INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI

A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600

Huxley's 'Lost' Play, *Now More Than Ever.*

A Scholarly Edition

by

James Penman Sexton
B.A., University of British Columbia, 1969
M.A., University of British Columbia, 1971
D.A. University of Oregon, 1980

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in the Department of English

We accept this dissertation as conforming
to the required standard

Dr. A. Jenkins, Supervisor (Department of English)

Dr. D. Thatcher, Departmental Member (Department of English)

Dr. T. Williams, Departmental Member (Department of English)

Dr. J. Young, Outside Member (Department of Philosophy)

Dr. R. Maud, External Examiner (Department of English, Simon Fraser University)

© James Penman Sexton, 1996
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by
photocopy or other means, without the permission of the author.

Supervisor: Dr. Anthony Jenkins

ABSTRACT

Aldous Huxley completed a three-act play called *Now More Than Ever* in the autumn of 1932. After trying unsuccessfully for over two years to persuade theatre producers in both New York and London to stage the play, he abandoned the project, turning his full attention to other work in progress, particularly the novel *Eyeless in Gaza*, which he completed in 1936.

The core of this dissertation (Chapter Three) is an annotated edition of Huxley's "lost" play, *Now More Than Ever*, based on the only extant script, housed in the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin, and indexed as "An Unpublished Play, t ms, corrected, 92 pp."

The thesis argues that the play is an important document in Huxley's intellectual and spiritual development and should not merely be regarded as a minor and fruitless theatrical adventure. In fact, it is best understood as part of the author's ongoing discussion of spiritual and social concerns to which he consistently returned in his fiction and journalism of the inter-war period. Written in 1932, midway between two major novels, *Brave New World* (1932) and *Eyeless in Gaza* (1932-36), and resonating with ideas put forward in his volumes of linked philosophical essays—*Do What You Will* (1929) and *Music at Night* (1931)— *Now More Than Ever* should be recognized as an important part of an

ongoing discussion with himself, which grew less and less provisional until his arrival at the definitive outlook on life that amounts to a spiritual conversion in 1936. Like most of Huxley's fiction and drama, *Now More Than Ever* is partly autobiographical. Some of the male characters embody, at least in part, Huxley's earlier positions before his spiritual conversion, specifically the sceptical/aesthete and the extremist anti-democrat. *Now More Than Ever* takes the reader to the threshold of that conversion.

Chapter One briefly summarizes the play then discusses the social, political and economic background, with particular emphasis upon the historical events surrounding the economic crisis which forms the backdrop for Huxley's play.

Chapter Two discusses Huxley as drama critic as well as apprentice and journeyman playwright. Although this aspect of Huxley's career has received scant attention from the critics, he left behind a significant body of dramatic work—three full-length plays, *The World of Light* (1931), *Now More Than Ever* (1932), and *The Gioconda Smile* (1948)—and co-authored stage adaptations of his novels, *The Genius and the Goddess* (1957) and *After Many a Summer* (1958). In addition, he published over eighty drama reviews and several short dramatic pieces.

After discussing Huxley's monetary and artistic goals as a dramatist, the chapter describes his early, apprentice plays and his dramatic precepts as revealed

in the reviews. Next, I examine his full-length plays within a context of the post-Ibsen "drama of ideas" in Britain, pointing to technical and thematic analogues in the dramatic works of Shaw, Munro, and Galsworthy, especially as these authors treat what Galsworthy termed "the parlous state of England". The chapter concludes with an analysis of *The World of Light* and *The Gioconda Smile.*

Chapter Three introduces the play text with an analysis and evaluation of the themes and symbolic structure of *Now More Than Ever.*

The appendices present several of Huxley's Hearst essays which illumine various aspects of *Now More Than Ever* followed by a list of all significant deletions that Huxley made to his typescript.

Examiners:

Dr. A. Jenkins, Supervisor (Department of English)

Dr. D. Thatcher, Departmental Member (Department of English)

Dr. T. Williams, Departmental Member (Department of English)

Dr. J. Young, Outside Member (Department of Philosophy)

Dr. R. Maud, External Examiner (Department of English, Simon Fraser University)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ii

TABLE OF CONTENTS v

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS vii

INTRODUCTION 1

I. THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND 10

1. The Kreuger Affair 11
2. Extreme Solutions 18
3. Rationalization or Fascism? Britain's "Supremely Uncomfortable Moment of History" 26
4. Capitalism as Seen from the Left 44
5. *Now More Than Ever* and the Novels: 1928-1936 62

II. THE THEATRICAL BACKGROUND 74

1. Huxley's Theatrical Apprenticeship 75
2. Drama Reviews 81
3. The Shavian Pedigree of Huxley's Discussion Plays 88
4. The Political Plays of Munro and Galsworthy 103
5. *The World of Light* and *The Gioconda Smile* 115

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont'd)

III. *NOW MORE THAN EVER* 137

1. Lidgate Agonistes 139
2. Idolatries 143
3. *Now More Than Ever*: The Play Text 153

BIBLIOGRAPHY 252

APPENDIX A Selected Essays, 1931-34 268

1. "Gossip" 269
2. "Hyde Park on Sunday" 271
3. "Forewarned is not Forearmed" 275
4. "Hocus Pocus" 279
5. "Compulsory Suicide" 283
6. "Swindlers and Swindlees" 287
7. "Idolatry" 290
8. "Christ and the Present Crisis" 293

APPENDIX B List of Significant Deletions to Typescript of *Now More Than Ever* 298

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to Laura and Matthew Huxley for permission to quote from copyright materials belonging to the Aldous Leonard Huxley Literary Estate. I also wish to thank Cathy Henderson and the staff at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin for their assistance in allowing access to the Huxley archive and for unbinding the typed manuscript of *Now More Than Ever* so as to facilitate the incorporation of Huxley's marginal emendations. In addition, I wish to thank the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada for a doctoral research grant. For his willingness to use my edition of *Now More Than Ever* as the acting text for the world premiere of the play in Münster, and for choosing "Now More than Ever" as the motto for the centenary symposium on Aldous Huxley in 1994, I wish to thank Prof. Bernfried Nugel of the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität. Finally, I wish to thank my supervisor, Dr. Anthony Jenkins, for his critical suggestions and unflagging support, and committee members, Drs. David Thatcher, Trevor Williams, and James Young, for their aid in the preparation of this thesis.

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation argues that *Now More Than Ever* is an important document in Huxley's intellectual and spiritual development and should not merely be regarded as a minor and fruitless theatrical adventure. In fact, it is best understood as part of the author's ongoing discussion of spiritual and social concerns to which he consistently returned in his fiction and journalism of the inter-war period. Written in 1932, midway between two major novels, *Brave New World* (1932) and *Eyeless in Gaza* (1932-36), and resonating with ideas put forward in his volumes of linked philosophical essays—*Do What You Will* (1929) and *Music at Night* (1931)—*Now More Than Ever* should be recognized as an important part of that discussion with himself which grew less and less provisional until his arrival at the definitive outlook on life amounting to a spiritual conversion in 1936. Some of the characters in this partly autobiographical play embody Huxley's earlier positions before his spiritual conversion, specifically those of the sceptical/aesthete and the extremist anti-democrat.

Although the play was completed in the fall of 1932, Huxley's numerous efforts to have it produced were unsuccessful. The world premiere did not take place until 27 June 1994 at Münster, Germany, the first of six performances

staged by the amateur English Drama Group during the Aldous Huxley Centenary Symposium organized by members of the English Department, University of Münster.

The rationale for offering a scholarly edition of *Now More Than Ever* lies mainly in the fact that this interesting and thematically significant play clearly demands a place in the Huxley corpus. It is not mentioned in either Hanson R. Duval's *Aldous Huxley: A Bibliography* (New York: Arrow Editions, 1939), nor in Claire John Eschelbach and Joyce Lee Shober's standard *Aldous Huxley: A Bibliography 1916-1959* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961).

In his article, "Aldous Huxley at Texas: A Checklist of Manuscripts" (*Library Chronicle of the University of Texas*, 9, 1978), Pierre Vitoux first called attention to the existence of the play that had hitherto been considered "lost" by Huxley's biographer, Sybil Bedford, (*Aldous Huxley: A Biography*, London: Chatto, 1973, 257) and by Grover Smith, editor of Huxley's *Letters* (New York: Harper, 1969, 14). Vitoux described the "most important" item in the Texas collection, as "the complete typescript of Huxley's play *Now More Than Ever*" (41). In addition to Pierre Vitoux, Bernfried Nugel, in his programme notes to the Münster production of *Now More Than Ever*, referred to his perusal of the

typescript during a visit to Austin, finding the play "well worth a stage test" (4) but did not reveal this opinion in print until the week of the world premiere. Then, too, David Bradshaw dealt with *Now More Than Ever* in the fifth chapter of his D.Phil. thesis *Aldous Huxley's Ideological Development 1919-1936*, Worcester College, Oxford (1987), but this work has remained unpublished. Given the limited circulation of Vitoux's article and the Oxford dissertation, and despite the citation of Vitoux's checklist in Eben Bass, *Aldous Huxley: An Annotated Bibliography*, (New York: Garland, 1981, 196), it is not surprising that my play text used in Münster and my introductory essay delivered at the conference made the existence of the play known to the general scholarly community.

Since there is only one extant text, there are, of course, no variant readings, except for deletions and additions within the text itself, and I have always followed the author's brief autograph revisions—mostly pruning, but occasionally expansion of passages—as a guide to his preferred rendering of the text. I have used Grover Smith's edition of *Letters of Aldous Huxley* (Harper, 1969), supplemented by the unpublished letters from Huxley's correspondence with J. Ralph Pinker, 1920-1934. These letters help to reconstruct the history of the composition of *Now More Than Ever*.

