J. M. BARRIE, DRAMATIST.

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J. M. BARRIE, DRAMATIST.

J. M. Barrie is both Dramatist and Novelist, and I have deliberately chosen to put the "Dramatist" before the "Novelist." From the production of his first burlesque in 1891, for over thirty years Barrie has occupied a foremost place among dramatists. He has sounded a wide range of chords, which almost without exception have found immediate response in the heart of the theatre-going world. J. M. Sloan says, "The Playwright was somehow born with him."(1) As a boy Barrie was surrounded by "Auld Licht" influences which austerely frowned upon the stage as the "Vestibule of Hell," yet in his school days he headed a revolt against this Puritan tradition, and with other boys stole away to the theatre, and organized theatricals in spite of threats of dismissal from the Dumfries Academy. (I wonder if Amy and Genevra of "Alice Sit by the Fire" were created with these escapades?) Again Sloan says, "His metier is in stage-craft rather than fiction or humorous prose."(2)

Barrie told in a reminiscent speech at Dumfries December 11th, 1924, of his first introduction to the stage.(3) It was in the part of a young lady. With hair attached to his

(1) T. P.'s Weekly Nov. 28th. 1914.
(2) T. P.'s Weekly Nov. 28th. 1914.
(3) When he received Freedom of Borough of Dumfries.

hat, his feminine part was so perfectly filled that a male member of the caste asked for an introduction. He humorously relates that it was to escape feminine parts in school plays that he wrote his first play "Bandelero, the Bandit." He played the part depicting all his favorite heroes rolled into one, so that he had constantly to be changing his clothes. He also relates an in that first stage appearance as the feminine "Adele." Her "husband" in stage fright, pulled the table cover and contents on the floor. "Adele" saved the situation by putting her arms around his neck and saying, "You clumsy darling." The audience cheered, (led by Manager Wedd.) Barrie recognized the importance of his dramatic work in saying, "I think I should never have taken seriously to it (writing plays) but for pressure from two great Englishmen--Sir Henry Irving and Mr. George Meredith. Irving not only drove me to write my first three plays and found managers to produce them, but it was he who got me out of the way of writing them on the backs of old envelopes. Why Mr. Meredith wanted me so ardently to turn playwright, I could never quite understand, unless it was because he liked me to go down to his famous chalet and tell him about theatres without his having to go to them himself."(1)

Mr. Charles Frohman, who produced many of Barrie's

(1) Speech at Dumfries 1924.

plays, and who lost his life in the Lusitania disaster on May 17th, 1915, urged Barrie to go on writing plays. As Barrie puts it, "I wanted to go on writing novels,--he wanted me to go on writing plays."(1) "Peter Pan" has made J. M. Barrie as immortal as the fairies themselves and long will his memory live in "Mary Rose," "The Admirable Crichton" and "Dear Brutus."

How fortunate it is for those who cannot see his plays that J. M. Barrie has published his dramas. In this connection H. M. Walbrooke says that "The Twelve Pound Look" and "Rosalind" make perfect novelettes.(2) Indeed the reader finds the drama as published quite as interesting as the novels. The whimsical comment which prefaces the acts,--with most authors it is dry-as-dust stage direction, character and scenery description,--is quite as entertaining in Barrie's published drama as is the drama itself, for it is full of quaint humor and penetrating information. The reader can readily see the dramatis personae from these word pictures, and can understand their characters very realistically. These enlightening passages must be the very directions the author would give the company at rehearsals. The reader gets more, in one sense, from the reading than from witnessing the play, because in the former case he gets just what the author

(1) "J. M. Barrie and the Theatre" H.M.Walbrooke
(2) "J. M. Barrie and the Theatre."
(3)

intended, and in the latter only what the actor interprets. J. B. Priestly says, "His comments are the most delicious and characteristic thing of Barrie."(1) "J. M. Barrie's stage directions are redolent of humor, and are wonderfully intimate."(2) An illustration of the whimsicality of the "stage directions" follows. It is taken from "Mary Rose" and is part of the description of Mr. Morland, the Squire, and Mr. Amy, the Clergyman, who "are chatting importantly about some matter of no importance."

> "The Squire is lean, the Clergyman of full habit, but could you enter into them you would have difficulty in deciding which was Clergyman and which was Squire; both can be peppery, the same pepper. They are benignant creatures but could exchange benignancies without altering. Mrs. Morland knows everything about her husband, except that she does nearly all his work for him. She really does not know this. His work, though he rises early to be at it, is not much larger than a lady's handkerchief, and consists of magisterial duties and now and then an impressive scene about a tenant's cowshed. She then makes up his mind for him, and is still unaware that she is doing it. He has so often heard her say (believing it, too) that he is difficult to move when once he puts his foot down, that he accepts himself modestly as a man of this character, and never tries to remember when it was that he last put down his foot. In the odd talks which the happily married sometimes hold about the future, he always hopes he will be taken first, being the managing one, and she has decided that there must be another arrangement."(3)

This passage aptly shows Barrie's power to pick out the little foibles and idiosyncrasies of humanity; so penetrating is he in this that if the reader would confess it, he writhes at the point of the lance. Actors do not always act as the

(1) "Sir James Barrie", J. B. Priestly, London Mercury Oct. 1924.
(2) Book Buyer, Nov. 1914.
(3) "Mary Rose," Act. 1.

playwright desires. How often have we been disappointed when seeing a play a second time, being acted in an inferior way as compared with the first time. Or how disappointing is the cinema after reading the book from which it was derived. After reading Barrie's drama we know just how it should be acted. Again I quote his description of Crichton at the dramatic moment when the boom of the ship's gun has made him a servant once more:-

"There is a salt smile on his face as he shakes his head to her (Lady Mary whom he had just honored with an offer of marriage). He lets the cloak slip to the ground. She will not take this for an answer; again her arms go out to him. Then comes the great renunciation. By an effort of will he ceases to be an erect figure; he has the humble bearing of a servant. His hands come together as if he were washing them."(1)

In this attractive form Barrie has given some of his plays,--the best of them. One may get "Mary Rose," "The Admirable Crichton," "Dear Brutus," "A Kiss for Cinderella," "Alice Sit by the Fire," "What Every Woman Knows," "Quality Street," "Echoes of the War" (which contains four plays, "The Old Lady Shows Her Medals," "The New Word," "Barbara's Wedding" and "A Well-remembered Voice"), "Half Hours," (which contains "Pantaloon," "The Twelve Pound Look," "Rosalind," and "The Will"), and"Der Tag." And so does Barrie delight not only the theatre-goer with his dramas, but everyone who may read enjoys them almost as fully.

(1) "The Admirable Crichton," Act. III.

However, Barrie's work was limited in place almost altogether to Thrums, (Kirriemuir, his native town in Scotland) and to London. "The Little Minister" is confined strictly to Thrums, and is distinctly Scottish in its atmosphere and dialect. True, he takes us away on a pirate adventure in "Peter Pan." Even then one does not have to go farther than Kensington Gardens to satisfy the imagination. In his Speech at Dumfries Barrie said that in his boyhood days at Dumfries "Certain of them crept up walls and down trees."(1) These pirates in Dumfries were later to become the pirates of "Peter Pan." As one reads "Sentimental Tommy" it is easy to imagine that the adventures therein related were the adventures of a real boy with a flaming imagination and that boy, young Barrie. He relates the story of his first friendship formed at Dumfries Academy when he was "handed on" from Kirriemuir. The first day he was there this friendship was cemented over "The Last of the Mohicans," and so "Peter Pan's" Indians are the same as Fenimore Cooper's. Again in "The Admirable Crichton," Barrie takes us away to the South Sea Islands, and as we read we can scarce believe that Barrie knew the South Seas very well. We wonder if his friend Stevenson did not supply some of the ideas, and Scotland and England the rest. Of course there were the days in Nottingham about which Barrie has delightfully told us in

(1) Dec. 11th, 1924.

"When a Man's Single." In his drama, however, he has stayed near London. "Mary Rose" opens in Sussex, and during its course takes us away to the Outer Hebrides, and there gives the reader a breath of the Scottish atmosphere which he loved so well. This is done through the introduction of Cameron, the Highland Student. This is reversed in "What Every Woman Knows." The opening scene is laid not far from Aberdeen, and here again we are reminded of Barrie's beloved Thrums in the description of the Scottish home with its dambrod. Even the name 'Cathro', familiar in "Sentimental Tommy," appears here. Yet the author does not permit his characters to use the Scottish dialect, as he does 'Cameron' in"Mary Rose." "Dear Brutus" does not take us far from London, and in "A Kiss for Cinderella" we never leave it. We are left to imagine that Cinderella came from Scotland, for when the policeman questions her and asks "Scotch?" Barrie interjects "her mouth shuts," and the policeman continues, "Ah, they'll never admit that." This whole play has a decided Cockney tang to it. As for "Quality Street," it was written of the days one hundred years ago, and for all we know "Quality Street" may have been one of London's quiet side streets. And what place could one imagine "Alice Sit by the Fire" to be located but in London! The Cockney is in evidence again in "The Old Lady Shows Her Medals," and also in "Pantaloon." In the former, Mrs. Dowey is referred to as a transplanted Scotch woman. The others of Barrie's published plays which might have London as the scene are "The New Word," "Barbara's Wedding" "The Well-

Remembered Voice," "The Twelve Pound Look, " "Rosalind," and "The Will." We are not told definitely that the scene of the plays just mentioned is London, but to the reader it would seem that the plays contain nothing that would prevent the scenes being laid in or near the city of Barrie's adoption. John D. Williams says that Barrie knows and loves the London of Lamb, Dickens and Thackeray.(1)"Der Tag" was written, no doubt, as propaganda, and the name indicates at once the nature of it. It is related as if occurring in Berlin. Barrie's limitations as to place have made the staging of his plays a much simpler matter than it would otherwise have been. J. B. Priestly says that Barrie has no extended action or large background. (2) This is a gain in drama which limits scenes and atmospheres.

Even as Barrie confines his drama largely to one place or near it, so he confines his drama to one time or near it; viz, contemporary with himself. "Quality Street" takes us farther away in time than any of the works of Barrie. In this play the recruiting sergeant reminds us that we are in the period of the Napoleonic Wars, (or was it the Boer War). "Walker London" is of the London of Barrie's young manhood. "The Little Minister" tells of Thrums as Barrie knew it in his boyhood. "Alice Sit by the Fire" is of the days of the "new drama", and Genevra speaking of the revelations she and Amy have had at the theatre, says, "Amy,

(1)"The Charm that is Barrie," Century, Oct. 1914 Vol. 88.
(2)"Sir James Barrie," London Mercury, Oct. 1924.

that heart-gripping scene when the love-maddened woman visited the man in his chambers" clearly indicates this. In "What Every Woman Knows" we hear of elections, a Liberal victory, and the Suffrage movement. "The Admirable Crichton" smacks of Socialism, and proves its modernity. "Pantaloon", "The Twelve Pound Look", "Barbara's Wedding" and "The Will" are quite modern. "The Twelve Pound Look" is of the days when women became independent, and found ways to make their living. "Barbara's Wedding" brings War memories to us. "The Well" is of the ultra-modern age of great wealth and ambition. "Echoes of the War" is the title of a book containing "The Old Lady Shows her Medals," "The New Word," "Barbara's Wedding," and "A Well Remembered Voice," all of which are of the period of the Great War. "A Kiss for Cinderella" describes a regular Internment Nursery for War babies, and Harry, the Australian Soldier, comes back to the home of his childhood days which is still haunted by the ghost of Mary Rose. "Der Tag" too, as the name indicates, is written of the critical days of 1914. One cannot, in the face of these facts, but come to the conclusion that Barrie is modern in his material as a writer either of plays or novels.

