall.²⁰ It is the story of a hero-surgeon, Sir Mark Ridgeway, who, just before performing a delicate operation on his best friend Archie Kingsford, finds out that Kingsford is his wife's lover. Several motifs in this play suggest that Jones is heading into another of his depressive periods: the twenty-year age difference between Ridgeway and his wife, the insistence that honor and duty can triumph over all obstacles and the bitter ending where Ridgeway surrenders his wife to Kingsford. His next play Sophie clearly shows that this is the case.²¹

Sophie is yet another attack on the puritanism in the mercantile, middle class English mind, and it is yet another consideration of the endless debate between science and religion and their place in education and reform. It is often crude, tasteless and unbalanced. In the opening scene, Jones introduces the prudish Mrs. Agatha Froyle who forces Helen Risdale, a young wife full of good common sense, to hide the clothes she is sewing for the baby she is expecting so that she will not embarrass the Froyle's virginal ward Sophie and the Froyle's delicate son Henry. Because of such ridiculous measures and the parental mentality that they suggest, both Sophie and Henry still act like children. Henry is a weakling with what his parents call a "beautiful nature" while Sophie, nearing the age of eighteen, still lavishes all her affection on dolls and puppies. The Froyles' plan is to perpetuate this state of innocence by plotting to marry Henry off to Sophie who is almost of age to inherit her uncle's large estate so that Henry can preserve himself and not have to work. The complication is that Sophie's Uncle Charles was a believer in

Eugenics, and he stipulated that Sophie could not inherit if she chose to marry an "unhealthy" man. In the course of the play, Sophie becomes the unwilling pupil of both scientists and religionists who debate the soundness of her uncle's ideas. She finally manages to marry the eugenically correct man, Kenneth Hayward, instinctively, because even she can see by Henry Froyle's actions that he is a physical and emotional coward and a slave to his parents' will.

Sophie is a complex play, but its obsession with sickness and healthfulness, with the devastating effects of a strict puritan upbringing and with the blind faith that Nature and instinct will save the day show Jones well on his way into the pit of dark depression once again. His next play, Loo Vallance, resembles the earlier Felisa. It is the most lurid of his plays that has yet come to light.

In Loo Vallance, Jones wallows in hysterical emotion and vice. Earlier in his career, his melodramatic characters had suffered from an insatiable appetite for alcohol or gambling or sensuality. Here the central figure is a drug addict. Drug use, of course, was not new to Jones; he had grown up with the problem. For most of her life, his mother, both neurotic and deeply religious, took large doses of laudanum for an "internal complaint." Jones's daughter Mrs. Thorne records that her father told her the story of how his mother "as a young girl" had taken an overdose by mistake and of the difficulties it had caused.²² Jones probably drew upon this first-hand knowledge of the effects of drug use in writing this play. Certainly the most vivid parts of Loo Vallance are the depictions of the hallucinations from which the heroine suffers when she takes an overdose of opium.

The title character of Loo Vallance is a circus performer who is

billed as the "Dashing, Daring, Devil-may-care Loo." In reality, she is a sad, pale opium addict who is pregnant for the second time by one of the circus owners, Alec Bannister. As the play opens, Mab Majendie, another circus performer, has just returned from a weekend with Loo's lover. When the vulgar and flashy Mab begins to brag about her conquest, Loo stabs her and leaves her for dead. She finds refuge in a country cottage and there takes a near fatal dose of opium. Eventually Bannister finds her, rouses her from her nightmare-filled sleep and convinces her to go on living.

Jones was at a low ebb when he wrote Loo Vallance. Even though this kind of hyper-emotion will appear later in his scenarios for silent films, the sordid quality of most of the characters and Jones's insistence that Loo has "natural refinement" and suffers a guilty conscience makes this play symptomatic of the artistic breakdown from which he was suffering at this time.

As in the case of Felisa, the mere writing of Loo Vallance must have been therapeutic.²³ This, combined with the success of The Knife in London in late December 1909, helped Jones pull himself together. He wrote next another play designed for a music hall, a "recruiting tract" called Fall in, Rookies! Jones himself reported that it "went boisterously with a very simple audience" when it was played at the Alhambra Theatre on October 24, 1910, but that it "has no value as drama."²⁴ It is easy to agree with him. In the first scene, hard drinking and lustful Nat Drake is rejected by his lady love Cherry Gedge and chastised by his mother who predicts he will "die in a ditch." He joins the army and returns in Scene 2 a disciplined soldier. He wins a sports prize, his mother's respect and

Cherry's hand, and he also lectures two anti-war types on the virtues of army discipline.

Did Jones compromise himself as an artist by writing plays like Fall in, Rookies? No, Jones sincerely believed, because of his own experience, that patriotism, devotion to duty and a rigid adherence to strict moral values were the only hope for civilization. He loved self-indulgence, but he also felt that such indulgence brought heart-break and ruin. Lest we think Jones insincere, we need only read his next play, The Ogre, where he gives the male view of the Women's Movement.²⁵ The play not only shows how reasonable his views were but also how shallow and callous were his feelings for anyone other than those who measured up to his strict standards.

In The Ogre, a three-act comedy-satire, Jones presents a rational and comfortable view of middle-class life. "Ogre" Nick Fawsitt has been working so hard and long in the City to keep his family materially comfortable that he has not had time to exert any real influence over them. Obviously this was a man with whom the hard-working Jones could sympathize. Nick himself is an extremely likable fellow, not at all the arrogant raisonneur of Jones's earlier tailor-made-for-Wyndham plays. Since he is the only member of his family who works at all, Jones easily convinces the audience that it is only fair that he should have some voice in deciding how his money is spent. As the play opens, Nick's business forces him to cut back expenses by retiring to the country for several months and this gives him the opportunity to take a hard look at his family. He finds that his young wife, Dorinda, and his three children from his previous marriage are completely out of control and appear to him as characters

straight out of stage farce. His eldest daughter, Sylvia, a "handsome, impulsive" girl of twenty-two, has written a scandalous novel called Bina Smithers, the Self-Revelations of a Shop Girl, which is being used as feminist propoganda by Feemy Boon, an eccentric who "carefully displays her absence of a woman's figure" with her mannish dress. Nick's younger daughter Lillian is a militant feminist of fifteen who eventually accuses her sister of reconciling with their father only "because you've crawled and cringed to him and asked permission to kiss the dust beneath his feet."²⁶ She eventually learns to obey also. Obviously Jones has little sympathy for the Women's Movement, but he is no less harsh on Nick's son Bertie. Ruined by his overindulgent parents, Bertie has become engaged to Victoria Quinton, a vulgar music hall artiste who is professionally known as "the Goldfinch." Bertie eventually marries her because he thinks he can live comfortably off her earnings, but both soon want a divorce. Finally, there is Dorinda, Nick's wife, whose philosophy in money matters is "if we were to wait till men could afford things we should never get anything at all" so she never waits (I, p. 6). She is threatening, meanwhile, to run off with Cosmo Paradine, who believes in "rational matrimony" based on a five-year renewable contract. Cosmo eventually flees because he does not want the responsibility of supporting the extravagant Dorinda.

Realizing that he is surrounded by a group of lunatics, Nick becomes more determined than ever to move to the country, a prospect he looks forward to with great pleasure after the hectic pace of business life. He even offers to share half the housework with his wife, but she is determined to stay in London. Thus the second act

turns out to be a naked battle of the sexes with Dorinda pitting her will against that of her husband. For his part, all Nick wishes is that Dorinda "give up these senseless tricks, set to work keep [sic] me put our home in order and let's see what happiness and comfort we can get out of it" (II, p. 87). But Dorinda is determined. When she arrives in the country, she promptly insults the new cook so that she will leave, but her plan backfires when her husband manages to get himself a dinner from the local inn with the help of an old misogynist named Pidduck while his wife must go hungry. She also attempts to frustrate his efforts to hang an engraving of Landseer's "Monarch of the Glen" over their country fireplace, and in a temper in the second act, she smashes the glass on the engraving and tears it to pieces. This is finally too much even for the long-suffering Nick, and he nails "the sacred symbol of masculine authority" over the fireplace, his riding breeches (I, p. 43).