More than 230 unpublished Huxley letters to his literary agent J. Ralph Pinker are now housed in the Pinker archive at the University of Texas, Austin. Some of these letters document Huxley's vain efforts to stage *Now More Than Ever*. He wrote Pinker on 10 October 1932, announcing the play's completion, noting that he had read it to friends to quite good effect, adding that he would send it on in a few days "when I have done the typing." He added that he wanted to offer the play to Leon Lion, a producer who had "cheerfully lost money" on two of his previous theatrical ventures. Over a month later, he asked Pinker whether he had received any word from Lion about the play (19 November 1932).

In an interview published in the *Sunday Referee* on Christmas Day, 1932, Huxley told Derek Patmore that he had come to London from his home in France to expedite production of his "new play *Now More Than Ever*[,] . . . a study of the present financial and economic position of the world" (6) and, in reply to the interviewer's question about the expected production date, Huxley responded with unfounded optimism: "Well, that's not quite settled. Soon I hope."

The next reference in the correspondence is a request dated 25 May 1933 that Ralph Pinker send a copy of the play to Pinker's brother, Eric, the firm's New York representative. This optimistic letter from on board the SS *Statendam* states:

> There are several people in New York interested in [the play] and I want to make some improvements in the first acts—where several defects were pointed out to me by Miss Helburn of the Guild.

On 11 June Huxley told Pinker he was working on a revised version of the play. His last reference to Theresa Helburn, then executive-director of New York's Theatre Guild, was dated 22 June 1934, over a year after she had pointed out defects: "I am still waiting for Miss Helburn to come forward with her suggestions, but she seems to me otherwise occupied."

According to David Bradshaw, at around this time Huxley had a luncheon at the Cheshire Cheese with Rupert Doone, Robert Medley and other members of the Group Theatre. In a letter to Bradshaw dated 16 September 1984, Medley recalled, "The possibility of a play by him was of course the reason for the party, which was a very enjoyable one, but nothing came of it" (Bradshaw, Diss. 230).

Huxley's last, rather pathetic reference to the play was written on 18 December 1934:

> I met last night the man [Robert Newton] . . . who runs the Shilling Theatre at Fulham. He expressed a desire to look at *Now More Than Ever*, and I think it would be a good idea to send him a copy . . . I should like to see some sort of a performance of it, if only to be able to judge what should be done in the way of altering it—and I think he might possibly give it a show.

A year after high hopes of a possible Theatre Guild run, Huxley was willing to settle for the Shilling Theatre. Soon afterwards, he shelved the play and moved on to other projects.

Editorial Method

Only one version of *Now More Than Ever* exists, and that is the authorially corrected typescript version housed in the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin. There is no reason to disagree with David Bradshaw that the "revised version" of the play Huxley says he was working on at Sanary, in the letter to Pinker dated 11 June 1933, is "probably the typescript deposited at Austin" (Diss. 229). After Helburn's initial criticism, Huxley revised the sequence of events in Act One, scene one, but, apart from this change and the altering of one major character's Christian name, Bradshaw's summary of the authorial revision is unexceptionable: "Huxley's revisions . . . largely consisted of ineffectual tamperings with the dialogue, and did not change the play in any substantive way." That the Texas typescript is the version Huxley corrected after several defects were "pointed out" by Miss Helburn in the letter of 25 May 1933, is buttressed by a careful examination of Huxley's "corrected manuscript".

Close scrutiny reveals that all ninety-two pages were amateurishly typed on Excelsior paper with a watermark, "F. Guermand & Co., Voiron." Since Voiron is a town in the Isère *département* of France, not far from Huxley's Sanary home, it is likely that Huxley was, in fact, the typist. However, twenty-five of these pages were typed on a different machine—doubtless in response to Helburn's suggestions. The sixty-seven pages of the draft seen by Helburn are all single-spaced within speeches. Moreover, the lower-case "w" key was stiff, resulting in an irregularly-raised character. On the other hand, the twenty-five second draft pages are consistently double-spaced within speeches and show no evidence of that raised lower-case "w" key. Huxley apparently put these pages in sequence to produce a 92-page script but then re-revised the whole script, in pen. His title page reflects these revisions and he used the second typewriter to label the whole script, "Corrected Typescript." Huxley's use of a second typewriter is perhaps accounted for by the fact that he had apparently left it behind in New York before embarking on a cruise to Central America, since in a letter of 24 May 1933 he thanks Eugene Saxton, his New York publisher, for finding it and arranging to have it sent to London (*Letters*, 370).

The Texas manuscript is almost certainly the one Huxley referred to in his undated letter to Ralph Pinker, requesting him to have "the corrected version of

the play, *Now More Than Ever* . . . typed in quadruplicate or quintuplicate . . . and send at least two copies to your sister-in-law in New York . . . . I had a note from her two days ago, saying that the Guild people . . . were anxious to see the thing . . . ."

I therefore print, as the received text, the version which Huxley sent Pinker for typing. Since some of his revisions obscure occasional details whose omission readers might regret, and since—had the play gone into production—other revisions would undoubtedly have been made, I print the most important of the textual variations as Appendix B.

It is worth speculating that Helburn's main concern was that the only important female character, Joan, daughter of the tycoon protagonist, Arthur Lidgate, was not drawn with sufficient depth. This speculation is borne out by the fact that all three large insertions to the original script typed on the second machine (pp3-6; 21-27, and 33-43) deal with Joan's characterization: the first change places Joan on stage as the curtain rises. This insertion deftly serves two purposes: it delays the arrival of Lupton and Upavon. Originally at the opening curtain they had been revealed conversing about matters relating to the business theme—a too sudden engagement with political ideas. In the revision, Joan's importance is immediately signalled, and the amusing depiction of the way she

spurns Lupton's unwanted attentions reveals her as a spirited character capable of independence. The second major addition emphasizes Joan's growing disaffection with the milieu of the débutante (21-27); the third, in Act Two, (33-43) emphasizes her search for a creed.

I have silently capitalized the term of address, "daddy" and emended hyphenated words such as "to-day" in keeping with contemporary usage. During the process of editing this play, I have striven for "accuracy, clarity, and simplicity", the three characteristics John W. Graham stresses in his essay on editing Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* (Halpenny 77-92). I have also been mindful of Huxley's critique of certain editors which he voiced through the persona of Emberlin in an early story, "Eupompus Gave Splendour to Art":

> That is the way of commentators—the obvious points fulsomely explained and discussed, the hard passages, about which one might want to know something, passed over in the silence of sheer ignorance (*Limbo* 197).

I have tried to illuminate the hard passages and hope that judicious readers will excuse discussion in some of the footnotes of what to them may appear relatively obvious information on the grounds that sixty-four years stand between the general reader and the period depicted in Huxley's timely and topical play.

I: THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND

Thanks in large part to a refocused interest in Huxley during the 1994 centenary of his birth, several important works he wrote before World War II have recently become generally available.[1] Regarding the long-forgotten *Now More Than Ever* (1932), this development is particularly welcome. For Huxley's play can profitably be considered within a context of works he wrote as a direct response to the economic and political crisis of the inter-war period; namely *Brave New World* (1932) and several journalistic pieces such as "Abroad in England" and three other essays written for *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* in 1931, as well as several others he wrote for the Hearst newspaper chain and for *Time and Tide* during the early 1930s. Taken together, they reveal Huxley as an informed and deeply concerned commentator on social, political, and economic problems of the time.

1. The Kreuger Affair

The idea behind Huxley's play was precipitated by the suicide of Ivar Kreuger, the Swedish Match King. On 24 July 1932, in a letter to his agent J. Ralph Pinker—ironically, later jailed for swindling his clients, Huxley among them—Huxley notes, "I am working out the scenario of what may be, I think, rather a good play—with a Kreuger-like figure as the central character—linking the story up with general economic ideas, which might be timely, as everyone is bothered about these things" (*Letters*, 364n). By 15 October 1932, Huxley was able to announce in a letter, "I have just finished a play. Let's hope a few members of the theatre-going public may find it as interesting as I do" (364). The model for Arthur Lidgate, Huxley's tycoon protagonist, was Ivar Kreuger (1880-1932). Today his name is known to few except economic historians, but in an obituary which appeared in *The Economist*, 19 May 1932, his fall was likened to that of a Greek tragic hero, and no less a figure than J. M. Keynes gave a sympathetic obituary over BBC radio shortly after news of his suicide reached England. As time passed and details of Kreuger's chicanery emerged, *The Atlantic Monthly* devoted its cover story of August 1932 to a man "guilty of the grossest frauds; [one who] had forged securities on a gigantic scale and . . . swindled investors to the tune of about 750 million dollars, and possibly more"

(Barman 238). Huxley shared the world's fascination with Kreuger's fall, penning at least two articles on him, the first in *Time and Tide*, 7 May 1932. Since Huxley's contributions under the rubric "Notes on the Way" sometimes escape his bibliographers, I shall quote at length from this little-noticed article. In it, he reveals a well-informed interest in economic affairs. Lamenting the ability of "speculative bears" to destabilize currencies, he deplores the power that a small group of wealthy gamblers wields over the economic prosperity of the community:

> Under the present dispensation, people who play baccarat and roulette are fined or sent to gaol; people who gamble in the well-being of the nation are treated, so long as they succeed, as honourable citizens. And yet the first harm only themselves and their immediate dependents; the second do mischief on an incomparably larger scale. In a more reasonable world, gambling in stocks and shares would be made illegal, or rather, by the better organization of investment, physically impossible. . . . Monte Carlo is far less mischievous than Wall Street (515).