Since Barrie has confined himself both in Novel and Drama to a limited time and space, and since he has made over his plays into delightful novelettes, and his novels into plays that have great popularity, it is impossible to make any

important contrasts between his dramas and his novels. Barrie's name was made before he ever wrote a play. J. B. Priestly says, "The Nineteenth Century knew him as a Novelist, and the Twentieth Century knows him as a Dramatist. His writing has all the evidence of the Journalist in him"(1) Robert Louis Stevenson recognized Barrie's place in literature and at the same time gave warning of his Journalistic tendencies. Stevenson said of him, "Stuff in that young man, but he must see and not be too funny. Genius in him, but there's a Journalist at his elbow,--there's the risk."(2) Many of us are rather pleased that something of the Journalist lingered at his elbow, for his directness is one of the charming features of his work, something too that he kept right through from the "Auld Licht" Idylls which brought him a literary fame in the eighties, to "Mary Rose" first produced in 1920. The following illustrates this characteristic directness. It is taken from "Dear Brutus":-

Joanna: "Of course it isn't fair to him, but let's do it Coady."
Mrs. Coade: "Yes, let's do it."
Alice,(who is writing out a telegram): "Of course I am. The men are not coming, are they?"
Joanna:(reconnoitring): "No; your husband is having another glass of port."
Alice: "I am sure he is. One of you ring please."
(The bold Joanna rings.)
Mrs. Coade: "Poor Matey!"
Lady Caroline: "He wichly deserves what he is about to get."
Joanna: "He is coming! Don't all stand huddled together like conspirators."
Mrs Coade: "Is that what we are!"

(1) "Sir James Barrie" London Mercury, Oct. 1924.
(2) Letter to Henry James, Dec. 1892.

(Swiftly they find seats and are sunk thereon like ladies waiting languidly for their lords, when the doomed butler appears. He is a man of brawn, who would cast any one of them forth for a wager; but we are about to connive at the triumph of mind over matter.)

Alice (always at her best before 'the bright face of danger'):"Ah, Matey, I wish this telegram sent."

Matey (a general favorite: "Very good, Ma'am. The Village Post Office closed at eight, but if your message is important....."

Alice: "It is; and you are so clever Matey, I am sure that you can persuade them to oblige you."

Matey (taking the telegram): "I will see to it myself Ma'am; you can depend on its going."

(There comes a little gasp from Coady, which is the equivalent to dropping a stitch in needle-work.)

Alice (who is THE DEARTH now): "Thank you. Better read the telegram Matey to be sure that you can make it out."

(Matey reads it to himself, and he has never quite the same faith in women again. THE DEARTH continues in a purring voice): "Read it aloud Matey."

Matey: "Oh, Ma'am."

Alice (without the purr): "Aloud."

(Thus encouraged he reads the fatal missive.)

Matey: "To Police Station, Great Cumney. Send Officer first thing to-morrow morning to arrest Matey, Butler, for theft of rings."

Alice: "Yes, that is quite right."

Matey: "Ma'am!" (But seeing that she has taken up a book he turns to Lady Caroline.) "My Lady!"

Lady Caroline:(whose voice strikes colder than THE DEARTH'S): "Should we not say how many wings?"

Alice: "Yes, put in the number of rings, Matey."

(Matey does not put in the number, but he produces three rings from unostentatious parts of his person, and returns them without noticeable dignity to their various owners.)

Matey (hopeful that the incident is now closed): "May I tear up the telegram Ma'am?" (1)

This passage is only one bit (there are many such in Barrie's writings) which illustrates his wit and whimsicality. The line of Alice's, "Yes, put in the number of rings," is humor which is distinctly Barriesque, and it floors the thieving

(1) "Dear Brutus" Act I.

butler completely. The passage is typical also in the parenthetical instructions, as the description of Matey as he reads the telegram, "Matey reads it to himself and he has never quite the same faith in woman again." Lastly, the journalistic directness is well illustrated here. Barrie wastes few words in any of his works, with the result that he is rarely tiring. If he can be accused of being tiresome it is rather from a dragging plot than from wordiness or didacticism. The story may be said to drag in "Tommy and Grizel," but this may have been partly due to the fact that the author persisted in going his own way with the story instead of bringing it happily to a close at the logical time. He says himself that Tommy and Grizel are not going to marry and live happily ever after, as the reader would have it. Barrie provokes the reader particularly in this story until he is ready to throw aside the book in despair. This is only an isolated instance, and it is not a general characteristic of Barrie's writings that they produce a feeling of annoyance. Yet it is quite characteristic of Barrie that he lets his imagination have full play to the utter disregard of what one might expect, or of what one might consider the regular or proper way of having things go. In the drama one might get the feeling that there was not rapid enough action in "Alice Sit by the Fire," or in "Quality Street," but the impression is not strong. Again Priestly says, "In fiction he is best at dialogue and

running comment."(1) Directness then is one of Barrie's outstanding characteristics.

In actual life he is a man of very few words. The following story illustrates this point. It is told that when J. M. Barrie was visiting this country during the war, he was guest at a dinner at which there was a dispute about some international character. Some attacked the man savagely, others insisted that he was a fine fellow in spite of his mistakes. During a lull in the argument, Barrie, who did not appear to have been listening, said quietly, without looking up from his plate, "He was an unmitigated scoundrel."(2) Nevertheless, Barrie said, or implied in few words, what some writers take volumes to declare, and he did it so simply, so effectively, that he never wearies the reader. This characteristic, coupled with the shafts of wit, keeps the reader in happy anticipation as he reads. At the same time, unintentionally, we suspect, Barrie tells us much that is pure gold. As John D. Williams says, "His impulse behind his writings is to fire everyone of his readers with the spirit of that game which is life, so that everyone may live it more happily, even if unwittingly."(3) One more illustration of Barrie's belief that "Brevity is the soul of wit": Barrie was at a meeting once at which there was a keen discussion as to the correct pronunciation of the word "licht." The chairman saw that Barrie was becoming interested, and hoped against hope that a speech from

(1) London Mercury, 1924.
(2) Onward, Feb. 25th, 1928.
(3) "The Charm that is Barrie", Century, Oct. 1914.

Barrie would result. All turned with eager interest when Barrie arose and addressed the chairman. What he said was, "Mr. Chairman, the word is "licht," and then he sat down. (1)

Many incidents and anecdotes are used in both his plays and his novels. One writer says that "Barrie never wastes an idea. He uses them twice or oftener. He makes his novels into plays and his plays into novels. It may be the love of an old humorous idea or it may be his Scotch tradition."(2) In"Sentimental Tommy," the maiden sisters, Miss Kitty and Miss Ailie are the Misses Susan and Phoebe of "Quality Street". Their problems in discipline are the same in the novel as in the play. The McLean back from India in the former is the Captain Brown back from the Napoleonic Wars of the latter. In both "Peter Pan" and "The Little White Bird" there is the confusion of "Kiss" and "Thimble," which Wendy permits to stand rather than attempts to explain. The Joey and the Pantaloon of the playlet "Pantaloon" have the same uncontrollable appetite for sausages as the Joey and Pantaloon of "The Little White Bird." The Cathro of "Sentimental Tommy" appears again in "What Every Woman Knows." And so one could go on relating incidents and jokes which have been used over again, but the above-mentioned examples serve to illustrate the point.

Barrie has the power of pathos. How easily he brings tears to the eyes, and how tenderly; yet he does not torture us. He touches us to the quick and then heals the

(1)"J. M. Barrie, The Man and His Work," Book News, Oct. 1910.
(2)"J. M. Barrie, The Man and His Work", W. T. Roberts.

wound with his quiet humor. John D. Williams says of this phase of Barrie's power that "His is the spirit that has made sun clear.....that no situation is so grim and taut but that a spark of humor will remove all tension." (1) Priestly too says in this connection, "What is the world in which in consequence (pointing to a super-abundance of fancy, and a certain lack of creative imagination on the part of an artist) does not matter and is even a virtue, in which there are no tumultuous passions, but everywhere there is the maternal instinct with all its accompanying domestic sentiment, a world essentially of laughter and tears? Obviously the world of childhood."(2) Of his novels, "The Window in Thrums" shows best Barrie's ability to take one into the realm of deep feeling. The home-coming of Jamie, long waited for by his old invalid mother Jess, cannot but touch us;(3) and true to form, such pathos is interspersed with the quaint humor so characteristic of the author. Among the plays, "A Well-Remembered Voice," and "Barbara's Wedding" play upon our feelings. Like the war period in which they were produced, there is little relief in these. "What Every Woman Knows" is more typical of alternating pathos and gentle humor.

The plays and novels are alike in the directness and whimsical humor. So consistent is he throughout all

(1) "The Charm that is Barrie", Century, Oct. 1914.
(2) "Sir James Barrie", London Mercury, Oct. 1924.
(3) "A Window in Thrums", Chap. 16.

his writings, that one gets the impression that these are Barrie. Certainly "Sentimental Tommy" is Barrie; Rob Angus and J. Noble Simms are Barries; and coming to his plays, one suspects that Peter Pan is Barrie, and that The Little Minister (or is it Babbie) is very like him. Peter Pan was the boy who wouldn't grow up. J. M. Barrie has never grown up, and may he never do so.

As a man unifies the plays and novels of this writer, so does a woman, and that woman is Margaret Ogilvy. J. D. Williams says "Never was a writer equipped with a more stimulating heroine. All his writings have an attitude born of the understanding of her many-sidedness. Charm is the exclusive attribute of Barrie's women." Again he says that all his women know, as Maggie Shand does, that laughter and not tears is their best weapon, and supporting this he quotes in connection with the Christening robe which was both Jess' and Margaret Ogilvy's "The hearse passes over the brae, and up the straight burying-ground road, but still there is a cry for the Christening robe."(1) Yes Barrie's women cry for the Christening robe. J. B. Priestly says, "All his women insist on being mothers, if not to their own--to the first man they meet."(2) It is impossible to laugh at any of Barrie's women--just as hard as it was for David to laugh at Maggie Shand. To this age in which we live

(1) "The Charm that is Barrie", Century, Oct. 1914.
(2) "Sir James Barrie," London Mercury, Oct. 1924.

there is a quaintness, and old-fashioned modesty to his women, so much so, that though Barrie is yet with us, his women make him Victorian. Someone has said that Barrie's women are the last of the charming women of the Nineteenth Century type. Be that as it may, Barrie has erected a lasting memorial to his mother, whether she be known as Margaret Ogilvy, Jess, Grizel, Wendy, Cinderella, Rose Mary, Maggie Shand, Alice Sit by the Fire, or Phoebe. He has touched all his women with a chivalrous gentleness even as he caressed his mother, Margaret Ogilvy. A. E. Malone puts it thus, "One woman included every woman. All his women are one woman.....Margaret Ogilvy and Thrums battled for the soul of J. M. Barrie."(1) Though old fashioned and modest, we find that these women are strong when need be. Kate, in "The Twelve Pound Look" could rise in revolt against a cold husband whose religion was success, and she was independent enough to go out and win her own livelihood. Maggie Shand was not the same type, but managed a difficult husband very cleverly--and he did not even know he was being managed. Yes, Barrie's plays are stamped with his own peculiar note of individuality, and so are his women;(2) or perhaps one should say his women are stamped with the individuality of Margaret Ogilvy.

There are those who tell us that there is a meaning

(1) "The Conservatism of J. M. Barrie", A.E.Malone, Fortnightly Review; Feb. 1927.
(2) Winnipeg Tribune, June 4th, 1913.

to every play that Barrie has written. Williams says, "Every play that Barrie has written had its first beginning in his mind as an idea of social importance."(1) Such would lay hands even on "Peter Pan." Here is what Malone has to say about this fantasy: "It is Barrie's masterpiece in drama and is the summary of his social creed. This creed is that humanity cannot grow up."(2) He adds, however, that the fairy tale has obscured the satire. Certainly such statements would not be true of his novels, and most of his readers will not hold them true of his plays. We are inclined to agree "He is too fine an artist to thrust philosophies upon us."(3) We like to think of Barrie and his fairies, not of Barrie and his pedantic puppets. We like to think of Barrie and his fairies in the same way we think of Sentimental Tommy in the Den peopling it with pirates and making himself, Corp, Elspeth, and Grizel into lords and ladies, but doing it so thoroughly that they seemed to themselves to be different folk. One likes to think that Barrie looked upon the world of his plays as Tommy and Elspeth looked upon London before they had seen it, or as Barrie saw Thrums after being separated by time and distance; a Romantic Thrums which must have fallen in ruins when he returned, especially after his mother had gone. We do not want to be bothered with wondering what he wanted to

(1) "The Charm that is Barrie", Century, Oct. 1914.
(2) "The Conservatism of J. M. Barrie," Fortnightly Review, Feb. 1927.
(3) Times Literary Supplement, Dec. 12th, 1918.

teach us. We want to fly with him on the wings of fancy, away into the Neverland, into Quality Street or the South Sea Island. In some of his plays lessons there are but they do not obtrude themselves.

Barrie in person may fly from us when the curtain call comes. He may escape down the lift when we go to see him, but he cannot escape us when we take up his plays, for "Barrie's stage directions supply charm and atmosphere and it is to be doubted whether the imaginative reader loses much by not seeing the plays on the stage."(1) His plays and stories are J. M. Barrie himself.