Unfortunately Jones fails to make his play a success for a modern audience in the third act where he attempts to resolve the problems he has raised. The first two acts of The Ogre are funny and rather like an early twentieth-century version of Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew, but in the third, Jones offers no insight or ideals or new solutions. He does not use imagination or show any sympathy for what we would consider today the obvious frustrations suffered by a wife and children who are forced to be subservient to the family breadwinner and who have no sense of self-worth or independence. Instead he resolves his play by clinging manfully, and not a little desperately, to his belief in order and reason and his prejudice that women, liberals and children of both sexes are merely

lazy, spoiled and willful and will conform for any promise of an easy life. This cynical and completely materialistic view of human nature is revolting. Jones has the feminist Feemy Boon, whose spirit of independence if nothing else one has come to admire, humiliated violently and the rest of the characters bow to Nick's will in order to enjoy material comfort. The tension built up within a social system in which most of its members are forced to consider themselves inherently inferior or immature and silly because they feel discontent or challenge accepted values is something Jones accurately describes but with which he cannot sympathize. This man, himself desperate to keep his own world from splitting in two, seems determined to keep society together and save both himself and everyone else from madness. This is why Jones gives his realistic comedy a traditional ending, why he makes the frivolous Dorinda incapable of being a mature, independent woman, only an obedient wife, why Nick's daughters are only too happy to return to the material comforts their father provides until they can receive the same comforts from marrying other benevolent despots and why Nick's son must be sent off to Canada to be made a man of, the secret of which is apparently only found on foreign soil under rugged physical conditions.

Times had changed and the Shavian woman had arrived on the scene. The Ogre failed to draw an audience when it was put on at the St. James's on September 11, 1911, with George Alexander in the title role.²⁷ Jones tended to blame Alexander for the play's failure, and he confided in a letter to his son-in-law that he feared this would "just knock me over as I was beginning to pull round."²⁸ Jones indeed had reason to be worried since his plays were also failing with New

York audiences. Although The Ogre was written before another comedy called We Can't Be As Bad As All That, the latter play failed in New York nine months before The Ogre failed in London.²⁹ Both of these disappointments was followed by still another when Lydia Gilmore failed in New York in February 1912.

Jones's New York plays at this time were obvious attempts to write popular drama. Jones could work such a trick quite easily in the Eighties and Nineties when he understood his audience. But now in 1910 and 1911, he was writing plays meant to be popular but which could only have succeeded with a late Victorian audience. We Can't Be As Bad As All That, for example, is a potpourri of plot devices and type characters from earlier Jones successes. There is, first of all, a woman with a past, Mrs. Evadne Engaine, née Nora Shard, who is threatened with public exposure by some fortune-hunting aristocrats. Lady Carnforth wants Mrs. Engaine, the widow of an American millionaire, to allow her step-daughter Violet Engaine to marry her vile brother Fulks Bissett for money and threatens to expose her if she does not consent. At the same time, Mrs. Engaine is in love with a stalwart middle-aged Englishman named Sir Ralph Newell who has just returned from living in South America for many years. This fact explains for Jones why he is stalwart and why he does not know that Mrs. Engaine as Nora Shard had been the mistress of his best friend Harry Furnival, now dead. He flees Mrs. Engaine when he learns of her past but eventually returns to marry her and whisk her off to Argentina. In the meantime, Bissett is too pressed by creditors to wait for a marriage to be arranged. He steals Mrs. Engaine's pearl necklace and replaces it with a cheap reproduction. Predictably

enough, a detective is called in and much ado is made over the pearls before Bissett is caught and sent to the continent in a kind of gentleman's probation at Mrs. Engaine's expense. This mongrel plot is helped along by Jones's usual crowd of witty, gossipy house guests eager to spread any hint of scandal. There is even a resident rake, Harry Stackpool, who is having an affair with Lady Carnforth. Once the criminal is discovered, Violet is free to accompany her stepmother and Sir Ralph to Argentina where they will be free of the corruption of sophisticated London life.

It is difficult to decide which was more responsible for keeping American audiences away from We Can't Be As Bad As All That, its cynical view of English society or its hackneyed plot. Having failed with a comedy-drama, Jones next tried a return to melodrama. Lydia Gilmore, first put on at the Lyceum Theater in New York on February 1, 1912, is a variation on Mrs. Dane's Defence, only this time the lie exposed is outright perjury. Jones is also not as moralistic as he is in Mrs. Dane's Defence but is out to give his version of why society is the way it is and why adultery flourishes.

In Lydia Gilmore, Jones focuses on the troubled marriage of Dr. Clement Gilmore and his wife Lydia. Dr. Gilmore has been successfully lured away from his contented wife and their child by the bored and childless Mrs. James Stracey. In the meantime, the idealistic and middle-aged attorney Richard Benham is attracted to Mrs. Gilmore, but she resists him. As the play opens, James Stracey overhears his wife and Dr. Gilmore planning a rendezvous. When Stracey confronts Gilmore, there is a struggle and Gilmore stabs Stracey to death with a letter opener. The doctor then returns home, confesses all to his

wife and begs her to lie for him in order to spare their son. Jones seems to have set the scene for a courtroom confrontation where a skillful lawyer wheedles the truth, the devoted mother's secret, from her, but instead Jones makes the attorney the opposite of Sir Christopher Deering, unethical. Because Richard Benham has been chosen to act as prosecuting attorney at the Gilmore trial and because he loves Lydia, he encourages her to lie on the stand in court, and he even goes so far as to rehearse her in her cross examination before she takes the stand. But an anonymous letter makes the judge suspicious and when confronted with the probability that her twelve year old son will be brought into court to testify against his father, Lydia breaks down and her husband is convicted. Because Gilmore cannot face execution and commits suicide, Lydia is free at the end of the play and is left under the protection of Benham.

Two of Jones's more neurotic truisms about human behavior came forth in Lydia Gilmore. First, his belief that men and women in their prime are constantly in a white heat of passion for someone, regardless of whether or not they happen to be married at the time. He generally sees this overabundance of unruly emotion as a kind of disease and he uses distasteful metaphors to describe it. When Lydia's uncle, Tom Rendle, is discussing Benham's infatuation with her, he describes the human condition in this unromantic way:

I've had too many skewers in my own heart. In fact till a few years ago I was rarely without a skewer in my heart. And now my only fun is to watch the other poor devils wriggling about with their skewers.³⁰

Secondly, Jones sees marriage as the opposite of romance, which is not an uncommon idea, but he also ascribes an excessive devotion to

children on the part of wives and a consequent neglect of their husbands. Lydia describes herself this way:

I'm the most ordinary average stay-at-home creature--
I'm quite contented with my home, and my husband and
my boy. I'm not bitten with any new ideas--really,
now I come to think of it, Clem's right--I do make
an excellent wife. (I, p. 11)

When her uncle asks her if she is happy, she says "Oh yes--as marriage goes (Sighs) after a dozen years of it" (I, p. 19). Jones stresses this complacency and praises Lydia's attachment to her son, which is, realistically speaking, the fatal passion in the play. Never does Lydia talk of her passionate moments with her husband, either before or after marriage, but she does talk of nursing her son after his bout with scarlet fever with great emotion. Her son is the only man whom she kisses passionately during the play. When we remember that Jones and his children almost enjoyed being sick so that his wife would nurse them and that she spent the first fifteen years of her marriage devotedly nursing her invalid son, it is easy to assume that here Jones is working out his own feelings for his wife just as he may have been writing about his mother indirectly in Loo Vallance.³¹ The personal quality in both plays is similar, and it is obvious that Jones was at a low ebb again here. This time, though, his problems were as much physical as mental, for within a few months after Lydia Gilmore failed in New York, Jones underwent surgery for cancer.