Beneath the overstatement, one notices that Huxley, like some professional commentators on economic matters, drew a similar lesson from the Kreuger scandal: the need for better and more stringent organization of stock markets, especially in the policing of securities issues. When his article turns specifically to Kreuger, Huxley sees him, not as a tragic hero, but as someone rather less sublime:

> The late Mr. Kreuger is now, quite definitely, my favourite character in fiction. After the discovery, last week, of those rubber stamps, there could be no doubt of his proper place; it was . . . among the Micawbers and Stepan Trofimovitches, the Psmiths and Vautrins and Uncle Tobies of this world. *Primus inter pares.* In admiring imitation I am thinking of having all the signatures of eminent persons in my possession photographically reproduced on rubber. Signed Maugham, or Shaw, or Galsworthy, my little articles will sell, not, as at present, like faintly tepid muffins, but like the hottest of hot cakes.

The rest of the article makes much of Kreuger's charisma—"even bankers and financiers fell in love with him at first sight. Later, when the glamour of success had enhanced his native charm, people fell in love even before first sight."

Finally, Huxley, like Keynes, chose not to pillory Kreuger as a self-interested shyster, but tended to see him as a "far-sighted idealist". He was quick to perceive that Kreuger was the most notorious embodiment of the new economics: someone who believed, like the man who gave his name to the World Controller of *Brave New World*, [Sir Alfred] Mond, that "business . . . and after business, governments, must be organized in ever larger and larger units. . . . In attempting to act on [his] enlightened convictions, to put [his] sociological ideals into practice", he was "forced into gigantic fraud." Clearly Kreuger was cut from the same cloth as Mond and would have made an ideal Wellsian "open conspirator". By some he was seen as the saviour of Europe; certainly to himself, as T. G. Barman states, he was that saviour, a man with a mission (249).

The opening scene of *Now More Than Ever* depicts the protagonist, Arthur Lidgate, a self-made tycoon, planning an elaborate scheme to rationalize the British iron and steel industry by a series of purchases and amalgamations. Besides Kreuger and Mond, Lidgate is in part based on financier Clarence Hatry (1888-1965), principal figure in the Stock Exchange scandal which rocked the City of London in 1929. In January 1930, he was found guilty of what his judge called "the most appalling fraud that ever disfigured the commercial reputation of this City" and received a prison sentence of fourteen years for fraudulently issuing forged securities for the cities of Wakefield, Newcastle, and Liverpool (Collier 301).

Lidgate relies on Sir Thomas Lupton, an unscrupulous representative of the American financier, Wertheim, to deliver needed but only vaguely-promised capital from his American contact. While stating that he has nearly persuaded the New York financier to lend Lidgate several million pounds, Lupton aims to purchase the factories Lidgate wants, intending to wait until the last moment before announcing to Lidgate that the Wertheim loan is not possible. He does not foresee Lidgate's stubborn yet foolhardy decision to press ahead with the purchase, even without the money.

Besides Lupton's pretended support, Lidgate's scheme receives actual moral support from a Beaverbrook-like newspaper magnate, Lord Upavon, who, like his real-life original, has used his newspapers to campaign for "administrative rationalization", and who currently propagandizes for Empire Protectionism.[2] Moreover, Lord Upavon is the employer of Ted, Duke of Monmouth, an impecunious gossip columnist, who, like Lupton, is trying unsuccessfully to woo Lidgate's daughter, Joan. He is based on Evelyn Waugh's friend "Pauper", Patrick Balfour, Lord Kinross, whose "Mr. Gossip" column appeared regularly in the *Daily Sketch* and whom Waugh depicted in Vile Bodies (1930), a novel Huxley knew and admired.

Lidgate's bid to save England by modernizing its industrial infrastructure melds with the play's subplot when Philip Barmby, a forerunner of Jeremy Pordage in *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan* (1939), introduces Lidgate's daughter, Joan, to Walter Clough, a former Oxford classmate of Barmby's, now turned Communist activist. His sense of humanistic purpose galvanizes Joan into a similarly high-minded pursuit of economic justice. She rejects quite readily the decadent frivolities of Monmouth and the socialite, Peggy Endicott, but she must also reject much of what her father stands for—a rift which is signalled when she returns his gift of a pearl necklace. Lidgate blames Clough for Joan's apparent

disaffection. But his mind is preoccupied with Lupton's betrayal, which he only discovers after it is too late to find alternative backers to support his buyout offers, so he is forced to issue false securities in order to raise the necessary capital. He does so partly to prevent Lupton from exploiting a situation that would result in national economic chaos. When Lidgate fails to raise the capital to cover the falsified securities, he realizes that he has two alternatives, prison or suicide, and he chooses the latter.

In the meantime, Joan's romance with Clough founders because of the latter's unwillingness to bring Joan down to his own economic level, fearing that he would eventually have to accept parental handouts and a capitulation to a life of relative ease. Joan learns of her father's suicide while Clough is at a political conference in Spain, and the last scene of Act 3 depicts her erstwhile friends, Monmouth and Peggy Endicott, getting ready to abandon her while becoming engaged to each other. An epilogue shows how Clough seeks out the now penniless Joan after he learns of Lidgate's suicide. After telling Clough of Joan's whereabouts and thereby making their reconciliation likely, Barmby rejects Upavon's offer to become a token reviewer of culture in his newspaper, thereby salvaging some of his critical independence, and distancing himself from Upavon's latest campaign for "public economy". The conflict of the play comes

full circle when Lupton's *per famem vinces* philosophy (by starving [the workers], you will triumph) is taken over in a subtler but no less exploitative way by Upavon, who campaigns in his newspapers for "retrenchment on unemployment pay and on education—all the social services, in fact. Sacrifices all round . . ." (*NMTE* 244).

Perhaps Huxley's ambivalence towards the overall benefits of a planned society is responsible for the pessimistic ending of *Now More Than Ever.* Yet in 1931 Huxley appeared to be a convinced Mosleyite, in his hostility to Old Gang politicians, business leaders, and agriculturists, and seems to have been reluctantly prepared to accept non-constitutional methods of turning the Mother of Parliaments from, to use Mosley's celebrated phrase, "a talking shop into a workshop."[3] Unwilling to entertain the possibility of a Communist regime in Britain, though not oblivious to that threat, he referred approvingly to Mosley's "National Policy" and *The Weekend Review*'s "National Plan" (14 February, 1931). Both plans advocated a streamlined executive, a similarity which prompted the editor of *The Weekend Review*, Gerald Barry, indignantly to deny Mosley's influence, attributing those ideas to a wave of innovation amongst the country's young political thinkers (Barry 249).

2. Extreme Solutions

> The enemy is the Old Gang of our present political system. No matter what their political label the old parliamentarians have proved themselves to be all alike. The real division of the present decade is not a division of parties, but a division of generations. (Oswald Mosley *The Greater Britain*, 1932).

One is struck by the clear polarization between young and old no matter which side of the political spectrum commentators of the thirties represented. Eugen Weber, a noted authority on Fascism, states that

> The years between the wars were dominated by old men and by mediocrities. Like families, like business, like the literary and artistic world, political parties were led by men of the nineteenth century whose age made them timid and reluctant to change (Brewer 6, 7).

That contemptuous term "the old gang", levelled at the pre-World War I generation of politicians, including Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Snowden, and other members of the National Government, was used by the Fascist Mosley as well as by the editorial staff of the liberal *Weekend Review*.

Huxley revealed a similar hostility in his October 1931 article, "Greater and Lesser London", in which he referred sarcastically to the "dear old gentlemen" who controlled parliament, business, and other institutions, suggesting that a

massive pensioning off would be desirable. Referring to a "grave national crisis", he saw little hope for effective action:

> So long as parliamentary procedure remains what it is, twaddling is unavoidable; prompt and comprehensive action, all but impossible. Some such reforms as those suggested by Sir Oswald Mosley are obviously essential. And no doubt reforms will be made—but as usual, much too late and not in their desirable entirety (49).

Since the proofs of this article are dated 29 June 1931, the reforms Huxley refers to are almost certainly those contained in the "Mosley Manifesto" (December, 1930) and the latter's monograph, *A National Policy* (February, 1931). Perhaps the most controversial idea was a proposal to turn cabinet into a five-person executive group, prompting one British political cartoonist to caption his drawing of Mosley and Il Duce, "Moslini". The cartoon represents a top-hatted Mosley showing Mussolini a placard inscribed, "THE MOSLEY MANIFESTO. WANTED: A NATIONAL CABINET OF FIVE," while Mussolini says, "Five Dictators? Why worry about the other four?"[4]

In a letter to Mosley's wife, Cynthia, dated September, 1931, Huxley writes, "Wouldn't it be possible to bring in a Bill of Impeachment against a few of the old politicians who have landed us in this mess by their criminal negligence?" (Skidelsky 227).