Finally, though Stevenson said in 1892 that Barrie's name was made before he wrote anything for the theatre,(2) it is now admitted that he is first a dramatist. His journalistic training, lively dialogue, and running comment used in his novels lent themselves readily to the making of plays so that it was natural for him to dramatize--in fact he was always a dramatist--so much so that his novels and plays are interchangeable. In all his works there is a remarkable unity. In place and characters, Barrie confined himself within a narrow range and yet gives us variety through his brilliant fancy. Through all his writing his wit and whimsicality with tender pathos throw light and shade across the reader's path. We find him brief and to the point, never

(1) "British and American Drama of To-day", Barret Clark (Stewart, Kidd)
(2) Letter from Samoa.

exhausting our patience with verbosity nor yet preaching to us. One woman and one man occupy the centre of the stage throughout. He who would analyze or criticize must finally come to--just Barrie.

Chapter II.

Barrie and the Theatre.

1. Barrie on the Stage.

In the previous chapter Barrie was thought of as the writer of Literature, his plays were described as we find them printed. Here we shall try to set forth something of his success on the stage.

Barrie has not had the prominence nor has he received the attention of critics on this side of the Atlantic that he has had on the other side. Some of his contemporaries, such as Shaw, have greater publicity than he. The reason seems to be that Barrie does not care to advertise himself. Clayton Hamilton mentions three books on Modern Drama which do not include Barrie at all, and says the reason is the lack of pomposity in Barrie's published drama. These, who leave Barrie out, he calls the undramatic critics, because they have never seen the plays they criticize.(1) Malone puts it thus, "Sir J. M. Barrie is a dramatist of genius who is beloved by the play-goer and scorned by the critic."(2) He cannot stand lionizing. He evades publicity. He is reticent in conduct. He has never thrust his opinions upon the public. (3) He is quite himself in this. His extreme modesty and reticence are shown by his conduct at the production of"Pantaloon" at the Coliseum. "When the curtain dropped on the play, Barrie's baronetcy was announced. The audience cheered. A man in a box got up and

(1) "Criticism and Creation in the Drama," Bookman, Vol.44.
(2) "The Conservatism of J. M. Barrie," Fortnightly Review, Feb. 1927.
(3) "J. M. Barrie, the Man and his Work", Book News, Oct.1910

moved with outstretched arms towards another in the same box. The audience understood and all gazed at the box. The man to whom the hand was outstretched, had, at one spring, caught up his overcoat and hat and at another was disappearing from the box like an apparition. Only his back was visible for a second--the back of a man whom ten titles cannot draw from that wise sensitive seclusion which alone keeps intact one's preferences and exclusions."(1) Barrie has written nothing sordid. This eliminates from his audiences an element which is attracted by this type of play through morbid curiosity or sensuousness. His plays are not problem plays. He does not attract attention by startling titles. He does not insist on preaching to his audiences. Barrie's audiences are select. Unless he were known for himself he would not be known. His audiences must seek him, for he will not urge them to come.

Speaking further of his reception in America a critic says, "In America J. M. Barrie is the dramatist of the few." And again in this connection he adds, "On the whole, however, she (Maude Adams) has been accepted in Barrie, and through her he has been qualifiedly accepted."(2) New York knows him, but not as well as London.

All over the world, but particularly in America, the motion pictures have been replacing the stage drama in popular favor. It is becoming more and more difficult for the stock and travelling companies of the legitimate stage to succeed unless guaranteed or subsidized. Especially is this true when

(1) "The Charm that is Barrie," by J. D. Williams, Century, Oct. 1914.
(2) "A Dramatist and a Dreamer," by W. P. Eaton, Bookman, No. 48.

high ideals are held. Some of Barrie's plays lend themselves remarkably well to screen production. There will be something said of this later.

It is in England, and particularly in London, where Barrie created his plays, that they are best known. "Peter Pan" has become the great Christmas event for thousands of English children. Exiles from England annually regret that they cannot see and hear "Peter Pan" at Christmas time.

Barrie's fame has spread to the Continent. "The Admirable Crichton" was well received in France. "Peter Pan" has had more than one successful season in Paris. Many of the plays have been translated into German,--even"Ibsen's Ghost", a very minor play, has had this distinction.

For the story of the production of Barrie's plays I am indebted chiefly to H. M. Walbrooke(1), who has so delightfully told, mostly from personal experience, of the production and reception of the Barrie plays in London Theatres. He has a keen appreciation of the man Barrie, and of his gifts to the world.

The story will follow the order of production as far as possible, beginning with "Richard Savage" in 1891--the year he wrote "The Little Minister."(2) This was written in collaboration with Mr. Marriott Watson, and had a run of one day. This play had real characters, such as Steele and Savage.

(1) "J. M. Barrie and the Theatre", (F. Y. White & Co.)
(2) See "Plays of J. M. Barrie," North American Review, Vol. 212, pp. 829-43.

The scenes were full of strange oaths and clashing of swords. Mr. Edward Mortson says that the future dramatist was revealed in this play.

In the same year, 1891, "Ibsen's Ghost or Toole Up-To-Date" was written, and was produced at a theatre on King William Street. It was a three-act farce. Mr. George Shelton, Miss Irene Vanbrugh, J. L. Toole, and Miss Eliza Johnstone were the performers in this burlesque (a very popular form of dramatic entertainment in those days.) This play was never revived. "Becky Sharp", a trifle made by arranging the language of Thackeray, was written also in 1891. It was not a dramatic success.

This led the way to "Walker, London," which brought into prominence, as a playwright, a man already prominent as a novelist. On February 25th, 1892, this play was produced in Toole's Theatre. The play was well received, and after the last act, amidst great applause, the audience called for the author. As he did not come, Mr. Toole had to apologize. Walbrook describes the incident. Mr. Toole apologized on three grounds for the non-appearance of Mr. Barrie: First,he is too nervous to appear; second, he is not in the Theatre; third, he does not smoke. The last of these reasons was appreciated most of all by those who knew Barrie best. The chief character of the piece is a London barber, Phipps, who, on the eve of his marriage, takes the honeymoon money and goes off to have

a "burst" as a gentleman--like the gents he had been shaving for so long. He promises to come back and marry his Sarah as soon as he has had his pre-nuptial honeymoon. There wasn't money enough for two at any rate. Phipps poses as an African explorer, Colonel Neil, after he becomes a member of a house-boat party through a fake rescue of a beautiful young lady. There is plenty of fun for the audience in this situation. He has difficulty in remaining true to Sarah, but she rescues him from his attractive friends before he becomes involved. The name, "Walker, London," is the telegraphic address given in answer to an enquiry from the houseboat just as he leaves. Barrie has used similar situations in "Richard Savage" and"When a Man's Single," where we have the houseboat party and the fictitious "Sir Clement",--really a London barber. The play ran for over a hundred performances. It was well received by critics. Its construction is in accordance with the laws of drama. Mr. Toole played the part of Phipps, Miss Irene Vanbrugh again appeared in a Barrie play. Barrie met romance in the production. Mary Ansell, who played a leading role, afterwards became Mrs. Barrie. The play laid the foundations for the Barrie fortunes. With "Walker, London" the dour Scot of"Auld Licht"Idylls became the dramatist who has charmed thousands with his delightful plays. J. M. Sloan says too, "Barrie's comedies reconciled the Northern conscience to the Theatre." (1)

(1) T. P.'s Weekly, Nov. 28th, 1914.

In 1893, May 13th, was produced at the Savoy Theatre, London, a comic Opera, "Jane Annie," or "The Good Prize." This piece was written by J. M. Barrie in collaboration with Arthur Conan Doyle. It was a miserable failure. The dialogue was crude in places and forced throughout. The plot was weak. Needless to say, this was Barrie's only venture into the realm of comic opera.

"The Professor's Love Story" re-established Barrie with the theatre-going public. It was first produced in the Star Theatre, New York, December 1892.(1) The story of this play is interesting, and is as follows: Barrie submitted "The Professor's Love Story" to Irving, who sent him on to Hare. Hare became enraged because he couldn't read Barrie's manuscript. After re-writing it Barrie took it to E. S. Willard, and it went to the United States and was produced there before it was in England. Maxine Elliott played Lady Gilding. As everyone in New York was reading or had read "The Little Minister," an eager audience turned out to see this play by the same author. Though it was the week before Christmas, the play was successful. In a curtain speech Mr. Willard asked if he might cable that the play had won the day. If ever sent, the message went astray. Barrie heard of its success in the form of a friendly and explanatory note from Charles Frohman, who later became a producer of Barrie's plays, and

(1) See N.Y. Times, Mar. 4th, 1917, "Second Thoughts on First Nights"

a great friend of the author. With the note Frohman enclosed a picture of his future Babbie, Leonora, Maggie, and Peter Pan. (Maude Adams) (1)

This play was acted in London for the first time on June 25th, 1894, and was well received by this, and more than five hundred succeeding, audiences. The play was revived at the St. James Theatre 1903. Barrie brought the play up to date in 1915, and it was successfully revived in New York in 1917.

The story of the play is that of a Professor in love and not knowing it. If it were not that people go to theatres prepared to accept anything, the play would have had a hard time. Barrie's charm won the day however, and this play breathing of Scotland satisfied the audiences. E. S. Willard, who first produced the play, was the original Professor.

Now we come to one of the best known and loved of Barrie's plays, "The Little Minister" was published first as a novel in 1891, and re-written as a play in 1897. W. L. Phelps calls it a better play than novel, and holds that it was at the point of the writing of this play that Barrie's fame as a playwright equalled his fame as a Novelist.(2) It was produced in the Haymarket Theatre on Saturday, November 6th, 1897. Walbrook says, "It broke down finally the barriers

(1) See N.Y. Times, Mar.4th, 1917, "Second Thoughts on First Nights."
(2) "Plays of J. M. Barrie", North American Review, Vol. 212, pp. 829-43.

which had so long and so disastrously stood between Literature and the Drama." He goes on to say "It had become a cliche of criticism that no novelist could make a dramatist. That night at the Haymarket killed it forever."(1) The play was acted simultaneously in New York, where Maude Adams took the part of Babbie. In London Babbie was played by Miss Winnifred Emery, with Cyril Maude as Rev. Gavin Dishart.

As in "The Professor's Love Story," the audiences were treated to Barrie's "Thrums" again. Those who have seen either the play or the moving picture will never forget the scene in which the four elders' top hats are seen over the Kirkyard fence spying upon their Minister who is kissing the gipsy girl who proved to be none other than Lord Rintoul's daughter. Barrie was well rewarded in this successful attempt to dramatize the novel. A grateful public flocked to see this charming play with its clean and fascinating romance.

Then a change came over Barrie, for his next production was "The Wedding Guest," a so-called problem play, which created a furore among critics. Barrie was advised to go back to his novels. He was scolded for his cynicism, and for his optimism. "The Wedding Guest" is the story of a young artist, Paul Digby, who had a past. At the wedding of Paul Digby and Margaret Fairbairn, Kate Ommaney, a former mistress, and mother of Paul's child, appears. After Kate goes, Paul confesses to his bride and she is nearly heart-broken, but forgives her

(1) "J. M. Barrie and the Theatre" Page 51.

husband, and they are left to live happily ever after. It was most unlike Barrie and surprised his audience, and, as above related, almost overcame his critics. It was produced in the Garrick Theatre on September 27th, 1900. The play was not a success, Walbrook says, on account of indifferent acting.

Now we come to "The Admirable Crichton". Of it Walbrook says, "No Comedy of our times has set beholders thinking so hard. In England and America, and even in Paris, it was hailed as one of"the most penetrating social pamphlets of the day".(1) The original Crichton was James Crichton (1560-1582), a Scottish Nobleman to whom the term "admirabilis" was applied by John Johnstone. He was an intellectual prodigy, educated at St. Andrews University. Before he was twenty years of age he had run through the whole circle of sciences, and was familiar with ten languages, and all Knightly accomplishments. He won many victories in disputation through Europe. He became preceptor to the son of the Duke of Mantua, and was killed by that son.(2) Another adds the information that he was a Bachelor of Arts at fourteen years, and a Master of Arts at fifteen years.(3) So much for the source of the title "Admirable Crichton."