Between the production of Lydia Gilmore and Jones's surgery, he wrote a "philosophical" play called The Divine Gift, and both his illness and his consuming desire to catch up with the times--on his own terms--go a long way towards explaining the tone of this work.

When Jones wrote The Divine Gift, he was sixty-one years old and his life was in ruins. He was ill, and he suffered from chronic nervous breakdowns. His children, now grown, were unruly, and his wife was deaf and perhaps unable to meet his needs in other ways too. He had just suffered three successive failures on the stage, two in New York and one in London, and this, of course, did not help his financial position at all. Nonetheless, with the strong will he always possessed and which was responsible for both his successes and his failures, Jones pulled himself together and in a hotel room in New York, he wrote a play in which he tried to solve not only his own but the world's problems.³² For this purpose, he created both his last and his most nearly perfect raisonneur, Andrew Cutler. Cutler's approach to life is a completely rational one. At the age of thirty-five, Cutler cut himself off from what Shaw would probably call the Life Force. He renounced women and never married because "I looked round the human Zoo, but I couldn't see any animal that I desired for a lifelong mate."³³ He has patterned his life on the model of the eighteenth-century man of letters, and he indulges his senses in everything except sex, scrupulously avoids emotion and devotes his time to thinking for the rest of the human race. He writes philosophical tracts and sees mankind from above in nightmarish visions:

Now sometimes I look down into the slimy whirlpool,
and see the blind eels twisting and wriggling and
curling round each other, feeding on the rank weeds--
I turn away and look heavenwards. (II, p. 139)

What Cutler has become then is a misogynist who, paradoxically, loves women and a misanthrope who loves people. He has come to love mankind in particular but hate it in general. In his attempt to make

his life ideal, which for Jones at this point means literally a life full of ideas, abstractions and intellect, he has divorced himself from all emotion, which for Jones at this time means real life. This makes him perfectly controlled but rather hateful to the rest of us since he does tend to prefer people who will take his advice or bend to his will. His arrogance is infuriating. But paradoxical as always, Jones makes it plain that although Cutler is a positive force, his approach to life is not the entire answer. Just as in Mrs. Dane's Defence where Jones provides a Portia in the person of Lady Eastney to soften the views of Sir Daniel (Mr. Justice) Carteret, Jones provides an ideal woman to soften Cutler in the person of Lora Delmar. When Cutler describes his life of luxury and leisure to her and brags that he possesses his own soul and that he is the "last of the aristocrats," she pities him. In her eyes and thus partly in Jones's also, this ideal philosopher is neither loving nor lovable, just perfect.

Still Andrew Cutler is disinterested and neutral, and the rest of the human race respects him and the more emotional and flawed among them come to his home to seek his sage advice. Jones uses this idea to provide a framework for his play, and he has two troubled couples disturb Cutler while he is writing his tract, "The Future of the Human Race." They are designed by Jones to reflect the two kinds of people in society, the ordinary and the gifted, and he eventually argues for a kind of dual system of morality allowing for freedom and understanding for the artists but strict control and discipline for the rest of society, especially for women.

The first couple to disturb Cutler's work is an ordinary middle-

class pair, Evie and Will Janway. For Jones, Evie is typical of the female rebel of his day. She is a trivial, stupid, pretty young woman with silly artistic pretensions. She wastes her solid carpet manufacturer-husband's money and by refusing to do her duty and be a good wife, she has become a useless troublemaker. She wishes to divorce her husband, but only with a settlement large enough so that she can live in luxury without having to give anything in return, and she especially wishes to avoid having the responsibility of bearing and bringing up children. This is the crux of the matter for Jones and he has Cutler discuss the position of women in the tract he is dictating:

The present inferior position of women is directly traceable to the disagreeable necessity which is at present laid upon them of becoming mothers. This necessity once removed, their status will be immediately raised to that of perfect equality with men. (I, p. 123)

He uses this argument, what he calls Dame Nature's Law, to put down the labor movement of his day also. Some people are "doomed," he feels, to "constant and irksome toil." To this heartless and selfish man, who is also a compulsive worker and who, of course, has never heard of birth control or computerization, women and workers keeping their places seems to be the rational solution dictated by Mother Nature. Certainly forcing the parasitic Evie Janway to be a good wife is an understandably tempting solution, especially since Jones offers no explanation of how and why she became such a silly, idle creature except that women of a certain class are like that.³⁴ The root of the problem is that this is essentially a comic idea, and it works in Jones's own comedies, but it is not convincing in a serious

philosophical play.

The second woman who consults Cutler during the play is the divinely gifted opera singer Lora Delmar. This gentle and sensitive woman comes to ask Cutler's help with her present adulterous lover George Norton. With this second couple, the situation is completely reversed, and it is the man who is in the wrong. Norton is a careless, handsome aristocrat whose duty, according to Cutler, is to dedicate himself to ruling England because he has been bred and educated to do it. Instead he is as lazy and useless as Evie Janway. Cutler does not urge Lora to become a dutiful wife to Norton and have children as he does Evie, and he does not chastise her for living with a married man because she is, like her sage advisor, exceptional. Her duty, which he urges her to follow, is to her voice and to her public and to her art.

The problems of the Janways and Lora Delmar are both partially resolved in the third act which Jones sets a year after the second. For the less important characters, Will and Evie Janway, experience has been the teacher. Both husband and wife have become involved in sordid scandals, and each needs the other's protection to save face in provincial society. Will also needs his wife's presence to help him look respectable in the eyes of some of his upright business associates. Cutler mediates and they are reconciled. In the meantime, George Norton returns from the continent a broken and sorry man. He tries to win Lora back, but Cutler does his best to prevent any reconciliation. Lora pities George, but he has wounded her so deeply that she has become closed-off like Cutler and can no longer love him. She has grown sad and wise, and instead of having an

affair with the ardent young Cornish composer John Treganza who adores her and whose opera she has inspired, she gives him motherly advice. As the play ends, Cutler is trying to finish his tract in a burst of oratory, but he is cut off by something more powerful: the song of the nightingale and Lora singing one of Treganza's inspirations.

The Divine Gift reflects Jones's melancholy view of human life and his view of himself, with some minor distortions because of the pressure under which he wrote it. He was ill and probably in constant pain at this time, and two months after completing The Divine Gift, he underwent the serious operation which no one expected him to survive. But survive he did and his general health and state of mind improved dramatically. His illness was a turning point for him, as important as the failure of Michael and His Lost Angel in 1896. After his illness, he wrote fewer but better plays, and he became more liberal and sympathetic towards his fellow creatures, even feminists. His attitude was not to sour again until after the First World War. In a real sense, The Divine Gift is the best serious social play Jones was ever able to write as Michael and His Lost Angel is his best romance. Neither play is great and neither is very actable, but they are both crucial to our understanding of Jones the playwright and to our understanding of the mind of an era whose attitudes led to two world wars and to the modern world. It seems only fitting that Jones the champion of reason and dispassion should end The Divine Gift with the sound of the most irrational and emotional thing in earthly experience, human singing.

After more than a year of convalescence, Jones began to write a comedy which reflects his restored health and his understandably

bouyant mood, Mary Goes First.³⁵ This second satire, which resembles Dolly Reforming Herself in tone and technique, is the product of a balanced mind and Jones's new found physical health. Jones was probably also pleased because his daughter Sue's affair with Maugham was ending and she was soon to marry happily for the second time.³⁶ The playwright mocks, but with gentle laughter, and not with a vengeance. This play, which he dismissed so lightly in his own lifetime, is one of the best he ever wrote, perhaps because he did treat it so lightly.³⁷

As in Dolly Reforming Herself, Jones concentrates on the domestic scene in Mary Goes First, but with a difference. In Dolly Reforming Herself, Jones wrote mainly about a husband-wife quarrel over money, and he mocked the intellectual who is so bound up with theories that he could not satisfy his wife. In Mary Goes First, there are no unhappy marriages or even any serious quarrels. In what seems on the outside like the most innocent of situations, Jones is concerned with power and morality--in law, in politics and in the press. He laughingly considers how power is exercised and, without flinching, points out that it is done by compromise and expediency--and completely without any moral sense of values.