Mosley's hostility to free trade and his corresponding flirtation with Empire Protectionism attracted for a time the interest of Beaverbrook, Churchill, and Lloyd George. In the "Abroad in England" articles (May-July, 1931), Huxley also voiced a concern that continuing free trade would hurt Britain:

> Today almost every country is a producer. Many are very efficient producers. Having gone into the business later, they are not burdened with the old-fashioned plant and superannuated business methods bequeathed to us from an earlier generation of manufacturers. (Some of our rivals had what has turned out to be the luck to get their industrial provinces devastated during the War, and so were forced to begin again with a clean slate. A little judicious devastation in northern England, coupled with the discharging of some of the more elderly company directors, might have been the salvation of our basic industries.) Moreover, efficient or inefficient, all these new producers are Protectionists and most of them are, by our standards, underpayers of labour. The surprising thing is, not that our export trade should have fallen off, but that it should have remained even as flourishing as it is.
>
> It is sufficiently obvious that the historical accident which gave us our immense prosperity during the nineteenth century can never recur. There is no possibility of our becoming once again either the world's coal merchant or the world's manufacturer of iron and cotton goods. Even if the basic industries were protected—and there seems to me the strongest possible case for giving manufacturers and workers a certain security and stability, either by means of tariffs, or else by the establishment of import boards—even if they were assured the home market, they could never recover the preponderant position which they occupied during the nineteenth century. Large numbers of the men who used to be employed in these industries can never be employed in them again. Can they all be absorbed elsewhere? Probably not. The army of unemployed is destined, no doubt, to remain a standing army. Can we pay for the upkeep of this army? And can we reduce its numbers? Yes; but only by the most careful and systematic

> national planning. The age of happy accidents is over. Little piecemeal improvements and local tinkerings are inadequate to the modern circumstances. Stability and a measure of assured and permanent prosperity can be achieved only by the nation that has an intelligent national purpose ("Abroad" 84).

He concludes the first article of "Abroad" by praising Russia's penchant for national planning, as evidenced by its Five Year Plan, asserting that the country which fails to plan will die. He then refers to the "two national plans on the English market—Sir Oswald Mosley's and the rather more fully worked-out plan propounded by the *Week End Review* [February 14, 1931]." He expresses his doubt that either plan, or any such scheme, could be executed by constitutional means, citing the evidence of World War I to affirm the incompatibility of "rapid large scale action and traditional constitutional methods" (84). In a concluding paragraph Huxley comes close to espousing what could be called the Fascist position:

> So long as there exists a gulf between what is, by the highest human standards, desirable and what is actually desired by a majority or even a minority of human beings, force has got to be used. We are using it all the time. Many people desire to take cocaine; but it is not desirable that they should do so. We do our best to prevent them from getting what they want and, if they succeed and we catch them, we punish them severely. Nobody desires, I imagine, to pay income tax; but it is desirable that all whose income is over a certain figure should contribute to the expense of running the community. Force is used to extract the contributions.
>
> In the present case, a powerful minority, including almost all those now holding political power, may have strong objections to

> large-scale national planning. But if national planning is, . . . desirable, then the actual desires of this minority will have to be overridden and the desirable thing imposed by force. But as this minority at present controls the governmental machine, it follows that the application of force may have to be done unconstitutionally. Which would doubtless be regrettable; but not so regrettable, I think, as the prolongation of the present state of affairs, with the cheerful prospect of economic breakdown, revolution and a final communist triumph.

However, Huxley was not, on the strength of these sentiments, a supporter of Mosley's New Party, although at the time many respected figures had voiced sympathy, if not outright support, for Mosley's breakaway faction from the Labour Party. Among early sympathizers were John Maynard Keynes, Harold Macmillan, Leslie Hore-Belisha, Harold Nicolson, Cyril Joad, John Strachey, Osbert Sitwell, Bernard Shaw, and William Morris (later Lord Nuffield), as well as Huxley's friend, Gerald Heard. It should be remembered that Mosley had been touted as a future Prime Minister by Ramsay MacDonald himself.

Mosley did not form the British Union of Fascists until after the dissolution of the New Party in the late Spring of 1932 and, even after its dissolution, Nicolson, according to Skidelsky, held out the hope for "a respectable fascism—the corporate state idea introduced under the benevolent dispensation of the National Government and leading intellectuals, without recourse to revolutionary violence" (286). It is also worth noting that Keynes and Nicolson

eventually broke with Mosley, politically at least, when his fascist tendencies became clear. Mosley's loss of credibility for most moderates dated from Nicolson's article in the *Week End Review*, May, 1932, which resoundingly refuted Fascism, "calling it unnecessary . . . oppressive, and untruthful, . . . constituting a danger to the future of European stability" (Lees-Milne 29). Morever, Raymond Mortimer cites Huxley's contempt for *Action*, the New Party weekly edited by Nicolson [October-December, 1931], in a letter to Sackville-West dated November 1, 1931:

> *Action* . . . is not only squalid but ineffective. As Aldous says, it seems to be made up of articles rejected by *John O'London*. Altogether the New Party has been grotesque, choosing boxers and such people and deserves its fate. . . . It is depressing to see a person [Harold Nicolson] one is fond of making an incredible fool of himself (24).

Despite the mention of Oswald Mosley in *Now More Than Ever*, and despite Mosley's vociferous advocacy of national planning, Huxley's internationalism and indifference to Empire autarchy would have distanced him from Mosleyism. If such figures on the extreme left and extreme right as, let us say, John Strachey and Lord Rothermere, could find elements in Mosley's program they considered worthy of support, it should surprise no one that Huxley also found common ground with Mosley, at least until 1932.

The "influence" on Huxley's political thought at the time. and a possible source for ideas in *Now More Than Ever*, was the socialist Fred Henderson. Two days before he announced to his agent that he was working on *Now More than Ever*, Huxley recommended to his father

> an excellent book on the present economic situation—*The Economic Consequences of Power Production*, by Fred Henderson—a most excellently clear analysis. . . . I am sure he has got hold of the essential inwardness of the situation. But, alas, it takes a fearful long time for such books to make any effect on governments. 'In politics, everything is as stupid as it seems' (*Letters* 359, 360).

Whether Huxley had read Henderson's book early enough in 1931 to have used it as a source for *Brave New World* or the "Abroad in England" series, published in *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* in three instalments from May through July 1931, is difficult to tell. Certainly it was being advertised in the *Times Literary Supplement* as early as 23 July 1931. J. M. Keynes called Henderson's argument brilliant in an article for *Political Quarterly*, and the reviews were generally favourable. In any event, it is little wonder that Huxley found its subject matter timely. Significantly, it would appear that H. G. Wells, in *After Democracy*, and Oswald Mosley, in *The Greater Britain* (reviewed together by Kingsley Martin on 29 October 1932 in the *New Statesman and Nation*), also subscribed to Henderson's thesis that the Industrial Revolution had not progressed appreciably beyond its first phase. for despite the quantum leap in

production attributable to power-aided machinery, humanity's hope for a world of universal plenty had not come to pass because manufacturers regularly withdrew a portion of the proceeds from direct consumption as profit, "which they are obliged to capitalize for the financing and equipping of intermediate manufactures" (*TLS* 6 August 1931, 610). Henderson concluded that this tribute exacted by private owners of the means of production was archaically feudal and pressed for reforms in the area of distribution and production of wealth—namely the shift to a co-operative commonwealth, a position Huxley adopted after 1935.

In addition, the "Abroad" article, quoted above, and a 1932 essay, "Compulsory Suicide", written for the Hearst newspaper chain, show the congruence of Huxley's and Henderson's ideas regarding the folly of thinking that Britain could ever again compensate for technological unemployment by gains in the export market. Henderson also noted that, under the current economic system, any return to prosperity required "the utmost possible cheapening of production by every available device of rationalization and improved technique of power-production" (90). The simplest way was either to reduce labour entirely or else to cut labour's wages. Without reform, said Henderson, we "must settle down grimly to this competition in which the nation to emerge triumphant will be the nation whose working population will produce most and live on least" (92).

3. Rationalization or Fascism? Britain's "Supremely Uncomfortable Moment of History"

> Rationalization: "the methods of organization designed to secure the minimum waste of either effort or material. They include the scientific organization of labour, standardization of both materials and products, simplification of processes, and improvement in the system of transport and marketing. . . . [T]he judicious and constant application of . . . rationalization is calculated to secure . . . to the community greater stability and a higher standard of life." World Economic Conference, Geneva, sponsored by the League of Nations, 1927, defined in L. Urwick, *The Meaning of Rationalization*, 1929.

Aldous Huxley wrote *Now More Than Ever* between July and November, 1932, a period he referred to in an essay published in 1931 as a "supremely uncomfortable moment of history." Dire warnings about capitalism's final phase or extreme vulnerability emanated from all positions on the political spectrum, and Huxley's play considers several competing solutions to the economic and political crisis which had reached its peak in September 1931 when Britain's unemployment total reached 2.5 million. Moreover, the government had been forced to devalue the currency and abandon the gold standard.

At this time, Communists like John Strachey and D. M. Mirsky, published books which celebrated capitalism's death throes. Sir Oswald Mosley, having been unsuccessful in convincing the Labour Party to accept his economic blueprint for the salvation of England, formed the British Union of Fascists and

actively championed the Fascist solution. H. G. Wells, from 1927, had refined his Open Conspiracy solution, one he referred to in 1932 as "Liberal Fascism".[5] J. M. Keynes praised Wells's open conspiracy ideas, but himself offered monetary reform and a program of public works, an interventionism which came to be known as the New Economics.

Another solution was proposed by a group of eminent businessmen, economists, and scientists, associated with Gerald Barry's *Weekend Review*. Led by Sir Josiah Stamp, chairman of the largest railway company in Britain and a director of the Bank of England, and by Sir Basil Blackett, chairman of Imperial Cables Ltd., and also a director of the Bank of England, they formed what Strachey called "the national planning" school (237). Although some of the above-mentioned proposals would have employed methods unacceptable to the other groups, one concept stood out as a common denominator: rationalization.

Responding by letter to a request from producer Leon Lion to adapt the recently published *Brave New World* for the stage, Huxley demurred, offering instead "a politico-economic play more or less about Ivar Kreuger; i.e., a financier with a sincere desire to rationalize the world, but who bites off more than he can chew and is driven into swindling and finally suicide. . . ." (Lion 115).