The plot is elementary--the wreck of a family on an island.(4) The butler and maid are there, and of course we

(1) "J. M. Barrie and the Theatre", page 68.
(2) Boston Transcript, Jan. 1926.
(3) Literary Review, Jan. 12th, 1924.
(4) See "A Dramatist and Dreamer," by W. P. Eaton, Bookman, No. 48.

what it means and she chooses to stay with him, but he puts her away from him with "Bill Crichton will play the game." The return to his servile position is marked by the washing of his hands with invisible soap. Back in England again the family is always uncomfortable in the presence of of the butler, and are relieved when he asks to leave their service, for there was much curiosity on the part of Lady Brocklehurst to find out what had happened on the island. Lady Mary gets a last word alone with Crichton.

Lady Mary; "Do you despise me Crichton? You are the best man among us."
Crichton: "On an island, my lady, perhaps, but in England, no."
Lady Mary: "Then there's something wrong with England."
Crichton: "My lady, not even from you can I listen to a word against England."
Lady Mary: "Tell me one thing; you have not lost your courage?"
Crichton: "No, my lady." (1)

He (Barrie) shows up fools, liars, snobs cruelly because he shows them up against a great man (not without his vanity and weakness)."(2) "Barrie shows us,in "The Admirable Crichton", the fragility of class hierarchy."(3) There is something harder and more epigrammatic about this play than there is about any of the others.(4) "The Admirable Crichton" is as realistic as any play by any dramatist in revolt against social conditions. The first of the Twentieth Century social plays."(5) Malone holds that this play is the reaction of Barrie the Journalist

(1) "The Admirable Crichton," Act IV.
(2) "Times Literary Supplement, Dec. 12th, 1918.
(3) "Barrie's Secret and the Key," by Raymond Recouley, World Wide, Jan. 13th, 1923.
(4) "Sir J. M. Barrie," by J. B. Priestly, London Mercury, Oct. 1924.
(5) "Conservatism of J.M.Barrie" by A.E. Malone, Fortnightly Review, Feb. 1927

to the Labor movement. These opinions give one an idea of the interpretation given the play by critics, but Walbrook holds, and we are inclined to agree with him, that a farce based upon a character like Loam could not be considered a serious attack on society.

This play was produced in the Duke of York's Theatre November 4th, 1902. Strange to relate the play did not get a very good send-off because of delays caused by a strike of stage-carpenters. Crichton was played by Mr. H. B. Irving, Lady Mary by Miss Irene Vanbrugh, and Lord Loam by Mr. Henry Kemble. The play was revived in 1917 with the ending changed. A French version was produced in Paris in 1920. It was again revived at the Royalty Theatre, London, in the same year with a new fourth Act. In New York the play was produced in the Lyceum Theatre in 1904. This play was produced February 25th and 26th, 1916, in the Walker Theatre, Winnipeg, by the University of Manitoba Dramatic Society under the presidency of A. W. Crawford, M.A., Ph.D. It was very successful, though it is a difficult play for amateurs. This was the first time this play was produced in Winnipeg. Again on March 5th and 6th, 1928, the University Dramatic Society was successful in putting this play on in the Walker Theatre, Winnipeg. There is an unauthenticated story that Barrie got the idea of this play from Lord and Lady Aberdeen's attempts to democratize social customs at Rideau Hall, Ottawa.

In the same year that "Admirable Crichton" was produced "Quality Street" made its debut. This play was well received by the theatrical world, and by critics too. It is one of the most appealing of Barrie's plays, full of the tenderest pathos. It leaves much to the actresses and actors in its interpretation. It was written rather for the stage than for fiction. The story is that of two sisters, Susan and Phoebe Throssel, who live amid spying eyes and gossipy tongues on Quality Street. A budding romance between Phoebe and a dashing young man, Valentine Brown, is nipped by the Sergeant recruiting for the Napoleonic War,--Brown goes off without any understanding with Miss Phoebe. Certain investments advised by Brown, failing them, the sisters are driven to keeping school, to which occupation they are not well adapted. The struggles of the sisters against poverty is very pathetic, and at times offers some humorous situations. Captain Brown returns minus an arm. He appears at the school just in time to help Miss Susan in a problem of discipline. Miss Phoebe has a headache from a tiring day in school. The sisters <u>are</u> much older, and <u>look very</u> much older. Phoebe feels this to such an extent that her imagination helps her to believe that thirty is a very great age and that she is past all chances of winning the gallant Captain Brown. The suggestion of the maid that "if Miss Phoebe were to dress young again, and put candles in her eyes that used to be so bright, and coax back her curls"(1) .....is very effective. Miss Phoebe dresses up to see what

(1) "Quality Street," Act II.

it looks like, and as she is thus adorned, Captain Brown comes back and doesn't recognize her. So Phoebe passes as her niece, Miss Livvy. Captain Brown accompanies Miss Livvy, as he thinks, with Miss Susan as chaperone, to the ball where Phoebe carries off her part so well that she is the centre of attraction not only of the young gallants, but of the jealous ladies who are being robbed of their partners. The final result is that Captain Brown decides that Livvy is a shocking flirt, and says it is not the flaunting flower that men love, but the modest, and to Livvy he admits that he is in love with a lady who was once very like Livvy as he puts it, 'Ma'am, it is your Aunt Phoebe whom I love."(1) Of course the sisters have a hard time to get rid of Livvy, but at last this is done by Captain Brown (to satisfy inquisitive eyes across the street) and the play closes with Phoebe's words to Captain Brown "Sir, the dictates of my heart enjoin me to accept your too flattering offer."(2)

This play was produced on September 17th, 1902, revived in November 1913, and again revived in August 1921, when, owing to the facts that the war made it more real, and that there were few acceptable plays that year, it had a tremendous run of nearly a year,--this at the Haymarket Theatre.

Such artists as Miss Marion Terry, Miss Ellaline Terress, Mr. Seymour Hicks, Miss Nina Boucicault, Miss Kathleen Nesbitt, Mr. Godfrey Tearle, Miss Fay Compton, Miss Mary Jerrold and Mr. Leon Quartermain have played the three prin-

(1) "Quality Street" Act III.
(2) "Quality Street," Act IV.

cipal parts.

In New York the play was first produced by Charles Frohman with Maude Adams in 1901 at Knickerbocker Theatre, New York. She toured with it in 1903. It was revived in New York in 1913 at the Empire Theatre.

Then comes "Little Mary" performed at Wyndham's Theatre on September 24th, 1903. It was written the same year and produced in New York at the Empire Theatre the year after this.

"Little Mary" was announced as an "uncomfortable play" but proved to be otherwise. The Little Mary of the play was an invisible medium by means of which Moira Looney cures some aristocratic people of imaginary ills. Moira got the idea from her Grandpa's pamphlets. Grandpa believes that the English people eat too much and that Home Rule for the English is "One Day, One Dinner." "Little Mary" was the stomach. Miss Boucicault played Moira Looney.

The best known of all Barrie's plays, indeed of his writings, is "Peter Pan." It was written in 1904, and produced in London at the Duke of York's Theatre on the 27th of December, 1904. It won its first audience and has been revived annually at the Christmas season ever since. In New York it was performed by Maude Adams in 1906, and has become well known in all the great cities of America. It was revived in New York in 1913. It is enchanting fantasy. Wendy, John and Michael Darling are cared for by faithful Nanna, a Newfoundland

dog. Peter Pan and Tinker Bell fly into the Nursery when Mr. and Mrs. Darling are away, and Nanna is tied up. Peter teaches the children to fly, and away they all go to the Never Never Land where Wendy becomes mother to the lost boys. There are Indians and Pirates, and a crocodile with a clock ticking in it. A house for Wendy was there, with make-believe roses growing up the walls and John's hat for a chimney. Peter kept watch outside at night with drawn sword. There were threatened invasions from the fierce Indians and Pirates and wolves,--not half as bad as they sound. In the scene added in 1905 where Peter Pan is threatened with starvation, he utters the famous words, "To die will be an awfully big adventure!" These were the last recorded words of Charles Frohman, Barrie producer, as he went to death on the Lusitania.

Miss Nina Boucicault, already famous in Barrie roles, and Miss Maude Adams have been associated with the acting of this play, while Mr. George Skelton, Mr. Gerald du Maurier, and Mr. Robb Harwood took some of the male parts.

In Paris the play was produced on June 16th, 1908, at the Vaudeville Theatre, under the name of "L'histoire d'un petit garçon qui ne voulait pas grandir." It ran five weeks that season in Paris and was revived the following year.

Some critics consider this the most meaningful of all Barrie's plays. This, we are not going to discuss here.

Let us not spoil the fancy with attempted interpretation. Another criticism is that the scene with the empty nursery, and the childless parents, is too heart rending. There must be contrast and the contrast, in "Peter Pan," between the pathetic and the joyful, is one of the devices used very effectively by our author. Perhaps somewhat better taken is the criticism that Motherhood and Childhood are brushed aside too lightly, and even treated as unmanly. In reply to this one would say that it was need of a mother that brought Peter to take Wendy away to the motherless boys, that is Wendy becomes a mother--which all little girls do, at least in their hearts. (1)

It may not be out of place to give the origin of the name Wendy. William Ernest Henley, (whose book of poems was the only book on Crichton's island), was a very close friend of Barrie's. Alice Henley, his little girl, tried to call Mr. Barrie "friendly," and the nearest she could get to it was "wendy."(2) It is said, too, that the boy for whom he wrote "Peter Pan" died in France. He was the one who saw a special performance of "Peter Pan" because he was ill at its first London appearance.

"Peter Pan" will give lasting fame to Barrie. It is his immortal contribution to the joy of childhood. Winnipeg saw Maude Adams in "Peter Pan" just before the war, (June 23rd, --25th, 1913), at the Walker Theatre. Thousands of children,

(1) See Times Literary Supplement, Dec. 12th, 1918.
(2) New York Times Magazine, Nov. 12th, 1916.

young and old, have seen"Peter Pan" on the screen since the war. Long may he dwell in the hearts of children.

"Alice Sit-by-the-Fire", too, has been seen in Winnipeg. On Friday, February 29th, and Saturday, March 1st, 1924, this play was produced under the auspices of the University Women's Club, and under the direction of Miss Rowena Brownstone. The first production of this play was in the same year it was written, (1905). It was given at the Duke of York's Theatre on April 5th of that year with Miss Ellen Terry as Alice. In the years 1905-6 the play was produced in the United States with Miss Ethel Barrymore as Alice, and Miss Irene Vanbrugh as the daughter. It was not a great success in America. It is said that this play was brought with "Peter Pan" to Charles Frohman to recoup him for the losses he was certain to incur in producing the latter. It was "Peter Pan" that made the profits after all.(1)

Critics were widely divergent in what they said of this play, and well they might be, for its characters are all absurd from Alice Grey, the vivacious and irresponsible yet charming young wife of Colonel Gray. Colonel and Mrs. Grey return from India to their children, Cosmo and Amy. Amy has her pretty head full of ideas from plays seen in "thinking" Theatres. Alice, though forty, is younger than her daughter, and soon after Amy welcomes her mother, Amy finds that she must save her from Mr. Stephen Rollo, an old friend who calls and

(1) "J. M. Barrie and the Theatre," P. 113.

invites them to visit him and since the Colonel cannot leave the baby, Mrs. Grey agrees to go alone. Amy has overheard it all, and assumes from her theatrical experience, that there must be letters. So the plot rises with misunderstanding after misunderstanding on the part of the innocent Stephen Rollo and the equally innocent Alice. Amy in her imagination builds up a strong case against her mother and tries to take her mother's place in the imagined intrigue with Rollo, in order to save the Colonel from finding it all out. This ridiculous fantasy works out finally into the seene where the Alice, who has been the centre of gaiety and love, becomes the middle aged Alice. "Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire" henceforth. "Farewell, Alice that was: It's all over, my dear. I always had a weakness for you but now you must really go. Make way there for the old lady!"(1) is the pathetic close of the play, as Alice surrenders her place to Amy.

"Pantaloon" was written the same year, (1905), and produced in the Criterion Theatre, New York, in 1905 - 6. It was also produced as a curtain raiser to "Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire" at the Duke of York's Theatre on April 5th, 1905. It was revived at the Old Vic. Theatre in 1921. This is a far-fetched little comedy and hardly Barrie's standard.

In 1906 Barrie wrote the plays, "Josephine," and

(1) "Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire," P. 139.

his life, but this does not change Maggie, who remains in the background as ever. Now that Lady Sibyl tires him, Maggie feels that they would be happy if only she could make John Shand laugh,--which she finally manages to do, and with a very old joke. Maggie's triumph is complete.