Because Mary Goes First is such a light and delicate play and the characters are all so charming, it is difficult to describe the serious issues underneath the surface and still be faithful to the tone of the play. Jones centers his comedy around the rivalry between two women, Mary Whichello and the newly-created Lady Bodsworth, both of whom are vying for social leadership in the tiny town of Warkinstall. Mary is furious over the fact that Fanny has become a

lady because her husband Thomas has financed a sanatorium for the town. Mary's jealousy and Fanny's haughtiness come to a head at a dinner party given in honor of the new knighthood by an ambitious young lawyer named Felix Galpin who is in love with Mary's sister Ella. The results of the women's Edwardian version of a flyting contest are a silly suit for slander because Mary referred to Fanny as an "impropriety" and a determination by Mary that her husband must get himself a baronetcy either by endowing a new cemetery and crematorium in Warkinstall or by giving a large donation to the Liberals, the party in power at the time. Her poor husband Dick who is only interested in minding his own business and playing golf is first forced to run for Parliament and then to finance the penniless Galpin's candidacy when he himself gives up in disgust. He thus enriches the Liberal Party, and after endowing the cemetery and crematorium, he has bought his wife the baronetcy she craved. What he buys for himself is peace and quiet.

In Mary Goes First, Jones does supremely well what he always did best, copy the human life he saw around him. It is because he so often felt that he had to pound his message and stern sense of morality home to his audience that most of his plays are fatally flawed. Here, because Jones tells the unadulterated truth but does not add his own interpretation openly, he can make the audience see for themselves what they are—and that mirror image is both charming and devastating. Jones describes philanthropy done not for charity but for a place on the Birthday Honors List. He describes political life not as something led for idealistic motives but as a means to a fat living. Law suits are silly arguments carried on by bluff and

bluster for the sake of personal vanity. Press accounts of events veer crazily away from truth and reality depending on which part of the political spectrum supports a given paper. The Liberal daily praises the Liberal rally and mocks the goings on at the Tory one and vice versa. But probably the most devastating cameos are of the members of the younger generation in the play, Harvey Betts and Felix Galpin. These young men, Harvey, the up-and-coming young politician and the new Junior Whip of the Liberal Party, and Felix, the energetic but penniless young lawyer, seem to have everything: they are well-educated, suave, intelligent and eager. The only things they lack are a sense of right and wrong and any scrap of conviction or principle. Felix, for instance, laments his financial situation to his uncle Dr. Chesher:

Felix. That's it. But if I don't arrive very soon, I shall have to change my point of view, chuck the Tories and Church people, and go in a mucker for dissent and radicalism.

Chesher. Will that be necessary?

Felix. It's absolutely necessary that I shouldn't starve. My income last year was eighty-six pounds. I've got seven pounds in the bank and I haven't paid for tonight's dinner-party. Isn't it about time I changed my political principles?

Chesher. It is better to change one's political principles than to starve.

Felix. Oh, if it comes to principles, my principles are thoroughly Tory--so far as they go. Especially as in Warkinstall all the nicest people are Tories.³⁸

Jones's satire is devastating precisely because everyone in Mary Goes First seems so normal and sensible and harmless. No one ever questions the morality of the situation or the traffic in titles and political favors. Jones appears to be reporting commonplace and everyday events and yet these charming middle-class people are, in their lack of values, more dangerous than the most dastardly melo-

dramatic villain who, at least, shows his true colors. Honesty and conviction are alien words to the characters in Mary Goes First and gentle deceit is a way of life. Jones has finally written the kind of play he praised in his dramatic theorizing in the Nineties. He has painted a faithful picture of English vanity and polite corruption, and the mere facts speak for themselves.³⁹

Unfortunately Jones's own renaissance was not to last very long. The production of Mary Goes First at the Playhouse in London on September 18, 1913, was to be the playwright's last before the calamitous First World War. Jones received mixed reviews for the play, but because Marie Tempest scored a personal success in the title role, the play had a fairly good run in London and New York.⁴⁰ Jones did write one other play before the war, The Lie, which was a great success for him both when it was produced in New York in 1914 and in London in 1923, after the war and after Jones stopped writing new works for the stage.⁴¹ The Lie is the only serious play which Jones ever wrote which is not flawed by earnest moralizing. Reacting at this time against the contemporary "theater of ideas," he allowed the plot to dominate and in a relaxed, simple way, he manages to write a balanced play without emotional excess or blatant exaggeration.⁴²

In The Lie, Jones tells the story of two sisters, Elinor and Lucy Shale. Elinor is the elder and very warm-hearted. This good nature allows her callous younger sister to take advantage of her. Both girls are desperately in need of money, and Lucy steals Elinor's rich beau, Gerald Forster, by allowing him to think that the child she herself had out of wedlock is really Elinor's. The elder sister's rage at the younger sister's cruelty and the nobility with which she

controls it and spares the brother-in-law whom she had wished to have for a husband pain give Jones the opportunity to write a gripping play with little sentimentality and no pathos. The audience feels great sympathy for Elinor and chagrin that her own sister could cause her such anguish, and these emotions resemble an audience's response to classical tragedy, feelings of pity and terror. What weakens the play is Jones's inability to face the fact that Elinor suffers due to forces beyond her control. He allows her to find another, more worthy lover and she adopts her sister's son. His view of the universe, ironically, is not harsh enough in this play.

Jones's career was hampered not only by his own complex personality but also by incredibly bad luck. Just as he had gained a measure of mental and physical health, the kind which he himself attested he had never before enjoyed in his life, the war came to distract him.⁴³ Perhaps with a few years of tranquility, he might have been able to write at the height of his powers with full artistic and self control even though he was now sixty-three years old. Perhaps he could have eliminated the tediousness which sometimes creeps into Mary Goes First, and he could have put more thought, if not "ideas," into his more openly serious plays. By the time the war was over, Jones's passion for saving civilization was aflame again, and this time it burned so hot that it could not be contained within a dramatic structure where he had to discipline himself and form his ideas into characters and a plot. Instead he began to produce social and political tracts written by accretion in the form of letters where he could run on at will. This makes the task of examining Jones's last plays, those written between 1915 and 1919, a sad one

because during those years he worked on five plays, three of which are the most interesting he ever wrote, but none of which were properly produced.

The war years began for Jones with a production of a short play he had written many years before called The Goal which is a telling portrait of Jones in 1897 and which coincidentally fit the mood of 1914, making it seem as if Jones had predicted the current conflict.⁴⁴ It was produced in New York as was his next play, a comedy called Cock o' the Walk, written especially for the famous American actor Otis Skinner and meant also as a tribute to Shakespeare.

Cock o' the Walk suffers from the same fault as The Bauble Shop, The Tempter and Carnac Sahib--too much research and not enough observation from real life. While preparing to write it, Jones read all of Shakespeare,⁴⁵ and in the play manages to quote almost every famous line the Bard ever wrote. Cock o' the Walk often seems more like a dictionary of quotations than a play. This is particularly disappointing since it is based on a fragment which Jones began to work on in 1909 under the working title of the "Morocco Play" where Jones manages to work in Shakespeare's words much more cleverly.⁴⁶

For the "Morocco Play," Jones first created the formidable figure of the Shakespearean actor Anthony Bellchamber, another showman in the mold of Dick Slinfold and the Chevaleer Munteagle. In the 1909 piece, the starving Bellchamber and his actor friend Bob Tandy try to extort a good dinner from Lord Farloe whose wife Vera was once engaged to Bellchamber. Lord Edward is a hard, cruel man and when his daughter Ruby runs away from his tyranny, Bellchamber becomes her protector on a ship bound for Morocco. He falls in love

with her during an acting lesson, and it is here that Jones is able to slip Shakespeare in so cleverly. Bellchamber begins Ruby's acting lessons by rehearsing the Balcony Scene from Romeo and Juliet with her, but before he knows it, art has become real life and the two are in love.