As Chris Hopkins points out, "Kreuger was not simply a businessman who failed spectacularly: he was adopted by Marxist, and other Leftist critics of the thirties as a supreme paradigm or symbol of the 'crisis of capitalism'" (62). Hopkins does not cite John Strachey's reference to Kreuger, but that scion of privileged liberalism had been Huxley's pupil at Eton, and suggests a possible model for the communist character, Clough, in *Now More Than Ever*.

In *The Coming Struggle for Power* (1932), Strachey referred to Kreuger's spectacular collapse, which occurred after he had written the first draft of that monograph. There he depicted Kreuger as the "ultra-imperialist" incarnate, whose Swedish conglomerate was the best example of a "well-developed world trust". According to Strachey, Kreuger was one who, "pointing to the existence of international monopolies, look[s] forward to Combination instead of Competition amongst the great powers themselves" (84). With the benefit of hindsight, Strachey referred to T. G. Barman's *Fortnightly Review* article of December 1931 which proposed "a whole political philosophy upon the beneficial activities of Messrs. Kreuger and Toll" (85 n.). To Strachey, Kreuger's fall demolished the dream of a future internationally-rationalized capitalist utopia, inferring somewhat fallaciously —on the basis of one example—that "international trusts are inherently unstable."

The operative word in Huxley's letter is "rationalize". Seen by many business commentators as the best hope for a solution to the economic crisis that had been in effect since the Wall Street Crash of 1929, rationalization occupied much of Huxley's thought at the time. To economists, rationalization of industry entailed a combination of smaller concerns into larger ones; it also implied the use of science to increase efficiency, especially those techniques propounded by American engineer Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856-1915) and by the man who had applied Taylor's techniques in the fledgling automobile industry, Henry Ford. Strict time and motion methods, together with the use of assembly lines and division of labour, characterized rationalized industry.

The man credited with pushing through the amalgamation of the British chemical industries in 1926 into one massive, multi-national corporation, Imperial Chemical Industries Limited (ICI), was Sir Alfred Mond, Lord Melchett (1868-1930). He provided a succinct definition of the modish concept of rationalization for a new edition of *Nuttall's Standard Dictionary* in May 1929: "The application of scientific organization to industry, by the unification of the processes of production and distribution with the object of approximating supply to demand" (Bolitho 290).

Significantly, Huxley gives the name Mond to one of the ten world controllers of *Brave New World*, and critics agree that Mustapha Mond, spokesman for the rationalized world of 632 A.F. (*Anno Fordi*), at least holds his own with the humanist protagonist. John Savage, in a debate about the new dispensation's methods of ensuring stability. The reason the devil receives more than his due in *Brave New World* is plain enough to see. For although in a letter to Mrs. Kethevan Roberts dated 18 May 1931, Huxley notes that the novel was originally conceived as a satire on the "horrors of the Wellsian utopia", he, like his brother Julian, was very receptive to the idea of rationalization, remarking in a January 1933 essay for *Harper's Monthly*, that "political reform and industrial rationalization are necessary and valuable", despite the following caveat:

> But do not let us make the mistake of supposing that they automatically create happiness. The only people who derive happiness directly from them are the reformers and rationalizers themselves. Absorbed as they are in occupations which are felt to be valuable, they lose themselves in their work and consequently are happy. But the people for whom they work do not share this happiness. All that reform and rationalization can do for them is to provide . . . an environment propitious to the kind of working and living that brings self-forgetful happiness ("Problem of Faith" 214).

Like many thinking people during the economic crisis, Huxley sincerely sought a solution to the problems of unemployment and the growing deterioration of cities, especially in the industrialized North. Long before

J. B. Priestley and George Orwell set out on their fact-finding missions to the industrial heartland of Britain which would result in *English Journey* (1934) and *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1936), Huxley had made two separate journeys to the Midlands and beyond. After Maria Huxley had typed 'the worst bits' of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in February 1928 for their close friend, D. H. Lawrence, the Huxleys made a motor tour of the region in March, a tour which resulted in Huxley's article, "Magic of London", in which he observed, "Nobody who has visited the coal and iron towns of the North can fail to have been struck by the dreadful silence and listlessness of the crowds of unemployed men who shuffle along the streets like walking corpses" (12).

In October 1930, Huxley gave the lecture "Science and Poetry" to a group of miners in Willington, County Durham, at a meeting of the local branch of the Workers' Educational Association. David Bradshaw gives a full account of Huxley's visits to Durham and to the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire colliery towns, as well as his "whistle-stop tour" of the industrial north in mid-February 1931, "which brought home to Huxley even more graphically the severity of the problems which confronted Britain" (Bradshaw, "Huxley's Slump" 155). Given their strong descriptive quality and caring tone, had Huxley accepted American publisher James Wells's offer to publish the resulting series of four long

essays under the proposed title *Abroad in England*, it is entirely possible that Huxley's reputation as an aloof observer of the bourgeois social scene might well have been modified by the obvious revelation of a social conscience.

By the time the first article, "Abroad in England" was published in May 1931, England's situation had gone from bad to worse. A glance at the titles of various books and articles of the period give an indication of the pessimistic temper of the times. Huxley contributed the foreword for Alderton Pink's *A Realist Looks at Democracy*, while articles such as F. Britten Austin's "H.R.H.—The British Mussolini?" advocating the Prince of Wales as dictator, were being published in *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* along with pieces by Bernard Shaw and G. K. Chesterton discussing the virtues of government by intellectuals. The January 1932 issue featured an article by H. G. Wells entitled "Crystal Gazing" (later that year published as a chapter in *After Democracy*) in which he maintains that

> Either those necessary world conferences and federal boards, the essential frame of a reconstructed world, will have been assembled before twelve months are out, or we shall be realizing that 1932 was appointed by the Fates as the date when the collapse of Western Capitalism became evident and indisputable. Either *homo sapiens* will have pulled himself together or plainly he will have begun to tear himself to pieces. . . . [We] need rationalization along world lines. Too much has been left to accident. . . . The world is in need of monetary, economic, and political federation. Are we going in

> 1932 to set about doing what we all see so clearly has to be done? (16, 17).

The above attitude, so much a part of Wells's public persona as an open conspirator, is ostensibly what Huxley reacted against in *Brave New World*, (completed in 1931). Yet David Bradshaw convincingly argues that while that novel "has been approached mainly from a dystopian perspective; we can now also recognize that [it] embodies in an absurd and distorted form ideas and opinions that Huxley framed in earnest beyond this novel's satirical parameters" (Bradshaw "Huxley's Slump" 168). Although Bradshaw does not press the parallels between Wells's and Huxley's thought at this period, he makes it clear that neither Huxley nor Wells held democracy sacrosanct. In the "Abroad" journalism, Huxley was often contemptuous of the government, sometimes advocating methods distinctly in keeping with the Open Conspiracy frame of mind. Indeed, Bradshaw goes so far as to call Huxley "a card-carrying Open Conspirator" (Bradshaw, *HH* 31).

Despite the fact that both Wells and Huxley have been labelled "fascists", or at least fascist-leaning, their similar attitudes, especially towards science, pacifism, and socialism, render them fellow travellers en route to Cosmopolis, not Rome or Berlin.[6] If pacifism, socialism, and a hostility to nationalism be badges of fascism, then fascists they were. From 1929, they were fellow board members

of the short-lived journal of scientific humanism, *The Realist*, and, from 1933, members of Cyril Joad's Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals (FPSI), both, in fact, accepting status as Vice-Presidents, along with such liberal or leftist intellectuals as Gerald Barry, Vera Brittain, Kingsley Martin, Bertrand Russell, Rebecca West, Olaf Stapledon, Leonard Woolf, and Barbara Wootton: strange company for fascists to keep. Furthermore, in 1934, Wells referred to Oswald Mosley as a "little black-head" (*Autobiography* 649), and Huxley, after a brief consideration of Mosley's pre-fascist platform, scorned the declared fascist in a negative eye-witness account of a Mosley-led fascist meeting at Olympia in 1934.[7]

Before turning to Huxley's early attempts to find ways of solving England's economic crisis, it should be noted that his interest in the problem led him to sympathize with several formal or informal groups, under whose aegis his signature appeared in many letters to the editor and other open fora. Those problem-solving groups included Political and Economic Planning (PEP), The Federation for Progressive Societies and Individuals (FPSI), and The Peace-Pledge Union. In addition, his ideas reflected those spelled-out in Wells's *The Open Conspiracy* (1928):

> 1. The complete assertion . . . of the provisional nature of existing governments and of our acquiescence in them.

2. The resolve to minimise . . . the conflicts of these governments, their militant use of individuals and property and their establishment of a world economic system.

3. The determination to replace private local or national ownership of at least credit, transport and staple production by a responsible world directorate serving the common ends of the race.

4. The practical recognition of the necessity for world biological controls, for example of population and disease.

5. The support of a minimum standard of individual freedom and welfare in the world.

6. . . . Advancement of human knowledge, capacity and power (*Open Conspiracy* 113, 114).

In his writings from 1927-1935, Huxley endorsed the substance of items 1, 2, 4, 6, and signed public letters urging the kind of credit reform mentioned in clause 3. Moreover, by allowing Cyril Joad to draft him as a Vice-President of the Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals, he acknowledged his support of an organisation whose partial origin lay in the H. G. Wells Society. The first chapter of the Federation's *Manifesto* (1933) was drafted by Wells and called for reforms in production and distribution, specifically "the replacement of production for private profit by collective production", and in the system of money and credit so as to stabilize consumption (*Manifesto* 15, 16). Far from being Fascist, the common denominator in Wells' and Huxley's reformist thought

was socialist: anti-fascist and anti-nationalist. Only in their esteem for science, especially eugenics, might the tenor of their thought be seen as consistent with fascism—but even in this domain, both writers eschewed policies of racial superiority.