This play was produced at the Duke of York's Theatre, London, on September 3rd, 1908, with Miss Hilda Trevelyan as Maggie, and Mr. du Maurier as Shand. In New York it was performed, with Maude Adams as Maggie Shand, at the Empire in 1908. Miss Adams took the play on tour the same year.

A critic says of this play that it is audacious and only a Barrie would have attempted it as he did.(1) No word was spoken for seven minutes after the curtain rose. Silence is used for comedy. The two men, James and Alick Wylie, are playing at the dambrod, and the actions of this son and father provide the comedy. David Wylie, the other son, comes in but does not interrupt the game. He removes his boots, puts on his slippers, and crosses to the fire, There is silence in which you can hear the wag-at-the-wall clock ticking. Then David breaks in with "Oh let the solid ground
Not fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found
What some have found so sweet,
from Tennyson's "Maud."

The play is one of Barrie's best,--in the same class as "The Admirable Crichton," and "Dear Brutus." Patrick Braybrooke says of it, "What Every Woman Knows" takes us right

(1) W. L. Phelps, North American Review, Vol. 212, P. 829-43.

into the very domestic heart of Scotland." (1)

Of "The Twelve Pound Look" the same writer says, "If we can read a play and read it with enjoyment, then there is no need to worry about the possible failure of it when it is acted. Barrie's plays are always intensely readable, and perhaps "The Twelve Pound Look" is among those that are most readable."(1) This was one of the plays in a triple bill at the Duke of York's Theatre March 1st, 1910. It was performed by Ethel Barrymore on tour in America in 1911 and 1912. This play was successfully given by the University Dramatic Society on February 23rd and 24th, 1917, at the Walker Theatre, Winnipeg, and also at the Agricultural College, Winnipeg, November 25th, 1927.

It is the story of a woman who left her husband because he worshipped success, and swaddled her in luxury. Kate is rather more independent than Barrie's women usually are. She makes her living as a stenographer and years after, she goes to his house to do some typing for him, and when she is recognized, they talk of her disappearance and she reveals her story. The play ends with a pathetic inference that the second wife is unhappy for the same reason Kate was.

Performed at the same time as "The Twelve Pound Look" was "Old Friends" also written in 1910. "Old Friends" is a tragedy--the story of a man who fought and overcame a craving for alcoholic drinks. After twelve years he discovers that his

(1) "A Study in Fairies and Mortals," (London).

daughter is a victim of the same malady. "Old vices leave us--we don't drive them away. Their consequences remain--shadows that speak--old sins that have become Old Friends." The play is rather depressing and pessimistic. It does not give full credit to the man who fights and overcomes this habit.

1910 was also the year in which Barrie wrote "A Slice of Life," a skit on the use of the telephone on the modern stage. Each character in the play confides all his or her secrets to the audience, by telling them into a telephone receiver. This was performed by Ethel Barrymore in the Empire, New York, in 1912, and in London was performed in The Duke of York's Theatre in June, 1916.

Barrie's next dramatic work was written in 1912--"Rosalind" its name. It was produced October 14th of the same year, at the Duke of York's. It is the story of a young man who is an under-graduate of Oxford--Phelps says it might be of Yale or Harvard.(1) He falls in love with an actress, and is somewhat disillusioned when he finds that she is more than forty, and dowdy. However, she dresses in her fashionable attire again, assumes her airs, and the curtain comes down on a young man still in love, and a lady poo-hooing his advances, but not very effectively.

Braybrooke says "Except for the brilliance of the dialogue the play is a tedious farce quite unworthy of the

(1) North American Review, Vol. 212, P. 829-43.

genius of Barrie."(1) Walbrook wonders how it would have gone with the play without Miss Irene Vanbrugh in the title part.(2)

In 1913 Barrie wrote"The Will," and "The Adored One." They were produced together at the Duke of York's Theatre on September 4th, 1913. In America the former was performed by Maude Adams in tour and the latter in New York, both in 1913. "The Will" was given at The Manitoba Agricultural College on November 25th, 1927.

"The Will" was a great success. It shows a husband and wife on three successive visits to a lawyer giving him instructions as to the making of a will. At the first visit they are an adoring bride and groom, and he wishes all to go to his wife. At the second visit, after years have passed, he fears to leave her his £70,000 unconditionally lest she spend it foolishly after his death, but she finally persuades him to make the will that way. The last visit shows him a widower, his son has gone to the dogs, and his daughter has married a chauffeur. This time he says "Let it all go to the six men whom I have beaten most cruelly in life! And let them have it with my curse for each of them, for money does not bring happiness." In these last words we have Barrie's idea of the value of money with respect to happiness.

"The Adored One" was a failure and was received with mingled hisses and cheers. It is a freakish play in which a

(1) "A Study in Fairies and Mortals."
(2) "J. M. Barrie and the Theatre."

woman with a little child persists in closing a window because the child has a cold. A gentleman refused to let it be closed. At last she pushed him from the train and he was killed. She was acquitted by the jury in the murder trial which followed. Walbrook believes that the feminist movement had taken away his sense of humor for the time.(1) "The Adored" one was revised later and produced in New York with Maude Adams in the character of Leonora.

"Half an Hour", a little melodrama, was produced at the Hippodrome, September, 1913.

Nor was there any signs of improvement in the author's next play, "Der Tag," a short play which is nothing more than propaganda. It is the worst of Barrie's war plays, and was his reaction to the events of 1914. Time has proven that Barrie had some historical insight when he wrote it. It was produced at the Coliseum, December, 1914.

Worse still was "Rosy Rapture" or "The Pride of Beauty Chorus" played in the Duke of York's Theatre, March 22nd, 1915. The title-rôle was played by Gaby Deslys whose fame had been achieved by her costumes--or lack of them. As features at this performance there were a moving picture of a chapter in a baby's life, and a burlesque on Dickens' "David Copperfield." This was the last play produced by Charles Frohman who lost his life on the Lusitania May 7th, 1915.

In the same year, 1915, and in the same month, "The

(1) "J. M. Barrie and the Theatre," P. 125.

New Word" was played at the Duke of York's. It was another of Barrie's war plays and shows a diffident father saying good-bye to his bashful boy who is off for the front.

"The Fatal Typist" was performed at His Majesty's, November 1915, in aid of Australian wounded. It was a practical joke.

"Shakespeare's Legacy" was given at Drury Lane in April, 1916--another charity play for the benefit of Y. W. C. A. war work.

Once again after a lapse of many years, the genius of Barrie found expression in "A Kiss for Cinderella." "One part laughter, and three parts tears," as the critic of the New York Times put it after its production at The Empire Theatre, New York, in January, 1917.

The Cinderella of the play was a friend to all the babies who had no other mother--for Cinderella is one of Barrie's mothers. This held good even in the case of the one which was not exactly Swiss, of whom Cinderella said "Nobody would take her. She was left over, and her so terrible little couldn't help taking her,"(though she kept her behind barbed wire.) Cinderella is a universal character, and Barrie gives the name to the girl in the play who is the mother to all babies. Every child knows Cinderella, no matter which land it comes from. She was a veritable fairy to them. Nor is she mother alone. She is a friend to all and will mend "dickies,"

or shave people for a penny. Cinderella falls in love with a kindly policeman. While asleep she dreams she is at the Prince's Ball--and a queer Ball it was. She catches cold which develops into pneumonia, and has to be taken to a sea-side sanatorium where the romance between her and the police-man comes to a happy culmination.

This play was produced at Wyndham's Theatre on Thursday, March 3rd, 1916, in mid-war. It was one of Barrie's contributions to the morale of the people of Britain. It was produced in New York with Maude Adams in the leading part. Miss Hilda Trevelyan took Cinderella's part in England and the piece on tour was well received in the towns and cities of that country.

The New Theatre, London, in April, 1917, saw the production of another of Barrie's touching war plays. This was "The Old Lady Shows Her Medals." It is a story of London char-women at a cup of tea, Mrs. Dowey standing treat. The discussion centres on the war, and their"man-parties" at the war--and here Mrs. Dowey is the centre of attention for she has no one there. She pretends she has, and through an unforeseen turn of events word comes that Mrs. Dowey's son, Kenneth, has five days' leave. How she gets possession of the son and how he accepts her and entertains her in splendor is an entertaining story. Then his leave is up and he must go. He finds it hard to go and asks her to be his mother officially--his next of kin. The last glimpse is of the old lady looking at some medals, Kenneth's bonnet, and a packet of real letters--for Kenneth has been

killed in action. Phelps calls attention to the social distinctions among the char-women similar to those observed by Crichton and the servants downstairs. He refers to the reception of the play--at first laughter greets the players, but in the last scene the solitary woman moves about in silence while unrestrained sobbing is heard through the audience.(1) It is easily the best of his war plays.

The autumn of the year that saw "The Old Lady Shows Her Medals" produced was the time of the first performance of "Dear Brutus." It was first acted at Wyndham's Theatre on October 17th, 1917. It was revived in the same Theatre on May 6th, 1922. In New York the first regular performance was December 23rd, 1918, and the play ran until hot weather closed the Theatre. This play was put on by The Community Players at the Community Theatre, Winnipeg, during the season of 1922 - 23.

The title comes from the passage in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar,

> "Men at some time are masters of their fates.
> The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
> But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

People often wonder how much better they would live if they had a second chance. Barrie in his play gives this second chance to several dissatisfied people. They go into the magic wood at the magic hour, on Midsummer's Eve, when fairies frolic. Mr. Purdie, who always sighed for some other woman for a wife, finds himself married to another woman, and still

(1) North American Review, Vol. 212, P. 829-43.

unhappy. Coade, who on the other hand, has been a happily married man, finds himself single and still happy. Only one, Dearth, who has always longed for a child, finds himself perfectly happy with a dream daughter. After the characters come back to earth, we see the same Dearth happy once again with his wife, "breasting their way into the light." The play shows us that circumstances in life may be different, but our characters remain the same. "The fault is not in our stars, but in ourselves."

1918 saw another of Barrie's war plays. It was performed at Wyndham's in June. "A Well Remembered Voice" is the story of a man who is persuaded by the ghost of his boy to take up his paper and his pipe again and live in a normal way,--this in spite of the fact that his wife and daughter say it is sacrilege to the memory of the boy killed in the war. J. Forbes Robertson was the father in this fine little play, and in this part made a strong impression. Apparently Barrie is taking a sly drive at the spiritualism of the day.

In the same Volume, "Echoes of the War," in which "A Well Remembered Voice" appeared, is another war play, "Barbara's Wedding." It opens with the outbreak of the war. The old absent-minded Colonel, trembling and tottering, has a feeling as he looks at his sword, that he is needed somewhere. In his wandering mind he has the impression that there is a wedding, and a nurse, and a soldier. He sees the cricket field deserted--visions all. His granddaughter, Barbara, who expects to marry

Billy, and Karl a visitor with Billy, try to talk him out of his visions, for the Colonel thinks Billy Boy is not to be at the wedding. The wedding comes. Not Billy Boy, but Captain Dering, a former gardener of the Colonel's, marries Barbara, now a Red Cross Nurse. Billy Boy has been killed in France and Karl too, has paid the price, fighting against Billy. This piece is very mystical and pathetic in the character of the old Colonel.

"The Real Thing at Last" was performed in the Coliseum in March, 1920. It was a take-off on the "movies" showing a film version of "Macbeth" with the usual "movie" titles, etc.

"The Truth about the Russian Dancers" given at the Coliseum also, in March, 1920, was an amusing picture of life as lived in a Russian Ballet.

On April 22nd, 1920, there appeared another of Barrie's great plays, "Mary Rose." At the Haymarket Theatre this play got the best reception of any play for the previous six years. As usual, critics varied in their comment, but if we are to believe the story of the origin, it was a spirit story, if not a pamphlet on spiritualism as one critic called it. The story of its origin is said to be that a lady said to him, "Sir James, you have done many things for the theatre but there is one that still awaits you--the writing of a ghost story. I wonder if you would try your hand at that?" His answer was, "I don't know;

I will have a try,"--and the result was "Mary Rose."