Unfortunately Cock o' the Walk is quite a different play. Regardless of how many times Jones manages to quote Shakespeare, the comedy is still a trivial one. The play again centers around Bellchamber who, as usual, is unemployed. This time, though, he is more father than lover and his main task is to convince Johanna Bridle to stop being a silly fan who is embarrassing Sir Augustus Conyers, matinee idol and actor-manager. He also convinces her to return home to her parents and admit to them that she is in love with a penniless young man named Jack Rivers. For this good deed, she is given the opportunity to play Othello to Conyers' Iago in a Shakespeare Memorial Festival.

Jones originally did not want to call his play Cock o' the Walk but A Shakespeare Offering.⁴⁷ What began as homage to Shakespeare became homage to Anthony Bellchamber, Shakespearean actor—or rather homage to Otis Skinner as a Shakespearean actor.⁴⁸ Regardless of the judgement we may pass on this play today, what seems to us heavy-handed writing apparently suited the "nineteenth-century style" of Otis Skinner perfectly. It opened on December 27, 1915, at the George M. Cohan Theater in New York with Skinner in the leading role and ran for fourteen months.⁴⁹

In June 1916, Jones began a serious play which he left unfinished for the stage but which he eventually completed in June and

July of 1920 as a silent "film scenario."⁵⁰ Jones was very interested in the new medium for both artistic and financial reasons and several of his plays were filmed during his lifetime.⁵¹ Both the play and the film called Venetia Superba are about a femme fatale and her victims. In the play, the fatal woman is the adulterous Mrs. Anna Ridings who is out to ensnare Philip Bankart since she has tired of his brother George. In despair, George commits suicide in the first act and in the remaining inconclusive acts, Jones is concerned with the repercussions of the adultery and suicide on Philip and his wife and Anna and her husband. The film scenario is much bolder and has an air of decadence about it partly because of the graphic descriptions of some of the minor characters and their motivations. In the play there is some attempt to analyze the motives of the characters, but in the film only excitement is sought.

Although Jones was to be successful on the English stage with revivals of old plays and productions of plays first done in America for several years to come, the last new play from Jones to be performed in London was The Pacifists on September 4, 1917.⁵² Like The Ogre, it is a skillfully written and highly polished play. Also like The Ogre, it is a play in which Jones gives only one point of view--his own. This "parable in a farce," which Jones himself produced at the St. James's Theatre, is a blatant attack on pacifism. The playwright-satirist creates a hypothetical situation where he can follow the behavior of a pacifist to what he considered to be its logical conclusion: total surrender of personal freedom.⁵³ Fergusson, the belligerent butcher of Market Pewbury, decides to take aggressive action in his sleepy provincial town.⁵⁴ He fences off the village

common, effectively blockading all the inhabitants' back doors. He kidnaps the mother of the town's mayor, the pacifistic Peebody, and imprisons her in a damp coal cellar. He then daringly kisses Peebody's wife Susanna six times on the village green. Susanna soon succumbs to Fergusson's charms, but only until he is defeated by the pugilistic Tom Bluke whom Peebody's Uncle Belcher hires to defeat Fergusson. As the play ends, Susanna is leaving for Trumpington-on-Sea with Bluke, taking Peebody along so that he can pay the bills.

Because his convictions have no physical threat behind them, Peebody loses his wife, his independence and everyone's respect. He is never made out to be a man in a moral dilemma, but one who is both a victim and a complete fool. Since Jones was too old to take an active part in the war effort, he made his contribution by writing this polished and imaginative play. It has to be admired as a fine piece of work, even if one hesitates to embrace wholeheartedly Jones's point of view.

The Pacifists was a public play written partly out of duty. After he completed it, Jones wrote another play between December 1917 and March 1918, this time a more personal one for his own artistic pleasure.⁵⁵ It is Jones's last complete full-length comedy, his last snapshot of the life around him. The picture is an informal and candid one, and it shows a significant liberalization in the sixty-six year old Jones's views, especially concerning feminists.

In Finding Themselves, Jones gives an intimate view of an English family just before and during the First World War by detailing the adventures of the members of the Quarterman family. The first act is set in June 1914, and in it Jones expresses his disgust at the

decadence and sense of stagnation in England at that time. The entire Quarterman household is in disorder. Peter Quarterman, a wealthy businessman, is the seventy year old head of the family who spends most of his time pursuing the thirty year old widow, Mrs. Bessie Wideways. Mrs. Wideways, for her part, feels it is her duty to marry the old man in order to support her brother Rex and his fiancée Molly, Peter's plucky young granddaughter. Both Rex and Molly are dedicated reformers, Rex an idealistic socialist and Molly a suffragette, but Jones feels that their considerable energies are wasted because they are not directed properly. Still he admires them and contrasts them with the fashionable young couple composed of Peter's grandson Sidney and his fiancée Peggy Cukeny. Sidney and Peggy are only interested in convincing Peter to supplement their marriage settlements so that they can continue to live in the lavish style to which they have become accustomed. In contrast, the socialist Rex gives away all his income and feminist Molly makes it clear to Peter that she wants none of his money.

Jones sets the second act of Finding Themselves in May 1915 and the third in January 1918 to show what effects the war is having. Generally they are all positive. Molly zealously joins in the war work and takes to making shells in a factory in Woolwich. Rex works selflessly as an army doctor and is blinded in action. Jones has an obvious affection for these young idealists. They have a lovers' quarrel, but in the third act after Molly proposes to Rex, they decide to marry and Molly vows "to keep on being a rebel, while there's anything to rebel against."⁵⁶ Most of the rest of the family also falls in line. Molly's father James becomes a special constable

and Molesworth, the cowardly butler, enlists. The tyrannical Peter is furious that he is too old to join them. Peggy and Sidney remain the same--interested only in a large marriage settlement.

Because Jones wrote the third act almost at the same time as it is set and because it was never formally prepared for production or publication, it seems almost like a diary.⁵⁷ Peter Quarterman's frustration at not being able to enlist in the war effort probably reflects Jones's own, and the old man's temper and tyranny are probably his own mock portrait of himself as an irascible old man. Reading Jones's correspondence at this time, we can even see that the Quartermans' impudent servant Hosanna is a cameo of the Jones's own rebellious wartime servant "blowsy Irene."⁵⁸

Finding Themselves ends inconclusively because it was completed while the war was still going on, and it was never re-written to take into account the changes in English society, and so in the Quarterman household, after the war. It is obvious, though, that in 1918 Jones saw the war as a positive force and a social good for England. It woke the country and its young people up from a stupor induced by laziness and easy living. In the fundamentals, Jones remained a puritan and a reformer to the very end. If in 1918 he was Peter Quarterman in body, he was Dr. Rex Kingdon in spirit.

Jones began his last play, The Lifted Veil, in September 1919 after the war was over.⁵⁹ It is both an old style melodrama and the pathetic statement of an old man searching for religion, hope and consolation in a chaotic world he still does not understand. Here in the last version Jones was to write of that war between Science and Religion which raged throughout his life, he has his characters

search for some meaning amid calamities and tricks of fate. Indeed Jones writes melodrama, yet ironically he also comes closest to writing the kind of noble tragedy which eluded him for so long.