Upon his return from Willington, County Durham, on 12 October 1930, Huxley wrote to Marshall Diston, a functionary of the Independent Labour Party, who had been "seeking the views of prominent figures, such as Wells, Arnold Bennett, Bertrand Russell, and Huxley," on potential solutions to the current crisis:

> Having just returned from the Durham mining district, I feel more than usually diffident of expressing a political opinion. All I know is that I shall be enthusiastically on the side of anyone who gets us out of the social and industrial mess, of which the Durham coal-field provides such a terrifying example. Whether any party will or can get us out of that mess is another question (Bradshaw, "Huxley's Slump" 153).

By this date Huxley was already expressing doubt as to the ability of political parties to find solutions to England's problems. Those doubts were heightened after his unsatisfactory first visit to the Strangers' Gallery in the House of Commons on 11 February 1931, an account of which forms the basis for his Hearst essay "Forewarned is not Forearmed" (November, 1931). Snowden had warned on February 11 that "the country was heading for some kind of crash",

and that crash duly occurred. Britain's unemployment total stood at 2.5 million by September 1931, and the country was forced off the gold standard, the pound eventually stabilizing at a value of 15 shillings. The lesson Huxley learned from this was that "it is exceedingly difficult, especially in a democracy, to act . . . so as to falsify the prophecies of impending disaster" (*HE* 33).

In "Abroad in England" Huxley, after reflecting on the degradation of the industrial Teesside town of Middlesbrough and the plight of its many unemployed workers, suggested that only systematic national planning could help improve the economy and, faced with the prospect of economic collapse, seemed ready to consider a brave new world solution: the turning over of the executive branch of government to a form of Wellsian samurai class of expert planners. One may recall Mustapha Mond's history lesson in chapter 3 of *Brave New World*, where, after the Nine Years' War (read World War I) and the collapse of liberalism in the face of economic failure (read the economic consequences of Versailles, the Wall Street Crash), a saving remnant of scientists prepares to deliver "the primal and the ultimate need. Stability. . . . There was a choice between World Control and destruction" (*BNW* 34, 40). Mond presides over a Keynesian, post-liberal program of cunningly enforced consumption as a corrective to the over-production made possible by technology: "Every man, woman, and child

compelled to consume so much a year. In the interests of industry" (40). Thus we see a rationalized world, where production and consumption are kept in perfect balance, thanks to ubiquitous planning. A commonplace reference to the "army of unemployed" has its futuristic equivalent in the vast crews of Epsilon and Delta road workers, "an army of labourers . . . busy revitrifying the surface of the Great West Road" (*BNW* 52). Such measures contrast with the world of the Dirty Thirties, where Marxists and Capitalists alike bemoaned the outstripping of distribution by power production.

In "The Victory of Art Over Humanity" (*Nash's* July 1931), Huxley further demonstrated his Wellsian world-government leanings, marvelling at the orderliness which the recent Port of London Authority had brought to the London Docks:

> For the moment, this Gargantuan profusion at the Docks is the symbol and symptom of world-wide poverty. Wool is piled up in mountains—and Australia is bankrupt. There are cathedrals full of rubber—and the Malayan plantations cannot pay their way. Everywhere the same disease. And the remedy? Some sort of world-wide plan to co-ordinate the separate plans whose mutual incompatibility is the cause of the present confusion. The docks of London are the best possible advertisement for planning. Themselves, not so long ago a flagrant example of planlessness, they have become, under the co-ordinating Port of London Authority, efficient and progressive. It remains for some larger equivalent of the Port of London Authority to deal with the larger chaos of world trade ("Victory" 49).

Huxley's attraction to rationalization, planning, and the open conspiracy is not surprising considering the calibre of the Ramsay MacDonald government. In "Victory of Art over Nature", he mockingly attacked these aged parliamentarians' nineteenth-century ways:

> dilatory habits of parliamentarism, habits in manners of political economy, of *laissez-faire* . . . nationalism. Their habits are sacred and must be respected—even when . . . these habits are a danger to civilisation. Only by rejuvenating the dear old gents and breaking them of their century-old habits . . . and empowering governments to deal adequately and promptly with the problems of a civilisation at war with its own arts—can we hope to come clear out of our troubles. The art of co-ordinating the separate arts has got to be first invented, then imposed by some strong and intelligent central authority. Yes, imposed. . . . Governments are not the only dear old gentlemen with bad habits who afflict our modern world. Industry, commerce, finance, agriculture . . . there is a dear old gent in every cupboard (48, 49).

Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald was 65 in 1931, and had, according to Keith Hutchison, a meagre grasp of economics (240). Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Philip Snowden, was two years older, and lived up to Huxley's description of the dear old gent clinging to nineteenth-century habits such as economies, free trade, and a belief that the slump would naturally run its course. George Lansbury was over 70, as was Sidney Webb. Dubbed "Right Honourable Dress-suit" by cartoonist David Low, J. H. Thomas, 58, was out of his depth as the cabinet minister chiefly responsible for measures to relieve unemployment (Hutchison

236). In 1936 he was forced to resign for leaking details of the budget to a stock-market speculator. Before his disgrace. Beatrice Webb had described him as a "boozer . . . [and] a Stock Exchange gambler" (138).

His inaction succeeded only in alienating his dynamic young cabinet colleague on the unemployment committee. Sir Oswald (Tom) Mosley, then a new breed of Labourite, steeped in the theories of John Maynard Keynes and eager to put them into practice. By February 1931, Mosley had left the Labour Party to form the New Party, bringing with him only a few disaffected young Labour MPs such as his wife, Cynthia. Robert Forgan, Allan Young and John Strachey, cousin of Huxley's friend, Mary Hutchinson.

According to Skidelsky, *A National Policy*, the pamphlet published in February 1931 to explain the New Party's "emergency programme advanced by Sir Oswald Mosley" was, in fact, co-written by Young, Strachey, W. J. Brown, and Aneurin Bevan (Skidelsky *Mosley* 248). This was one of the two national plans Huxley referred to in "Abroad in England", and again in "Greater and Lesser London" (October 1931).

While Huxley's personal dislike of Mosley, rather than serious ideological differences, probably had more to do with his decision not to join friends Gerald Heard and Raymond Mortimer in contributing to the short-lived weekly, *Action*

(October-December, 1931), he clearly felt that government inertia had to be countered by an élite samurai-like group. Not only did he endorse some of Mosley's ideas during the height of the crisis in the fall of 1931, but was even more enthusiastic about those put forward by Max Nicholson, a young economic journalist, and Gerald Barry, who had resigned from *Saturday Review*, in protest against the proprietor's unilateral endorsement of Beaverbrook's Empire Free Trade policy, to edit the *Week-End Review*. Half a century later, in his prologue to *Fifty Years of Political and Economic Planning* (1981), Nicholson noted that the purpose of the *Week-End Review* was to "expose 'the Old Gang' and their out-of-date, ineffectual ways of running the country" (Pinder 6). In the early thirties, Huxley was an occasional contributor to Barry's journal, as is his alter-ego, Philip Barmby, in *Now More Than Ever*.

Nicholson offered *A National Plan for Great Britain*, the second emergency program mentioned by Huxley, as a possible solution to economic crisis. It was published as a special supplement to the 14 February 1931 issue of *Week-End Review*. Its principles formed the intellectual core of *Political and Economic Planning* (*PEP*), "an inchoate pressure group" with which Huxley was involved from the outset, in February 1931, as it "seemed to answer his demand

for trenchant action" (Bradshaw, "Huxley's Slump" 155). Both Huxley brothers attended the discussion meeting in early March at which it was resolved

> That National Planning is an immediate necessity for this country; that the present failure of politicians . . . to undertake any serious work towards preparing a Plan and preparing the country to adopt one amounts to a major national danger; that in view of this neglect the meeting accepts the responsibility of preparing and making propaganda for a Plan for the rational re-organisation of our political and economic institutions on a basis of industrial freedom (156).

Although Huxley soon grew impatient with PEP's gradualist approach, Bradshaw notes that "his belief in the need for planning intensified during the course of . . . compos[ing]" *Brave New World* (157). It was not until April 1933 that Huxley's initial enthusiasm for the utopian benefits of planning palled somewhat. Writing of the "great god Plan", he states that "planning can never provide the individual with that perfect happiness which the more fanatical devotees of the new providence expect from it" (*HE* 178). Though, if Aldous appears to have conceded that planning alone was no guarantee of the millenium, brother Julian's enthusiasm seems to have continued unabated. He praises Soviet-style planning in his three articles for *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* published in the Spring of 1932 after his return from Russia in 1931—a visit that Aldous had originally planned to share until problems with the composition of *Brave New World* forced him to cancel. And in 1934, Julian Huxley described his desired

corporate state (in many ways reminiscent of *Brave New World*) in *If I Were Dictator*, averring that "the conscious and scientific planning of society is destined to be the fourth great step in human history" (20). This book was published with the support of PEP, and Max Nicholson, by then a fellow member of PEP's Directorate, agreed to read the book in proof (J. Huxley 5). In Julian Huxley's rational society, "industry and agriculture will organize in corporations. . . . Every producer, individual or firm, will belong to its own corporation" (49).

From a Marxist point of view, Strachey would have considered Wells, the Huxley brothers, and the national planning school of administrators, bankers, and scientists as the *avant-garde* of Liberal Fascism:

> The talk of order and planning is little more than an elegant intellectual disguise. They do not want the real nature of national planning to be realized. . . . There seems nothing in the idea of social order, planning, pre-arrangement, which cannot be accepted by conservatives, liberals, and socialists alike. . . . And this is natural, for what could be more comforting to men who have ceased to desire a socialist society, than to dream that capitalism will soon settle down, solve its difficulties, cease its struggles, and afford us all the stability of socialism without the necessity of fighting for it? . . . The national planners have thrown a mantle of respectability over the appetites of the British trusts. . . . We might call the national planners the fig-leaf of monopoly. . . (Strachey 241-242).