There are a prologue, three acts, and an epilogue. The prologue prepares us for the ghost; the three acts are the life-story proper; and in the epilogue the apparition appears. A young Australian soldier on furlough visits a haunted house which was his boyhood home. The housekeeper goes out to get some tea, and Harry, the soldier, is left alone. Then the picture fades and there appears the home as it has been thirty-five years or so before in the days of Harry's grandfather. Mary Rose, the daughter of the house, comes home with her sweetheart Simon. Simon asks for Mary Rose's hand, and before it is promised the parents tell Simon a story of Mary Rose. When she was eleven years they had visited a mysterious island in the Hebrides. Mary had disappeared for twenty days, when she was found in the place at which she had disappeared. There was no explanation of it. Simon was never to remind her of this. Act II. shows Simon and Mary Rose, after four years' married lif e, on the mystic island. Mary Rose again mysteriously disappears and does not come back. The son Harry grows up and runs away to sea. Simon is on a war ship, and comes home on leave when Mary Rose returns twenty-five years after her disappearance. It is as if time had stood still with her while the others had grown old, and Mary Rose cannot understand her husband or her parents, they have changed so. She wants her baby. Then the scene changes to the old house with Harry waiting. There Mary Rose and Harry are reunited. One of Barrie's

finest love scenes is found in this play when Mary Rose and Simon are on the mystic island together. The scenes in which Mr. Amy and Mr. Morland are in dialogue are very funny. The mystery of the whole play is thrilling. No one of Barrie's plays has more heart-rending pathos than this one. It set people thinking wherever it went. This play is worthy of the man who wrote it. Though it would be a fitting climax to his dramatic work, we hope that it may not be his last great play.

In 1921, at the opening of the Theatre of the Royal Academy of Art, February 27th, a one-act piece, "Shall We Join the Ladies?" was given before a distinguished audience, numbering among them, the Prince of Wales. It was again given at St. Martin's Theatre, March 8th, 1922.

It has a queer plot. Thirteen sit down to a dinner. The host informs his guests that a brother of his was murdered at Monte Carlo two years previously, and that the guilty one is present. Suspicion falls first on one and then on another. A blood curdling scream is heard from another room. It was rather a grim farce.

This concludes the long list of the works of Barrie up to date. May there be many more!

Part 2.

Barrie on the Screen.

W. L. Phelps said that there was no reason for regretting that J. M. Barrie's plays were put on the screen, for it is better to see Barrie on the screen than not at all.(1)

Many of his dramas would seem to lend themselves particularly to screen production for though Barrie's plays are usually easily staged, being confined to room scenes, some of them are more difficult to produce on the stage. There would be no difficulty in staging "Quality Street" or "The Will", but when it comes to"Peter Pan" one can readily understand that there are great possibilities for this play on the screen. Filmdom has at its command many devices which seem like magic when presented as pictures. It is hard to deceive the unimaginative at any time and particularly hard to do so when we try to make fairies out of humans. "Peter Pan" has achieved a remarkable success in showing us what seems to be a very real fancy land in picture. So one might mention the advantage the picture producer has in "A Kiss for Cinderella" in presenting the Ball, and in "The Admirable Crichton" when the island scene is to be reproduced.

The plays of Barrie that have been filmed are "The Little Minister," "Peter Pan," "The Admirable Crichton," "A Kiss for Cinderella" and "Quality Street."

"The Admirable Crichton" was turned into a cinema comedy in 1919 under the name "Male and Female"--"which might

(1) North American Review, Vol. 212, P. 829-43.

be the title of nine-tenths of the moving pictures," says W. L. Phelps.(1) It was released in September of that year. The Paramount Corporation made the picture with Cecil de Mille as director. In the screen version , following out the suggestion given in the quotation of Crichton as he proposes marriage to Lady Mary, "I was a King in Babylon,
And you were a Christian slave,"
there was an elaborate picture story of Crichton and Lady Mary in their early Babylonian relationship. In the film play too pictures were used to show the impossibility of the union of Crichton and Lady Mary using as illustration the case of a lady who had married her chauffeur with disastrous results. The final scene in the picture takes us to a farm in America, away out on the Western plains. Back to the land for Tweeny and Crichton was rather a happy ending for such a "back to Nature" story. Phelps says of the film play, "It was marred in the opening scenes by some gratuitous and inexcusable vulgarity. After that the play proceeded extremely well. The story was dramatically and skilfully presented. The pictures were admirable."(2)

Thomas Meighan played the part of Crichton, and Gloria Swanson was Lady Mary Lasenby. Theodore Roberts, and Raymond Hatton took the parts of Ernest Wooley and Lord Brocklehurst respectively.

"The Little Minister" was made about 1921, by the Famous-Lasky-Paramount Corporation. It was one of the well

(1) North American Review, Vol. 212, P. 829-43.
(2) North American Review, Vol. 212, P. 829-43.

known pictures of the day. Many who never read Barrie's novel nor saw this play on the stage got to know it from the screen. As in the stage production, two of the well remembered scenes are the four elders watching over the Kirkyard fence to catch their little minister in the act of kissing Babbie, the gipsy girl, and the marriage of the little minister Gavin Dishart over the tongs in gipsy fashion. The picture is now out of service.

"Peter Pan" is probably better known as a picture than in any other way. As on the stage, this is Barrie's greatest production in filmdom. This picture was a Paramount presented by Jesse L. Lasky and Adolph Zuker. Herbert Brennan was the producer and Betty Bronson, the famous screen actress, played the part of Peter Pan. J. M. Barrie selected her to portray Peter Pan from more than one hundred candidates. It was made as a special Christmas picture and released Christmas Day, 1924, in all the de luxe Motion Picture Theatres in Canada and United States. It had a great reception all over the continent. The picture was shown in Winnipeg at the Capitol Theatre and reached most of the small town theatres in the following year and a half. Stories are told of those who had known Peter Pan on the stage in the Old Land flocking to see their favorite and bringing their children that they in turn might see the one and only Peter Pan. It was one of the triumphs of the screen, so well was the Never Never Land depicted. The Screen story followed the written version very

closely.

Barrie's "Quality Street" was filmed by the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corporation in 1927 and released in December, 1927. Miss Marion Davies was the Screen Star playing the role of Phoebe Throssel. Conrad Nagel played Valentine Brown and Miss Helen Jerome Eddy played Susan Throssel. The director of the picture was Sidney Franklin.

In the screen play Valentine Brown is made a doctor who takes Miss Phoebe Throssel to an al fresco dance and is about to propose when a sudden shower puts an end to the proceedings. As he carries her over the muddy road to her own side of the street however, he kisses her, to the scandal of the watchful old maids in nearby windows. (The kiss in the stage play was simply one on a wet face on the way home from a concert.) With this slight variation at the opening of the play, and a change of the name of Miss Livvy to Miss Janet (Phoebe's niece), the screen version follows closely the published play.

The picture will be seen by many of Barrie's friends this year (1928). Already reports of a very favorable reception are coming in.

Sir Esme and Lady Howard (Sir Esme is the British Ambassador to the United States) visited the studio during the screening of the picture, and at his suggestion some changes were made, such as the removal of a painted directory from in

front of the English chapel shown in the picture.

"A Kiss for Cinderella" has been screened too. Paramount made it and Betty Bronson was "Miss Thing." One year later the Paramount Corporation released "A Kiss for Cinderella." Herbert Brennon was the producer of this screen play, and Betty Bronson again appeared in a Barrie play, and at Barrie's request. She had successfully portrayed Peter Pan, for which part her wistful elusive qualities were well suited. Again, in this play, these powers of Miss Bronson fitted the character of Cinderella. Tom Moore played the Fairy Prince who turned out to be the Policeman.

The story as given on the screen follows the written story closely. Much is made of the wonderfull Ball that Cinderella had long dreamed of. The gorgeous Ball was that imagined by the girl limited by the London Slums. There were a gas stove, teakettle and gas meter four times actual size. Prince Charming and the King were the Jack and King she had seen on playing cards. The ball room was illuminated by street lamps. The lavishly attired folk at the ball stand and nibble at oranges, ice-cream and bananas. The music is supplied by a dozen organ grinders each with a monkey. The ball was just a glorification of Cinderella's every day surroundings.

"Peter Pan" had paved the way for the success of this play on the screen. As was expected, it was a great success.

Part 3.

Barrie's Actors.

Walbrook says, "Few, if any, dramatic authors owe as much to the producers of their plays and to those who have acted in them as does Sir J. M. Barrie."(1) Barrie was fortunate indeed in his producer, Charles Frohman, who was not only a business associate but a great friend of the author's. His death in 1915, when he was a victim of German ruthlessness, was a great blow to Barrie, who felt deeply the terrible times the nation passed through during the war. Barrie made many sacrifices of time and money during those years. He supported a Hospital in France with his private means, and wrote many charity plays; he suffered personal loss, but perhaps no loss was more keenly felt than that of his friend Frohman.

One is surprised when he looks down the list of Barrie actors and actresses to find so many of universal fame. One finds such world characters as Sir J. Forbes Robertson, H. B. Irving, Ellen Terry and Maude Adams. People of the stage who have achieved the summits that these have do not accept inferior plays. It is indeed a compliment to Barrie, the dramatist, to find such well known artists taking his roles.

Among the English players one is prompted to mention Miss Irene Vanbrugh first. Away back in 1892 she began with

(1) "J. M. Barrie and the Theatre."

"The Professor's Love Story," "Alice Sit-by-the-Fire," (with limited success), "The Twelve Pound Look," and "A Slice of Life."

Gerald du Maurier has taken more Barrie parts than any other man. He, like Miss Vanbrugh, took Barrie parts for nearly twenty years. He played in "The Admirable Crichton," (Hon. Ernest Woolley); "Peter Pan," (Mr. Darling and James Hook); "Pantaloon," (Pantaloon); "What Every Woman Knows,"(John Shand); and "A Kiss for Cinderella," (The Policeman). He directed the production of "What Every Woman Knows," "A Kiss for Cinderella," and "Dear Brutus."

Other well known artists who have appeared in Barrie plays are Ellaline Terriss, Maxine Elliott, Marion Terry, Hilda Trevelyan and Winifred Fraser.

Other than Gerald du Maurier's and H. B. Irving's, no other namesappear twice among Barrie's actors in London, excepting Mr. George Shelton who played Tesman in "Ibsen's Ghost" and Ben and Smee in "Peter Pan."

Chapter III.

ESTIMATES AND COMPARISONS

1. Barrie's Technique.

For three hundred years Shakespeare had been the ideal of the stage, at least in English-speaking and German countries. So far ahead of his time and so outstanding among his contemporaries was he, that Shakespeare was the Dramatist whose influence dominated the stage for this long period after his death. There had been established traditions of the drama, as immutable as the laws of the Medes and the Persians. Romance was enthroned. Then, towards the end of the nineteenth century came Ibsen with his challenge to these opinions and customs. As early as 1862 he had partly broken from the Romantic Drama and by 1891, the year in which Barrie seriously turned to the writing of plays, he had written many of his satirical works. This break with the past created a furore among critics. They were divided into two camps, Ibsenites and Romanticists. The latter held that, "To conceive of the Ibsen Drama gaining an extensive or permanent foothold on the stage is hardly possible. Play going would then cease to be an amusement and become a penance, and the function of the dramatist in society would be similar to that of the skeleton at the Egyptian feast."(1) Contrary to

(1) London Times, See "J. M. Barrie and The Theatre," by H. M. Walbrook.

this opinion, the social drama has gained a permanent hold on the theatrical world, and along with it we still have our Shakespeare and our Romance.

Starting on a dramatic career in the midst of such a division of opinion, it is little wonder that Barrie's reception was extremely varied. J. B. Priestly says, "Critics go to extremes on J. M. Barrie," and again, "He pleases some and infuriates others."(1) A. E. Malone also says "Sir J. M. Barrie is a dramatist who is beloved by the play-goer and scorned by the critic."(2)

Though his first success was an Ibsen burlesque, the Ibsenites have tried to claim him for their own. There are those who find him the most cynical of all modern dramatists, and hold the opinion that the satire in "Peter Pan" is too strong to be noticed by any except children.(3) On the other hand, we have the opinion, with which, generally speaking, we are inclined to agree, that "He is too fine an artist to thrust philosophies of life on us."(4) Ibsenite or not, Barrie must have welcomed the new freedom in technique sought by Ibsen.

It is a far cry from the Greek drama to that of Barrie. How our author would have succeeded in his art if he had had to write metrical lines, giving attention to the music and the poetry, and if he had had to obey the numerous rules

(1) London Mercury, 1924, pp. 624-633.
(2) Fortnightly Review, 1927, pp. 210-221.
(3) Fortnightly Review, 1927, pp. 210-221.
(4) Times Literary Supplement, Dec. 12th, 1918.

of the dramatist of that day, can quite readily be surmised, for we fancy Barrie was not conscious of rule when he wrote his plays. Barrie is one who "sings because he must," and in more ways than this he reminds us of those creatures of fancy, the birds.