Strangely enough, the vice which gets the plot of The Lifted Veil moving is alcoholism. Avis Southerne, bound by a promise to her dying mother, must leave her loving husband Geoffrey to travel to New Zealand in order to try to help reform her alcoholic brother Alec Langley who is living there. She succeeds in her mission but is shipwrecked on her return home to England and presumed dead. Her husband half-heartedly marries a family friend, Viva Newmarch, and they are about to have a child when Avis finally returns. The weary Avis learns about her husband's marriage in a cruel scene where she watches Geoff and Viva flirt lightheartedly while she is concealed behind a curtain. Ironically, this is the first time Geoff and Viva behave so affectionately in what has been a dreary marriage. Not knowing this, Avis despairs and in a tense scene in which Jones imitates the Ghost-Walking scene in Hamlet, Avis's dead mother appears to convince her daughter to "endure." The elevated tone and language in this scene, despite its melodramatic intent, lasts only for a moment. Almost as soon as Avis resigns herself to Fate, Jones rewards her by disposing of Viva and her unborn child in a convenient accident. The father of Avis, the mystic Rufus Southerne, then convinces the father of Viva, the scientist Richard Newmarch, that "in His Will is our peace." Geoffrey and Avis are then reunited.

Jones wrote to his daughter on December 21, 1919, that he had just finished The Lifted Veil with his eyes "full of tears."⁶⁰ Indeed it is a strangely touching play because of the sincere way in

which it reflects Jones's own personal conception of God as the "living intelligent Spirit" he finds in the universe.⁶¹ He believed in the end that the world was perfectly and naturally balanced and that even though mankind must face "all the woes and disasters and diseases and brutalities and blinding sorrows" of human life, there was also a "sentient happiness and joy and beauty" in the world equal to the bitterness and pain.⁶² He believed that mankind must learn to "keep perfect step and tune" with the universal laws of this "intelligent Spirit" and by doing this, would "gain increased faith, courage, patience, hope and self-control."⁶³ For Jones what cannot be cured must be endured. Thus Avis, having suffered terrible trials and having learned to endure, is allowed by cosmic law, which appears to us only to be accident, a share of earthly happiness while the skeptic scientist Newmarch is left without his daughter and grandchild but with a renewed faith in the universe governed by "His Will."

On the surface, Jones's tragedies seem merely to follow the playwright's whims, to be mere wishful thinking. Regardless of how much self-deception Jones's creed seems to contain, it was one he fought hard and long to formulate. It is a rugged and lonely Pantheism, only a bit more optimistic than Hardy's uncompromising pessimism. Jones chose to worship what he could not understand and what seemed indifferent to him. He tried to keep in step with the universe rather than beat his fists against its indifference. Although in his old age he seems finally to accept mysticism and religion as the answer, he seems also to believe that mysticism and religion will ultimately prove that reason is the underlying principle of the universe. In the end, Jones chose to cling to the idea

that goodness and honesty are ultimately rewarded.

After he completed The Lifted Veil in late December 1919, Jones wrote only a sketch for a comedy called I've Lost the Woman I Loved about 1922, but he did not fade from the scene.⁶⁴ He wrote film scenarios,⁶⁵ heated attacks on the ideas of Shaw and Wells⁶⁶ and innumerable other miscellaneous prose pieces.⁶⁷ He had a major London success in 1923 with The Lie, but generally his presence was little felt in the theater.⁶⁸ He died in 1929 with the reputation of a reactionary, feeling that he had failed.⁶⁹

Notes

Chapter IV

¹ The Hypocrites: A Play in Four Acts, rpt. Vol. III of Representative Plays, I, p. 293.

² I, p. 294.

³ Thorne, p. 232.

⁴ Thorne, p. 240. First performed in London at Hicks's Theatre, 27 August 1907.

⁵ A twenty-five page autograph manuscript of what apparently is a false start for The Evangelist is held at the Enthoven and dated 28 December 1906.

⁶ According to the dating on the autograph manuscript in the Albery Collection, Jones began the play on 19 February 1907, and completed it on 9 May 1907.

⁷ The Evangelist was privately printed as The Galilean's Victory (London, 1907), IV, pp. 83-4.

⁸ Jones's view of Shaw changed radically because of Shaw's skeptical view of the Allied cause during the First World War. In a letter to William Lyon Phelps dated 13 November 1906, Jones denies censuring Shaw for writing Mrs. Warren's Profession and adds that GBS "is an old friend of mine, and I should not like him to think that I would attack him." He likens Shaw to Aristophanes (Enthoven MS). Fifteen years later, Jones wrote that Shaw "is not so much a dramatist, as a pushing journalist with a strong sense of theatre." He further labels Shaw a "reckless farceur" who is "at times a brilliant and amusing one. The mischief is that he is accepted as a 'thinker'" (Notes, p. 12).

⁹ Thorne, p. 242. The Evangelist was first performed at the Knickerbocker Theater, New York, 30 September 1907.

¹⁰ Dating from autograph manuscript at Enthoven.

¹¹ According to the dating on the autograph manuscript (Albery), Jones began the final draft of the play on 17 April 1908, and completed it on 25 May 1908. It was first performed at the Haymarket, London, 3 November 1908.

¹² On the autograph manuscript of Dolly Reforming Herself, Jones wrote the same quotation from Ecclesiastes 7.16 that he had used as the "moral" of The Triumph of the Philistines: "Be not righteous overmuch--why shouldst thou destroy thyself?" (See p. 98, n. 44 above). Jones also included a quotation from Voltaire which appeared

on the privately printed edition of the play and is included in Thorne, pp. 249-50.

13 After the turn of the century, Jones began to equate the futility of trying to reform the drama with the futility of trying to reform the human personality. In "Literary Critics and the Drama (1903)," Jones lamented that "at last one begins to dread that the English drama is as perverse and incorrigible as one's own private character; a domain where, as all we good Christians know, enormous strivings after perfection are scantily rewarded with the most meagre, oblique, and miserable results" (Foundations, p. 247).

14 Matthew Barron resembles M. Bergeret in Anatole France's Histoire contemporaine (1897-1901).

15 Jones wrote that he gave Professor Sturgess "the dictatorial, humourless manner of Herbert Spencer--Alas!" (Notes, p. 26).

16 Dolly Reforming Herself: A Comedy in Four Acts, rpt. Vol. IV of Representative Plays, I, p. 12.

17 I, p. 21.

18 Thorne, pp. 249-51. Beerbohm lauded with "it is only when the play is over that we notice the art of it" (7 November 1908; rpt. Last Theatres, p. 400).

19 Printed in 1915. Dating from autograph manuscript at Enthoven.

20 First performed at the Palace Theatre, London, 20 December 1909. Dating from autograph manuscript at Enthoven. A film scenario manuscript is also held at the Enthoven. According to Thorne (p. 255) the scenario was filmed as "The Knife at the Heart."

21 Dating from autograph manuscript of four act play at Enthoven.

22 Thorne, p. 26.

23 Jones described his mental state as follows: "I had many nervous breakdowns in the new century, with weeks and months of sleeplessness and despair. Then I could pull myself together and write a play in the best of health and spirits" (Notes, p. 10).