Strachey regarded Beaverbrook's Empire Free Trade program as ultra-right wing, a program which aimed at reserving "the vast natural resources, and the vast

markets, of the British Empire for the exclusive exploitation of Empire entrepreneurs . . . protected against the rest of the world by tariffs" (242-243). Strachey, Mosley's former associate, saw little to choose between the above groups and the latter's avowed Fascism: "He [Mosley] offers to the British capitalist class the reorganization of their dictatorship by way of the creation of a specifically Fascist party", as against the method of gradually "fascising (if we may use the term) their existing parties" (284).

4. Capitalism as Seen from the Left

> BARMBY: . . . I know how conscientiously you're trying to reduce the purchasing power of the home consumer so as to compete with your rivals abroad. . . . And what huge sums you're spending overseas, in spite of the slump! . . . you'll have to reduce home purchasing power still further in order to compete. . . . And after you've finally discharged all the wage earners that can be discharged, after you've reduced the wages of the rest to a point at which they can't consume anything but bread and water, then . . . what follows? (*NMTE* 12)

Other contemporary writers echo Huxley's attitude to modern predatory capitalism. In *It's a Battlefield* (1933, published 1934) Graham Greene uses symbolic tableaux to dramatize the inequities of capitalism. Like a documentary cinéaste, he surveys the social hierarchy of England, first with an image of Queen Mary's Daimler, which stops motor traffic so that she may attend a "talkie", as men in morning coats bow from the hips (106). He then pans to the Prince of

Wales, "surrounded by men in frock coats carrying top hats," as HRH opens a hostel for the unemployed (65). In four separate references to newspaper headlines that report the Prime Minister's flight to Lossiemouth, he deftly accuses Ramsay MacDonald of dereliction of duty, implying that his real home is not Whitehall but his Scottish birthplace, Lossiemouth, a smart North Sea resort, where he presents golf trophies to winners in the "Royal and Ancient Game" (92) and from which haven he is enticed only by "international conferences in agreeable cities in Southern Europe" (137).

That imagistic indictment of privilege continues with a portrait of the Home Secretary's tall and smooth private secretary, a product of nepotism, who, with "a face like the plate glass window of an expensive shop", momentarily absents himself from two chic women to ask an Assistant Commissioner's opinion about the reactions of striking cotton and railway workers in "the poorer sections . . . the docks, . . . Paddington, Notting Hill, Streatham" to the proposed execution of a Communist, Jim Drover (13, 14). In a society of unacknowledged starvation and wage disparities "from thirty shillings a week to fifteen thousand a year" (189, 190), the fear lest the Home Secretary should miss his tea in the "battlefield" of parliament initially seems particularly complacent.

Greene describes the lower orders in a style reminiscent of *Brave New World*: "the hundred and fifty girls in the machine room worked with the regularity of a blood-beat" in a Taylorized match factory which in all probability could have belonged to Ivar Kreuger (27), for, as A. F. Lucas points out, in 1927 the large British match producer, Bryant and May, had merged with Kreuger's Swedish Match Company, controller of the world-wide match trust (196). Whether or not that novel alludes indirectly to Kreuger's empire, there can be no doubt that *England Made Me* (1935), the middle novel of the series, with its many references to Shakespeare's *Pericles* and to shipwreck, invites the reader to compare Shakespeare's watery chaos to Emil Krogh's/Ivar Kreuger's corrupt capitalistic empire.

Greene reviewed (*Spectator*, 3 March 1933) one of the many biographies of Kreuger to appear at the time, likening him to Uncle Ponderevo in Wells's *Tono Bungay*. But his own portrait emphasizes the swindler. Huxley's play depicts the idealistic rationalizer, dealing exclusively (save for walk-ons) with bourgeois characters, while Greene depicts numerous proletarian characters, one of whom, the oily-handed factory worker, Andersson, is sympathetically portrayed as an underling, who naively trusts in his employer, only to be felled by the knuckle-dustered fist of Krogh's factotum, Hall. The Kreuger character

seems sympathetic in Huxley's play, whereas Greene reserves his sympathy for Krogh/Kreuger's victims. Huxley's portrait is much more positive because he shared some of Kreuger's ultra-imperialist, Wellsian belief in what Strachey calls "the Liberal dream of a peaceful world . . . through gentle mergings of trusts and scientific federations of nations" (87).

Another writer whose sympathies lay more with the worker than the financier was J. B. Priestley. The peroration to his *English Journey* (1934) personified Big Business as a melodramatic villain:

> I thought then how this City, which is always referred to with tremendous respect, which is treated as if it were the very beating red heart of England, must have got its money from somewhere . . . and that a great deal of this money must have poured into it at one time . . . from that part of England which is much dearer to me than the City, namely, the industrial North. . . . What had the City done for its old ally, the industrial North? It seemed to have done what the black-moustached glossy gentleman in the old melodramas always did to the innocent village maiden (410-411).

Fog images suggest the "muddle" of laissez-faire capitalism, of "England on the dole", a transitional world "so bewildering that we don't know where we are [and where] the old rules aren't working" (408). After raising the spectre of Oswald Mosley and the British Fascists, or the "spirited majority" which might some day "adopt any cause that promises decisive *action*", Priestley cheers himself up by reflecting on the memory of John Milton and the "glowing tradition of the

English spirit", ending the book with hope that the nation will emerge from the "dark bog of greedy industrialism, where money and machines are of more importance than men and women . . . into the sunlight" (417).

Priestley blames big business for the miserable condition of industrial England just as he does in his successful play, *Laburnum Grove*, in which George Radford, the everyman of that "immoral comedy", indicts Big Business for his decision to forsake the wholesale paper business for life as a forger:

> Oh, I'd struggled with the business ever since I came back from the war. Slaved at it. Then the slump came. More slavery. But we had a good little connection in the fine-quality trade. And somebody wanted that, a big firm. They made me an offer. I didn't like it or the chap who made it. I turned it down, so this big firm did me in—never mind how—but they did. They won all right. Clever chap that, he's been knighted since—the dirty swine. . . . Well, having given honesty a fair chance, I thought I'd try the other thing (21-22).

Like Priestley, Huxley sympathizes with the victim who turns to crime. Lidgate and Redfern ring the changes on the meaning of "rationalization": Lidgate is an economic rationalizer who amalgamates muddled businesses into efficient groups; Redfern is an ethical rationalizer, who sanitizes his crime by pointing to its economic benefits, at times sounding like an unwitting adherent of Major Douglas's Social Credit policy:

> a lot of people think this depression in trade is chiefly due to the fact that there isn't enough money in circulation. . . . Our

> organisation—my associates and myself—have been quietly busy these last few years trying to remedy this unhappy state of things. It started in America—forging and counterfeiting bonds and notes—and then developed here. . . . We're doing quite nicely here, and sometimes I think that things in England would have been worse if it hadn't been for us. In fact you might say we've been doing our bit (24).

It should be noted that on 5 April, 1934, a letter appeared in the *Times*. bearing the signature of Aldous Huxley, T. S. Eliot, Herbert Read, Edwin Muir, and other literary figures. In an earlier letter to Eliot (circa 18 March 1934), Huxley agreed to sign that *Times* letter which urged "a thorough and public examination of some scheme of national credit" (*Letters* 378n). Although Priestley was not a signatory, he shared Huxley's suspicion of the banking system:

> At the time I wrote [*Laburnum Grove*], when I was also gathering material for *English Journey*, I was very suspicious about our financial system, if only because the banks appeared to flourish when industry was failing . . . (*Plays*, vol 2, ix).

Nor were Huxley and Priestley the only ones suspicious of the industrial system. Ellen Wilkinson, Labour MP for Middlesbrough (1922-31) and Jarrow (1931-39), refers to the latter as *The Town That Was Murdered*. Her non-fiction description of Sir James Lithgow's rationalization scheme for the ship building industry reminds one of Sir Thomas Lipton's rationalization scheme for profit in *Now More Than Ever*. She asserts that Lithgow's plan was little more than a

conspiracy amongst a few owners to ensure their profits, all the while creating a situation that led to massive unemployment in the shipbuilding industry.

Wilkinson, whom Bernard Shaw caricatured in his condition of England play, *On the Rocks* (1933), as Aloysia Brollikins, a militant in the class struggle, saw two possible solutions to the economic crisis: rationalization or nationalization. The former she saw as a tool of greedy capitalists led by the shipbuilding iron and steel magnate, Lithgow. Her conspiracy scenario also implicates the banking industry and the Vickers-Armstrong industrial conglomerate, whose chairman was also a director of the National Shipbuilders' Security Ltd, of which holding company, Lithgow was chairman. According to Wilkinson, this company bought and scrapped one-third of the British shipbuilding industry:

> By complying with . . . legal technicalities, a group of industrialists and bankers, engaged in closing down the shipbuilding industry of this country to maintain their own profits . . . [were] able to carry out their work in secrecy . . . (Wilkinson 152, 153).

Wilkinson singles out Montagu Norman, Governor of the Bank of England and chairman of the Bankers' Industrial Development Company (BIDCo, formed 1930), as one of the bankers who helped Lithgow to buy up numerous shipyards in Northeast England and Clydeside. By scrapping redundant shipyards and by paying other firms not to build ships, the NSS hoped

"to effect substantial reductions in overhead charges" thereby increasing profits and unemployment (149). Norman's biographer points out that the year 1930

> witnessed the zenith of the Governor's unmerited but understandable disrepute in the popular press and in leftist political circles as the evil genius who sought to save capitalism from itself by holding the weakest or least efficient employers to ransom and by throwing their redundant employees on the industrial scrapheap (Boyle 251).