One must not think for a moment that Barrie has no technique. Many dramatic critics are loud in the praise of just this phase of Barrie's skill. I quote some of them to illustrate. "Two of Barrie's good qualities are masterly skill in dramatic construction, and famous whimsicality."(1) "He has the power of sketching character in few words. He manoeuvres the intrigue cleverly and steadily piles up the interest."(2) "Of dramatic technique, as technique, Barrie has no knowledge, yet as a writer he has a perfect method for the theatre. Struck by an abstract idea, he proceeds to generalize it into concrete."(3) "Barrie is the most successful dramatist writing in English because he combines a complete, easy, almost scornful command of practical stage technique with that magic of his own personality and with almost unrivalled gifts of sympathetic human observation."(4)

Then if Barrie did not follow all the rules of traditional drama, he did, perhaps almost unconsciously, follow the general laws of dramatic construction. Let us try to see

(1) Times Literary Supplement, Dec. 12th, 1918.
(2) "Barrie's Secret and the Key," by Raymond Recouley, World Wide, Jan. 13th, 1923.
(3) "The Charm that is Barrie," by J. D. Williams, Century, Oct. 1914.
(4) "A Dramatist and Dreamer," by W. P. Eaton, Bookman, No. 48.

what Barrie actually did or did not do in his composition of plays.

In the first case, let us consider his ideas. No one of his ideas can be said to be historical, except "Richard Savage," a very minor play, and except that there were real characters from history in the play it can hardly be called historical. Love stories, desert islands, ghost stories, fairy stories, domestic situations, and you have pretty well covered the range of Barrie's central ideas. These are different from the conventional drama of old whose ideas were great historical struggles, tragedies or soul conflicts. The following are opinions in this connection. "All he needs is a fairy story with one of the elementary plots."(1) "No contemporary dramatist has ever attempted such themes or plots. He follows his own intuitions. He belongs to no school."(2)

But once he has chosen his idea, Barrie transforms it, taking what he wants of the idea, leaving what he does not need, and proceeding to create that which finds a response in the hearts of the world. The creative genius of Barrie in this respect is recognized. Clayton Hamilton says, "Barrie is always a creative artist."(3)

The dramatic always stirs up soul emotions. Let us briefly measure Barrie's dramas in this connection. What emotions stand uppermost in our thought as we think of Barrie?

(1) "A Dramatist and Dreamer," by W. P. Eaton, Bookman, No. 49, pp. 765-8.
(2) By "Ivanhoe," Winnipeg Tribune, June 4th, 1913.
(3) The Bookman, Vol. 44, pp. 628-32.

He has not even attempted to depict any great passion. We think first of pathos and then of humor and we hesitate before we say love. It goes without saying that Barrie's dramatic power lies largely in his pathos. Braybrooke says, "For it is in the melancholy wistfulness that we come upon the essence of Barrie."(1) I quote from "Quality Street" a pathetic passage, the speech of Miss Susan , who had a lover once but expects to live alone the rest of her life. She presents her wedding dress with:-

"Phoebe, I have a wedding gift for you. It has been ready for a long time. I began it when you were not ten years old, and I was a young woman. I meant it for myself Phoebe. I had hoped that he--his name was William--but I think I must have been too unattractive, my love. You will wear it, my love, won't you? And the tears it was sewn with long ago will all turn into smiles on my Phoebe's wedding day."

This may not be literature, but it is dramatic art. One could multiply indefinitely these examples of the author's skill in pathos, but we shall let this one example suffice and turn to the second point under consideration.

If Barrie can harrow our very souls with wistful pathos, he can as readily relieve the situation with shafts of wit. "All humanity oscillates between laughter and tears. He (Barrie) has learned to use his tap judiciously and the alternations between wet and dry are dexterously contrived," is the way one critic has crudely put it.(2) Barrie is a master when tension is to be relieved. His quaint humor, his whimsicality

(1) "A Study in Fairies and Mortals," by Patrick Braybrooke.

(2) "Conservatism of J. M. Barrie," by Andrew E. Malone, Fortnightly Review, Feb. 1927. P. 210-221.

ever stands by to supply naturally, too, the restoring touch to the soul. This happy alternation of the pathetic and the humorous is shown in the following extract from "A Kiss for Cinderella." It is by no means the best example in his plays;--there are many like it. The Policeman is investigating his suspicions about Cinderella, of whom he has heard strange things. He has had the surprise of finding that the four boxes nailed on the wall contain children, an orphan English child, a "French" and a"Belgy." They come to the fourth box.

Policeman: "I suppose that other box is empty. (Cinderella's mouth closes.) Is that box empty?"
Cinderella: "It's not exactly empty."
Policeman: "What's inside?"
Cinderella: "She's the littlest (the children exchange glances and she is severe) Couchy. (they disappear)."
Policeman: "An ally?"
Cinderella: "She's--she's--Swiss."
Policeman: (lowering)"Now then!"
Cinderella: "She's not exactly Swiss. You can guess now what she is."
Policeman, (grave): "This puts me in a very difficult position."
Cinderella (beginning to cry): "Nobody would take her. I'm a patriot I am. But there she was--left over--and her so terrible little--I couldn't help taking her."
Policeman: "I dunno (quite unfairly. If her folks had been in your place and you in hers, they would have shown neither mercy or pity for you."
Cinderella: (stoutly)"That makes no difference."
Policeman: (Was this the great moment?) "I think there's something uncommon about you."
Cinderella (pleased): "About me?"
Policeman: "I suppose she's sleeping."
Cinderella: "Not her."
Policeman: "What's she doing?"
Cinderella: "She's strafing."
Policeman: "Who's she strafing?"
Cinderella: "Very likely you. She misses nobody. You see I've put some barb-wire round her box."(1)

(1) "A Kiss for Cinderella," Act II.

When it comes to depicting of love Barrie has never been able to penetrate this passion. His love affairs are quite namby-pamby. In "What Every Woman Knows" the affair was a business proposition to the end. On "Quality Street," it was a very ordinary thing. In "The Admirable Crichton," "The Gov." makes an ordinary mating offer to Lady Mary. Only in "The Little Minister" and"Mary Rose" does he reach through to the passion itself. Babbie and the Little Minister leave us the impression that it would have been a serious matter for either to have lived without the other. There is one scene in "Mary Rose" which is a charming love scene, that of Simon and Mary Rose at the mysterious island. We feel that Barrie was very near the great passion there.

Indeed Barrie does not take us far into the realms of any of the great passions. There is no jealousy, envy, malice, hatred, or revenge in any of his plays. Rarely does he approach tragedy--only in the plays, "Old Friends" and "The Will" does the tragic element enter to any extent.

He shows a great love for the mysterious--we admit he makes a farce of it in "Little Mary" and in "Shall We join the Ladies," but in "Mary Rose" the whole play is based on Spiritualism and the mystic. In "The New Word," too, he enters the spirit world. As we move on to "Dear Brutus" we again approach realms where our author is right at home--Fairyland. This play is considered one of his best and the visit of the people of the play to the wood on Fairies' night is the idea on which he

works. But if Barrie is immortal it is because he wrote "Peter Pan," which is pure fancy. In the 'Never-Never-Land' Barrie is himself, and so much so that he is able to take his audience with him.

Barrie uses pantomine very effectively. The dramatic effect, from the device is very evident.in many of his plays. It is particularly good in "Peter Pan." In "What Every Woman Knows" the audience is overcome with laughter at the opening of the play for seven minutes with nothing but pantomine. "Pantaloon" and "A Kiss for Cinderella" have very effective pantomine also.

If one were to confine himself to serious drama in this discussion, it would be necessary to limit one's self to "The Admirable Crichton" which is about the only play in which the writer seems to keep himself in a fairly serious frame of mind throughout. "Dear Brutus" may approach serious drama, but the play is rather improbable. "The Will" is one of his shorter pieces, and in these Barrie did not have the opportunity of developing his theme fully.

The structure of "The Admirable Crichton" is good. The action is unified, the whole of the circumstances of the play are well presented near the beginning, the play is probable, the theme of the play is important, the chief hero is always in strong contrast and the play moves on to an inevitable conclusion.

As a character study, Barrie has done nothing like

it in excellence. Well did he name the play "The Admirable Crichton," for Crichton is the central figure, the Protagonist, throughout. Crichton's character is revealed very subtly too. Never do Barrie's characters obtrude themselves. They are much like their creator.

One could hardly imagine a more effective climax than that in "The Admirable Crichton." The action has steadily progressed to the point where Crichton is at the summit of power in his little island world. He has the woman he desired, and happiness is complete, when the loud boom of the ship's gun wrecks the whole structure. From this point on Crichton is still the hero, but it is made apparent to the reador or the audience that his position is impossible. So the action falls away to the end where the hero succumbs to his defeat, and leaves the Loam household.

Barrie has, in this play, taken advantage of the field offered by the modern life, for drama. One of the great questions of this day is the conflict between classes. If he has shown anything, the writer in this play has shown the artificiality of class distinction.

I have tried briefly to prove that in this play at least, Barrie showed remarkable skill in dramatic structure. His artistry in this, together with the delineation of the character of Crichton, the power of pathos, and gentle humor with which he touches his characters, makes this play generally accepted as Barrie's best.

2. Barrie and the Elizabethans.

When Elizabethans are mentioned one thinks of Shakespeare, and one always associates Shakespeare with the immortals in Literature. Naturally, then, you ask when you see the title of this, if Barrie is among the immortals. We hardly claim that for him. We only compare and contrast his drama with those written three hundred years ago.

Barrie does not stand head and shoulders above his contemporaries as did Shakespeare among Johnson, Marlowe, Fletcher, and others. For various reasons it is hardly probably that Barrie will be the representative of the early twentieth century dramatists. These reasons will be given fuller explanation further on in this chapter. On the other hand his plays have some qualities which give him supremacy among his contemporaries, and, by those who know him, Barrie will be placed very high, if not first, among the play-writers of his day.

With the standards of to-day kept in view, Barrie's plays compare very favorably with those of Elizabethan times. The moral standards are much higher. The plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, in many instances, had a coarseness in word and thought that would not be tolerated on the stage of to-day. Many of Shakespeare's plays have disappeared from the

stage largely because the subjects they dealt with were not fit for the modern stage. The best plays of Shakespeare have had unsavory parts deleted when they were prepared for school and college use. Johnson's "Volpone" would not be permitted on the modern stage, nor would Marlowe's "Jew of Malta." Barrie's plays are fine and clean--as pure as the mind of a child. They have been as popular as plays of contemporaries which deal with sex problems, crimes and like social questions. In time these will cease to be of interest, but Barrie's can never cease to be acceptable to all, and appealing to those who love to wander into the realms of fancy.

Another difference that strikes one in contrasting the plays of our dramatist with those of the early seventeenth century is the absence of classical allusion. One does not read far in Shakespeare to find that he was familiar with the Greek and Latin classics. Marlowe too is rich in reference to the heroes of Rome and Greece as well as to the myths of these countries. Such references are few in Barrie's plays. It was not that he had not the store of classical myths to draw from, but that he was never striving for poetical effect. He was not writing literature, but drama.

Shakespeare is immortal, not because of his acted dramas, but because of his literature--the universality of which makes his work as real to-day as it was three hundred years ago. His characters are types of the ideal which live

forever. He gets down through the changing surface of things to the real, the lasting elements that are just as much ours as theirs of the seventeenth century. His stately English, apt and poetical has brought down to us, through the centuries, the eternal ideals as no other writings have done. We can claim no such immortality for Barrie for he has not penetrated far beneath the surface of life. He has pictured to us everyday folk in every day life, searching out here and there little quiddities which we recognize as being parts of ourselves and of our neighbors,--unnoticed till he pointed them out. His field lies not in World struggles, National prejudices or soul conflicts. He does not deal with Caesars and Macbeths, or with Knights and Kings. He does treat of the every day life of Johns and Maggies, of the servants' hall, and upstairs, of heartaches on Quality Street, and of romance in Thrums.

Once upon a time on the stage a tree suggested a wood, a soldier or two stood for an army, the inner stage represented a cave just as readily as aprison. The audience accepted these devices of the Shakespearean stage as the nucleus for their imaginations and supplied the rest themselves. Great spectacles of which the Elizabethans were very fond, could be presented in this way. To-day the imagination is cloyed. Great spectacles are presented through the medium of the motion picture. The imagination is of little use in the motion pictures.