24 Notes, p. 35.

25 Final draft written between 10 May 1910 and 3 July 1910 according to dating on autograph manuscript held at Enthoven.

26 The Ogre, Enthoven MS, III, p. 90. All further references to this work appear in the text.

27 Thorne, pp. 260-1.

- 28 Enthoven MS dated only "Thursday."
- 29 Dating from autograph manuscript at Enthoven. First performed at Nazimova's 39th Street Theater, New York, 30 December 1910.
- 30 Lydia Gilmore, Albery MS, I, p. 18. All further references to this work appear in the text.
- 31 Thorne, pp. 50-1.
- 32 Dating and place from autograph manuscript (British Library MS. ADD 41740).
- 33 The Divine Gift: A Play in Three Acts, rpt. Vol. IV of Representative Plays, II, p. 138. All further references to this work appear in the text.
- 34 In The Shadow of Henry Irving (London: Richards, 1931, p. 20), Jones wrote that "rarely, rarely do any but mediocre persons make a happy, lasting marriage."
- 35 On 21 December 1913, Jones wrote to his daughter Doris that "if I had had it [operation] eighteen years ago, the whole course of the British drama would have been changed" (Enthoven MS). See also Notes, pp. 15-6.
- 36 Sue married her second husband, Angus McDonnell, on 13 December 1913 (Calder, p. 270).
- 37 Jones wrote to his daughter Doris on 17 February 1913 (Enthoven MS): "I am making capital progress with Mary--she is writing herself, and will I think be the best light comedy I have ever done--she will be more popular than Dolly, if I get her well placed. It is the kind of work that I do most easily. Mary gives me splendid chances of satire--titles; politics; lawyers; middle class snobbery and pretensions."
- 38 Mary Goes First: A Comedy in Three Acts and an Epilogue, rpt. Vol. IV of Representative Plays, I, pp. 206-7.
- 39 In "Our Modern Drama--Is It an Art or an Amusement (1892)," Jones defines English drama as simply "the art of representing English life" (Renascence, p. 265).
- 40 Thorne, pp. 281-3.
- 41 Thorne, pp. 291, 336-7. First performed at the Harris Theater, New York, 24 December 1914, and then at the New Theatre, London, 13 October 1923.

42 In a letter dated 29 October 1923, Jones reported to M. H. Spielmann that the London audience was "pleased to find that I had rediscovered Aristotle's fundamental rule in playwriting, 'The plot is the very first thing'" (Manuscript letter bound into copy of The Lie held at Senate House, Univ of London).

43 Notes, p. 15 and letter to Irving Albery dated 13 February 1915 (Albery MS).

44 See pp. 109-11 above.

45 Letter to Doris Thorne dated 13 February 1915 (Enthoven MS).

46 Enthoven MS.

47 Letter to M. H. Spielmann dated 24 November 1918, and bound into the copy of The Case of Rebellious Susan (CB 2) held at Senate House, Univ of London.

48 Heywood Brown wrote that "the play was all Skinner" ("The Season's Plays," Collier's, 13 May 1916, p. 24).

49 Thorne, p. 293.

50 Datings from autograph manuscripts at Enthoven.

51 Thorne (p. 334) discusses film rights to some of Jones's plays. See also Notes, p. 63 and Thorne, p. 75, 210, 255, 399. Jones published an interesting piece called "Dramatist and the Photoplay" in Mentor, 9, No. 6 (1921), 29.

52 It was a failure (Thorne, p. 298). In a letter to Mrs. Gertrude Albery dated 25 March 1927 (Albery MS), Jones complained that the playgoers of the time took The Pacifists for a "realistic play" and did not understand that in his "obvious burlesque" Peebody was Woodrow Wilson and Fergusson the "German military spirit."

53 Jones believed that pacifism only served "to provoke and promote Militarism" (Notes, p. 33).

54 Market Pewbury was also the setting for his earlier satire, The Triumph of the Philistines.

55 Dating from autograph manuscript at Enthoven.

56 Finding Themselves: A Comedy in Three Acts, Enthoven MS, p. 106.

57 After the war, Jones felt that the play was "out of date" but that "in ten years' time," it might have "some interest for playgoers as giving a picture of London life in those dark hours" (Notes, p. 63).

- 58 Letter to Doris Thorne dated 6 February 1918 (Enthoven MS).
- 59 Dating from autograph manuscript at Enthoven. Jones never succeeded in getting the play produced, but it was filmed under the title "Beyond" (Notes, p. 63).
- 60 Enthoven MS.
- 61 Jones set down his beliefs in "My Religion," an article which appeared in the Daily Express, 24 September 1925. Since this piece was published with extensive cuts, I have chosen to quote the proof sheets held at Senate House, Univ of London (P.C. 1). Autograph manuscript at Enthoven.
- 62 "My Religion," fol. 3.
- 63 "My Religion," fol. 4.
- 64 Dating from autograph manuscript at Enthoven. This is apparently the play discussed in Notes, pp. 63-4.
- 65 Three autograph manuscripts for original films not based on plays are held at the Enthoven: Jewels of Virginia: An Original Scenario; Tom Tobin, Policeman: A Domestic Drama for the Film (1921); and Venturesome Naomi.
- 66 Jones's view of Shaw and Wells is summarized by Norman and Jeanne Mackenzie in H. G. Wells: A Biography (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), pp. 324-5. A detailed study of the argument between Jones and Wells appears in Vincent Brome's Six Studies in Quarreling (London: Cresset Press, 1958).
- 67 A bibliography of Jones's prose works can be found in Thorne, pp. 425-31.
- 68 See pp. 180-1.
- 69 Thorne, p. 408.

Conclusion

Henry Arthur Jones was an important transitional figure in the history of English drama. With his idealism and energy, he triggered in 1889 the remarkable Renaissance on the London stage which culminated in the vital modern theater still performed in Britain today. But as Jones worked tirelessly to reform the static theater of his day by raising standards for both playwriting and production, he neglected his own growth as an artist. Jones the self-educated country boy had read voluminously but always without any critical or historical perspective. Both his plays and his writings on the drama are sometimes daring and full of insight and as often they are verbose, unsophisticated and even narrowminded. Jones the man who believed passionately in setting high standards for playwriting had himself to compromise in order to work in the crude conditions of the Mid-Victorian theater where empty-headed, bombastic melodrama and sickly sentimental domestic comedy reigned. Finally, Jones the family man often needed money to survive and so his career is checkered with daring failures on the one hand and actor-manager vehicles on the other. Jones seldom had a completely free hand to write as he pleased.

After the turn of the century, the atmosphere in the English theater improved. The audience was better educated and the theatrical establishment more responsive to the demands of the playwright. Now that new ideas and a fresh vision of the world were what was wanted, Jones was paradoxically unable to provide them. When he thought things through, he gradually turned away from his liberal ideas and the search for a new world order based on socialism and

became a rigid conservative crying out for a return to what he considered a glorious past. He sought--and perhaps had always wanted--not a theater based on the style of Ibsen but one where Shakespeare or Molière were re-done in modern dress. Thus, in the new century, Jones rejected the "Theater of Ideas" and came to despise the plays of Shaw, Barker and Galsworthy. He even advocated a return to the actor-manager system and the highly emotional acting style, a melodramatic one. He became both a reactionary and a super-patriot.

Still posterity has been unfair to Henry Arthur Jones, failing to understand both his ideals and his faults and so unable to see with any objectivity what was the best and the worst in his work. Jones's mind was often divided. Within his artistic personality, he held a great many opposing ideas. His plays are written mainly in strict modes: serious or comic. He reacted to the world around him in extremes, either as an idealist or a cynic. His morality was alternately strictly Victorian or full of Edwardian laxness and license. These irreconcilable pulls in his character in fact caused him to suffer a series of nervous breakdowns. The divisions themselves were probably rooted in Jones's childhood, where he was influenced alternately by a stern, puritanical father and a sickly, neurotic mother. And because at an early age he was sent away from the rather innocent country life on his family's farm to the harsh, hypocritical world of Victorian business, Jones was able to see things whole only a very few times in the course of his career and only a few times did he express his complex and enigmatic personality openly. When Jones did see things whole, he wrote his best plays--and these are all satires in one form or another: The Crusaders, The Triumph of the

Philistines, The Manoeuvres of Jane, Dolly Reforming Herself and Mary Goes First.

This dissertation has tried to understand this influential and complex man. Future work on Jones must include a complete bibliography of his surviving plays along with details of production and publication. A critical biography is also needed which would have to include a consideration of Jones's influence after he stopped writing plays in 1919. The biography especially would aid our understanding of the relationship among the three different theaters within which Jones worked: the theater of the Mid-Victorian era, the Nineties and the Edwardian age. It would also enrich our knowledge of Wilde, Shaw, Maugham and Galsworthy in relation to the theater of their day which was largely shaped by popular playwrights like Jones and Pinero. Finally, Jones is worthy of study as an example of the modern satirical mind at work which, frustrated, bitter and confused, vents its anger and hostility upon an intractable world which it feels it can neither change nor control. Jones spent a lifetime trying to tame his righteous indignation, but he never succeeded, perhaps because he never realized how angry he really was.

Bibliography

Dramatic Works

Although a thorough study of the various printed editions of Jones's plays is needed, this is hardly the place for such a list. A complete bibliography of Jones's surviving dramatic works follows. All known manuscripts are included. The principles of arrangement are:

- Column 1 Short play or film scenario titles.
- Column 2 Texts used in this study. All known manuscripts are included. See Key to Abbreviations below.
- Column 3 Dating taken from printed texts and manuscripts, if known.
- Column 4 Sources for manuscripts. See Key to Abbreviations below.
- Column 5 Notes.

Key to Abbreviations

Texts

AMS	Autograph manuscript
CH	<u>The Theatre of Ideas: A Burlesque Allegory. Three One-Act Plays: The Goal, Her Tongue, Grace Mary.</u> London: Chapman and Hall, 1915.
D	New York: Charles Doran
M	London and New York: Macmillan
MS	Manuscript
PC	Privately printed, London: Chiswick Press
PL	Privately printed, London
PN	Privately printed, New York
PT	Privately printed, Ilfracombe: John Tait
RP	<u>Representative Plays in Four Volumes</u> , ed. Clayton Hamilton. Boston: Little, Brown, 1925.
SF	New York and London: Samuel French
SFO	<u>One-Act Plays for Stage and Study.</u> New York: Samuel French
TS	Typescript

Sources

A	Private Collection of Mrs. Michael Albery, London
B	British Library
E	Enthoven Theatre Collection, London
N	New York Public Library

Agar				Same as <u>James the Fogey</u> (play)
Bauble Shop, The	TS		N	
	MS	1892	E	"Rough"
Bed of Roses, A	SF			For AMS, see <u>Sweet Do Nothing</u>
Breaking a Butterfly	PL			Henry Herman, co-author
Carnac Sahib	M	1899		
	AMS	1899	E	
Case of Rebellious Susan, The	M	1897		
	AMS	1894	E	
Chance the Idol	PC	1902		
Chatterton	SFO	1932		Seventh Series
Cherry Ripe	AMS		E	Produced as <u>Home Again</u> .
Chevaleer, The	PC	1904		
	AMS	1903-4	A	
Chrysold	AMS	1904-5	E	See also <u>Ingram</u>
Clerical Error, A	SF	1904		
	AMS		E	
Cock o' the Walk	TS		A	See also "Morocco Play"
Crusaders, The	M	1893		
Dancing Girl, The	RP			AMS at Harvard
Deacon, The	SF			
Dick	MS	1907-8	E	
Divine Gift, The	RP			
	AMS	1912	B	
Dolly Reforming Herself	RP			
	AMS	1908	A	
Dolly's Little Bills	TS		A	One-act version of <u>Dolly Reforming Herself</u>
Elopement	SF			
Evangelist, The				Printed as <u>The Galilean's Victory</u>

Fair Play's a Jewel				Produced as <u>Heart of Hearts</u>
Fall in, Rookies!	FC	1910		
	AMS	1910	E	
Felisa	AMS	1904	E	Incomplete
Finding Themselves	AMS	1917-8	E	
Galilean's Victory, The	FC	1907		
	AMS	1906	E	Fragment
	AMS	1907	A	Produced as <u>The Evangelist</u>
Garden Party, A	PT			
Goal, The	RP			
	AMS	1897	E	
Grace Mary	RP			
	AMS	1895	E	
Hard Hit	TS		B	
Harmony	SF			Original title: <u>It's Only Round the Corner</u>
Heart of Hearts	TS		B	Original title: <u>Fair Play's a Jewel</u>
Hearts of Oak	SF			Same as <u>Honour Bright</u>
Heroic Stubbs, The	FC	1906		
	AMS	1905	E	
Her Tongue	CH			
	AMS	1909	E	
His Wife	MS		B	
Home Again	MS		B	Also called <u>Cherry Ripe</u>
Honour Bright	PT			Produced as <u>Hearts of Oak</u>
	AMS		E	
Hoodman Blind	TS		N	Wilson Barrett, co-author
	AMS		E	Incomplete
Humbug	PT			
Hypocrites, The	RP			
	AMS	1906	A	

Ingram	AMS		E	Fragment labelled "Part 1" of <u>Chrysold</u>
It's Only Round the Corner				Published as <u>Harmony</u>
James the Fogey (play)	AMS	1902-3	E	Same as <u>Ingram</u>
James the Fogey (film)	AMS	1920	E	
Jewels of Virginia (film)	TS		E	
Joseph Entangled	SF AMS	1906 1903	E	
Judah	RP			AMS at Columbia
Knife, The (play)	SFO AMS	1925 1909	E	Second Series
Knife, The (film)	MS		E	Also called <u>The Knife at the Heart</u> and <u>The Surgeon's Knife</u>
Knife at the Heart, The				See <u>The Knife</u> (film)
Lackey's Carnival, The	PC AMS	1900 1900	E	
Lady Caprice	PT			
Liars, The	M	1904		
Lie, The	D	1915		
Lifted Veil, The	AMS	1919	E	
Loo Vallance	AMS	1909	E	
Lord Harry, The	MS		B	Wilson Barrett, co-author
Lydia Gilmore	TS AMS	1911	A E	Incomplete
Mad Cook, The	AMS		E	Fragment
Manoeuvres of Jane, The	SF	1905		
Mary Goes First	RP			

Masqueraders, The	RP			
Michael and His Lost Angel	RP AMS	1895	A	
Middleman, The	RP			AMS at Yale
Morocco Play	AMS	1909	E	Fragmentary early version of <u>Cock o' the Walk</u>
Mrs. Dane's Defence	RP AMS	1899-0	A	
Noble Vagabond, A	TS		B	
Ogre, The	AMS	1910	E	
Old Master, An	SF			
Pacifists, The	PC AMS	1917 1917	B	Originally <u>The Perfect Pacifist</u>
Peony, The	AMS		E	Incomplete early version of <u>Saints and Sinners</u>
Perfect Pacifist	MS	1917	E	Early Ms of <u>The Pacifists</u>
Perfect Woman, A				Published excerpts of <u>A Garden Party in Era</u>
Physician, The	M	1899		
Princess's Nose, The	PC	1902		
Rogue's Comedy, The	M AMS	1898 1896	E	
Saints and Sinners	M AMS	1891	E	Incomplete
Silver King, The	RP MS		E	
Sophie	AMS	1909	E	
Surgeon's Knife, The				Another title for <u>The Knife</u> (film)
Sweet Do Nothing	AMS	1881	E	Produced as <u>A Bed of Roses</u>
Sweet Will	SF AMS	1881	E	Rough

Sword of Gideon, The	PC	1905		
Tempter, The	RP			
Tom Tobin, Policeman (film)	AMS	1921	E	
Triumph of the Philistines, The	M AMS	1899 1895	E	Rough
Venetia Superba (play)	AMS AMS	1909 1916-7	E E	Fragmentary early version Incomplete
Venetia Superba (film)	AMS	1920	E	
Venturesome Naomi (film)	AMS		E	
Wealth	MS AMS		B E	1887-8
We Can't Be As Bad As All That	AMS	1910	E	
Wedding Guest, The	PT			
Whitewashing Julia	M	1910		
Woman I Loved, The	MS		E	Fragment

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