Everything is set before the eye. In the theatre too, scenery has become more important. The modern dramatist has limitations imposed upon him which did not disturb the Elizabethan. The latter had his five acts, each with perhaps four or five scenes and in addition there was a prologue and an epilogue. The modern stage producer would not be able to provide the scenery much less to change it as often as was required of old. The scenes were easily managed when all that had to be done to represent a forest scene was to put out a small tree. The Elizabethan had the Grecian drama as his model. The modern dramatist has had to suit his play to the limitations of the modern stage. Barrie's long plays have three or four acts which are not divided into scenes. His characters are few, and he had kept within due bounds with respect to time and space.

In thinking of poetry we are too prone to think of verse and rhyme. That Ben Jonson wrote in iambic pentameter does not indicate necessarily that his plays are poetical. In fact they rarely are poetical. Shakespeare has enduring fame not because of the fact that he wrote in verse, but that his writing was elevated; because it was inspired. His thoughts were eternal verities. He clothed them in beautiful language. Barrie occasionally reached the poetic in his plays. One cannot resist the feeling that in Act II. of "Dear Brutus" Barrie is picturing the beautiful, and at times the language

reaches a degree of beauty, but only in patches. Barrie needs the assistance of an artist to convey the real beauty of his plays to his audience--for after all his plays were written primarily for the stage, and not as literature.

Barrie and Shakespeare have been mentioned together at least once. Speaking of "Dear Brutus" Raymond Recouley says of the second act (referred to in the previous paragraph), "The memory of Shakespeare rises to the mind in the second act. Barrie knows to perfection what he can ask from his audience."(1)

There are two or three points in which Barrie aspires to the giants of old. One of these is dramatic structure. "Masterly Structure" is almost a byword of Barrie critics. It was a natural gift with him. Reference has been made specifically to this power in part one of this chapter, where an attempt was made to prove that in at least one play Barrie proved himself a master in dramatic technique. Shakespeare, of the Elizabethans, set an example in this that has not been excelled. In subtle character delineation no dramatist comes near him. In being true to life, in keeping his hearers in touch with the story, in sequence of events, in unity of purpose, Barrie resembles the great Elizabethan.

Barrie is much gentler with his touch in pathos than Shakespeare. The latter sears the very soul when he ventures into this realm, and the wound is never healed no matter how the sense of justice may be satisfied. The field of tragedy

(1) "Barrie's Secret and the Key," World Wide, Jan. 13th, 1923.

was not one in which Barrie ventured far. Brutality, which mars such plays as "The Jew of Malta," by Marlowe, is entirely absent in the plays under discussion. Barrie never hurts his people, but he does show up their foibles in kindly fashion. The Elizabethans went rough shod over their victims. Barrie holds up his characters to kindly ridicule perhaps, but he does not forthwith proceed to annihilate them for their weaknesses. The contrasts between Barrie and the Elizabethan in pathos and humor are more a matter of intensity than kind. The Elizabethans depicted not only deeper passions but a mingling of them. The forces brought into play might be revenge, love, ambition, despair, superstition. Barrie's range of passions is limited when compared with those shown, for instance, in "Hamlet."

In the realm of fancy Barrie vies with any of the Elizabethans. His ventures into fairyland are more realistic than Shakespeare's, that is, the connections between real life and fairyland are better. Shakespeare had a background of fairy lore upon which to work with well formulated legends which were accepted by the people of the day. Barrie built up the whole story of his "Peter Pan" without precedent either as to character or fairy tale. Herein lies Barrie's greatest claim to immortality, for "Peter Pan" has become world famous, and in "Peter Pan," too, Barrie has created a literary character who will live side by side not only with Titania and Puch but with Shylock, David Copperfield, Pippa, and the host from the realms of fancy who have become very real friends of humanity.

3. Barrie and His Contemporaries.

There is a story which is told by J. D. Williams that an American, visiting J. M. Barrie at Adelphi Terrace, said that he had never seen George Bernard Shaw. Barrie proceeded to throw some crusts at a window across the court and soon a head appeared in the window. The American saw Shaw.(1) Just beneath Barrie's apartments lived John Galsworthy. These three men associated thus intimately in their apartments, are also closely associated in the dramatic world. The three names, Shaw, Barrie, and Galsworthy stand for the best in English drama during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Each of them stands for the modern movement in drama. In varying degrees and with varying methods each of them has had something to teach. Each has published his plays.

With much in common, these three have varied greatly. It is generally agreed that Shaw is the leading dramatist of the day, though Barrie has supporters who claim the same distinction for him. The arguments for Barrie's supremacy are very plausible, too, but most opinions concede first place to Shaw. Galsworthy too, has claims which place him near the others in fame.

Shaw's rugged independent attitude towards the world is partly due to the conditions of his childhood and youth.

(1) "The Charm that is Barrie," Century, Vol. 88, P. 801-4.

He was thrown on his own resources at a very early age. His home conditions were not the happiest. He faced many hardships and a long struggle before he won success. These circumstances together with a bold, fearless nature have brought Shaw to the position he holds in the world esteem. John Galsworthy was born into greater comforts than was either Shaw or Barrie. His education was obtained without sacrifice on his own part. He was able to leave the profession (law) for which he was trained, and after some time spent in travel, followed his inclination towards writing. Barrie first saw light in a Scottish home, humble compared to our standards, yet a typical Scottish home in a typical Scottish community. He had the love of a wonderful mother whose influence was a great force in his life. He had no great struggles. His tenure on Grub Street was of short duration. These three, born in 1856, 1867, and 1860, respectively, have reached prominence along different paths.

All of them were novelists before dramatists. Shaw, however, is the only one of the three to have participated in public affairs. Early in his career he obtained publicity on the platform as a Socialist advocate. So persistent has he been in making revolutionary speeches that he has gained the reputation of seeking publicity and notoriety--for he has been a revolutionist in several ways,--in religion, in marriage relations, in property rights. St. John G. Ervine says that the truth is he is a shy and nervous man, humble-minded, sincere,

courageous, non-plussed at meeting strangers, but gracious when he recovers.(1) The same writer says of Galsworthy, "The most sensitive figure in the ranks of modern men of letters," he goes on to say that this sensitiveness is of a peculiar nature--totally impersonal. Of Barrie H. M. Walbrook says, "The newspaper 'interviewer' has long regarded him as morbidly elusive, nor has the most determined roar of "Author!" yet succeeded in drawing him into the glare of the footlights. He has probably never made a public speech which has not been "the speech of the evening," yet the number of his efforts in this direction could very likely be counted on the fingers of one hand. Of self-advertisement, much less self-glorification, he has never shown the smallest sign."(2)

Each has published his plays in very readable and attractive form. In this Barrie has struck a happy medium between Shaw and Galsworthy. Shaw published his plays with long introductions telling the reader what he was supposed to learn. The plays were given with the characters acting as Shaw's puppets full of Shaw's morals. Finally he concludes with long articles telling the readers what they should have learned. Barrie publishes his plays with the most intimate and delicious comment on his characters revealing all that could be given without the interpretation of actors. Galsworthy's published plays are somewhat less comp lete in his

(1) "Some Impressions of My Elders," (MacMillan).
(2) "J. M. Barrie and the Theatre."

character delineation but very complete in stage directions.

Shaw's plays were published in most instances before they were produced on the stage. More than once have his plays run foul of the censor, and been barred from the stage. It took Shaw, too, a long time to win his place on the stage and since he had chosen the plays as the means of making public his doctrine they were published as described above, greatly amplified, to get his ideas before the world. On the other hand Barrie's plays were proven successes on the stage before they were published--indeed he delayed a long time before he ventured publication of any of them. Galsworthy followed the example of Barrie in the publication of his plays.

A hint as to the purposes and methods of the three men has already been given. Professor A. W. Crawford has recently said that Shaw was primarily a propagandist, and that his plays were part of his campaign.(1) Shaw sends his men and women out on the stage to say what he tells them to say, and what he tells them to say is what he wants to teach. Barrie does not consciously use his plays to teach or to preach. His characters are a result, as he puts it himself of "a devouring desire to try on other other folk's feelings, as if they were so many clothes.(2) These words were spoken of "Sentimental Tommy," but Tommy is another name for J. M. Barrie. Barrie gives free rein to his fancy and asks nothing more than that

(1) University Radio Talk, March 5th, 1928.
(2) "Sentimental Tommy," P. 372.

the hearers or readers do the same. A quotation from J. W. Cunliffe will illustrate the purpose of Galsworthy. Cunliffe quotes Galsworthy, "A drama must be shaped so as to have a spire of meaning. Every grouping of life and character has its inherent moral; and the business of the dramatist is so to pose the group as to bring that moral poignantly to the light of day," and then goes on to say that the method of Galsworthy in his dramas "requires detachment, sympathy, the far view and it depends on the interpretation of character." The method referred to by Cunliffe is the "setting before the public no cut-and-dried codes, but the phenomena of life and character, selected and combined, but not distorted by the dramatist's outlook, set down without fear, favor, or prejudice, leaving the public to draw such poor moral as nature may afford."(1) Cunliffe also refers to Shaw's method as "setting forth his own views the more effectively if they are the opposite of what the public wishes to have placed before it, presenting them (this is not Shaw's method) so that the audience may swallow them like powder in a spoonful of jam." Since it is difficult to find anything that Barrie definitely tried to teach, the method is unimportant. "The public will be content to accept his humor and pathos without enquiring too closely as to his ultimate purpose. In the average theatre-goer's heart, Barrie's place is secure."(2)

(1) "English Literature during the Last Half Century," Macmillan.

(2) "Modern English Playwrights," by J. W. Cunliffe, Macmillan.

Barrie's reticence as to his teaching was broken once he said, "Dear Brutus is an allegory about a gentleman called John Bull who years and years ago missed the opportunity of his life." "The "Mr. Dearth" of the play is really John Bull. The play shows how on the fields of France father and daughter get a second opportunity. Are now the two to make it up permanently, or forever drift apart? A second chance comes to few. As for a third chance, who ever heard of it? It 's now or never. If it is now, something will have to be accomplished greater than war itself. Future mankinds are listening for our decision. If we cannot rise to this second chance ours will be the blame, but the sorrow will be posterity's."(1) Critics have read meaning into most of his plays, but whether Barrie intended it or not is another question. No doubt he shows in "The Admirable Crichton." that social barriers are thin. Barrie's teaching is mostly surmise. He is not a propagandist. The only consistent idea that seems to exist throughout his plays is that "what is to be, will be."

Galsworthy is a propagandist to a larger degree than Barrie. His legal training taught him that laws were not always just. His acquaintance with prisons showed him that improvements in conditions there, were necessary in the interest of humanity. He also believed that the divorce laws

(1) Letter to E. W. Gillette, Feb. 1919.
(2) "Modern English Playwrights."

were very unfair to the poor. Cunliffe says "No one realizes more profoundly the inadequacy of the modern social organization. He has a sympathetic understanding for the under dog. "Justice" affected some mitigation of the English penal system."(1) Galsworthy's plays were one of the means by which he tried to show up and correct social injustice.

Shaw is an ardent propagandist throughout and he used the stage as one of the best means of reaching the popular ear. In his plays he is against the conventions of society. Though an ardent socialist all his life, he has become more reasonable in his views in later years. He attacks conventionality in all its forms. "In Arms and the Man" he ridicules the "heroic" soldier. In "Candida" he aims his shafts "against current conceptions of what is right, moral and fitting."(2) He opposes conventional religion. He attacks marriage customs and proposes something to replace them. He upsets Romance and puts Realism on the pedestal.

With this one can understand why Shaw is better known than either Barrie or Galsworthy, but though better known he is not better loved. Coupled with his keen insight into social affairs Shaw has a sharp wit. Galsworthy lacks the sense of humor. Barrie's humor is of the kind that harms none. Pathos is a common power with both Barrie and Galsworthy but Barrie

(1) "Modern English Playwrights."
(2) "British and American Drama," by Barret Clark, Holt & Co.

uses it more effectively.

Finally we come to the point in which Barrie excels, wherein he stands head and shoulders above his contemporaries. We love him for his deep pathos and gentle humor, we love him because he entertains us and does not lecture, but most of all we love him for his charming fancy which is of such a quality that it can be described only as Barrie's fancy for as he says, "My humble branch of literature may be described as playing hide and seek with the angels. My puppets seem more real to me than myself."(1)

(1) "Courage," Page 7.

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