From a present-day perspective, Wilkinson's conspiracy theory may seem somewhat extreme, but it should be remembered that as early as 1929, Marshall Hattersley, a writer who popularized Major Douglas's Social Credit theory, pointed to the mixed blessing of rationalization, or as he called the phenomenon, consolidation:

> In itself the substitution of consolidation for competition is not wholly an evil and . . . to a certain extent modern scientific progress has rendered it inevitable. It is economically sound if it helps to eliminate waste, and should tend, through coordination, to efficiency. Consolidation makes possible the employment of bigger and better plant and the installation of labour-saving devices on a large scale, and offers unprecedented facilities for scientific experiment and research. . . . On the other hand there is an evil inherent in this tendency towards gigantic monopolies [since] the industrial trust controls not only the quantity and quality of the thing it supplies, but also the price (Hattersley 48).

He then went on to note that the man in the street would soon forget the theoretical advantages of rationalization unless there was a corresponding reduction in prices.[8]

Leftists such as Allen Hutt, Storm Jameson, Wilkinson and Priestley viewed rationalization with deep suspicion.[9] Writing in 1935, Hutt echoed Huxley's theory that overproduction was the nemesis of modern capitalism:

> . . . . on the eve of . . . the entry of world capitalism into its epoch of general crisis, the governing class had at all costs to keep jammed tight 'the sluices of modern productive resources'. They knew then that the needs of the whole world could easily and cheaply be met, but that this would mean the production of such large quantities as could never be *profitably* absorbed. Today it is patent to all that the problem for capitalism is not . . . to increase production, but to restrict production (cotton, coal, shipbuilding . . .) in order to restore profits by hardening prices. . . .
>
> Anyone . . . concerned with industrial costing has one main maxim: to increase the profit on a certain output at a certain price . . . and one thing only can be done—reduce the labour time embodied in that output. . . . This is the essence of the process of rationalization [,] which is the basis of capitalist 'prosperity' present and future (Hutt 267, 269).

In her review of Hutt's *This Final Crisis*, for *Left Review*, (January 1936), Huxley's fellow member of the Peace Pledge Union, (Margaret) Storm Jameson, referred contemptuously to Labour MP and cabinet minister J. H. Thomas as "a fat Dick Whittington" and to others like him "who finding themselves comfortable inside the present order, make only the most temperate efforts to change it" (Jameson 157). Published shortly before the appearance of her novel *In the Second Year*, which depicts Britain under a Mosley-like Fascist dictator, this

review endorses Hutt's view of capitalism's final crisis and sees rationalization as a tool of capitalist profiteers:

> The general lines of the capitalist attempt at a solution of the present crisis have become very clear in the past ten years. It took the shock of the war, with its effect on England's financial supremacy, to persuade English industry of the necessity for scientific reorganization. What is called rationalization serves a double purpose—to restore profits at any cost to human labour power and to prepare efficiently for war. . . . Rationalization demands and has received the use of the repressive powers of the State. . . . We are watching a thickening and rigidifying of the structure of the State, a wall into which the body of the working-class is to be built (158).

Although, by 1933, Huxley was to declare rationalization necessary, he was deeply ambivalent towards its implementation, especially when promulgated with the "industriolotrous" confidence of a Henry Ford. "The dream of reason", said Huxley in his essay on Goya, "produces monsters":

> But . . . Reason may also dream without sleeping; may intoxicate itself, as it did during the French Revolution, with the day-dreams of inevitable progress . . . of human self-sufficiency and the ending of sorrow, not by the all too arduous method which alone offers any prospect of success, but by political re-arrangements and a better technology (*TV* 216).

One sees that ambivalence in Huxley's description of the tour he made of the Lucas works:

> In Birmingham, I visited a factory of electrical equipment for motor-cars. A very efficient, up-to-date factory. In the room where the magnetos were assembled, forty or fifty girls were sitting at a

> long table. In front of them an endless band slowly crawled along, carrying on its surface the constituent parts of an electrical machine. Each girl had her special function—to insert a rod, to tighten so many screws, to make fast certain wires ("Sight-seeing" 53).

Here clearly is the biographical source for Huxley's Brave New Worldian view of rationalization. Human beings deliberately stunted so that they may conform to a predestined function as tools or tool-handlers are monstrosities of the dream of reason.

However, in an earlier section of "Sight-seeing", Huxley had been lavish in his praise of Billingham, Alfred Mond's new chemical plant, the jewel in the rationalized crown of Imperial Chemical Industries. Huxley contrasts Billingham to Middlesbrough, which, like Topsy, "just growed." Billingham is a monument to reason, a cathedral, which like the garden cities of Letchworth and Welwyn offer:

> . . . . amenities of country life without sacrificing their urban advantages. . . . Nevertheless, the whole process of modern urban growth remains . . . fundamentally unorganized, chaotic, cancerous. . . . There are individual houses . . . whole streets . . . in the rapidly expanding outer suburbs of London which are excellent. Nevertheless, regarded as members of the great organism of London, these new outer suburbs are monstrous excrescences, wens on the Wen. By increasing the difficulty of entering or leaving the central areas, . . . these new growths threaten to make London almost uninhabitable. The problems of urban growth and new industrial development can only be dealt with adequately on a

> national scale. As usual a plan is needed, and, as usual, there is no plan (51).

Huxley goes on to chide revolutionaries and reformers for their untrammeled optimism, concluding that modern tyrants, unlike their predecessors

> are all believers in Progress, in a hypostatized and almost personified History that is providentially 'on our side', and in a Future so gorgeous that no present price for its attainment can be regarded as excessive. Five or six millions must be liquidated. . . . What of it? In the twenty-second century their great-great-grandchildren will be men like gods (48).

Huxley's ambivalence toward rationalization and planning should by now be clear. His opposition to communism can be seen in a letter to Flora Strousse, dated 6 January 1931: "If only one could believe that the remedies proposed for the awfulness (Communism, etc.) weren't even worse than the disease . . . " (*Letters* 345). His opposition to the inadequacies of parliament is even clearer. So, in *Now More Than Ever*, Philip Barmby's hostility to both Walter Clough's communist solution to economic crisis and to Upavon's (i.e., Lord Beaverbrook's) Imperial autarchy reflects Huxley's own views. Barmby says to Lidgate, "The trouble with Upavon's self-sufficient empire is (a) that it won't work (b) that, if it did work, it would infallibly involve us in war with the rest of the world" (*NMTE* 167). Neither communism nor Beaverbrook's type of

capitalism can solve the problem, or if either could, the cure would be worse than the disease.

Nor can Barmby support Lidgate's third alternative: an idealized rationalization and planning solution. Lidgate is clearly sincere in his wish to save the British economy, and in his concern for the "thousands of decent men and women" (*NMTE* 216), Huxley is well aware that the profit motive of sharks like Lupton would destroy an idealistic rationalizer's plan to end the class struggle by creating such a strong economy that, in a resultant age of plenty, all might share the wealth. Such a hope was one of the bases of Taylor's scientific organization of labour, and Lidgate, by adopting rationalization, adopts the Ford-Taylor model. As Charles Maier puts it,

> To borrow the language developed from game-theory, Taylorism promised an escape from zero-sum conflict, in which the gain of one party could be extracted only from the equal sacrifice of the other. In addition to the optional allocation of given production and income, the expansion of output through improved workshop organization was also to benefit both sides. Increased production would be shared with labour as well as with investors, so that there need be no bitter scrapping over any given level of return (31).

As early as 1928, Huxley's friend, Drieu La Rochelle, had signalled the decline of *laissez-faire* capitalism (*le capitalisme anarchique*) and its supersession by controlled capitalism (*le capitalisme organisé*) in his book, *Genève ou Moscou*,

and. in the same year, Huxley's Mark Rampion described the infernal destination of Capitalism's "individualist bus" and Communism's "collectivist tram running on the rails of state control" in *Point Counter Point*:

> They all believe in industrialism in one form or another, they all believe in Americanization. Think of the Bolshevist ideal. America but much more so. America with government departments taking the place of trusts and state officials instead of rich men. And then the ideal of the rest of Europe. The same thing, only with the rich men preserved. Machinery and government officials there. Machinery and Alfred Mond or Henry Ford here (*PCP* 415).

Mond and Ford were the best-known advocates of the scientic organization of labour, but Huxley's Rampion was no doubt shaped in reaction to Wells's long novel, *The World of William Clissold* (1926)—reviewed favourably by J. M. Keynes and panned by D. H. Lawrence—which names Mond as the man industrialist William Clissold identifies as one admirably suited to run his rationalized new world order:

> A man who rouses my curiosity greatly is Sir Alfred Mond of Brunner Mond and Co., that kindred octopus which runs so parallel and interdigitates so frequently with our great network (764-765, 774).

Then, too, in *After Democracy*, Wells had stated that his fictional "giant metallurgical concern", Romer, Steinhart and Crest—which figures significantly in the plots of *Clissold* and *The Autocracy of Mr. Parham* (1930)—was modelled

after Brunner, Mond and Co., the forerunner of the rationalized multi-national corporation Imperial Chemicals Incorporated (ICI).

Like many leftist critics of the time, D. M. Mirsky (later executed in Russia for his outspoken views) regarded the National Government (1931-35) under Ramsay MacDonald as a tool of capitalism. The Independent Labour Party expelled MacDonald from the party in 1932, and the real power in cabinet belonged to Stanley Baldwin, former Tory Prime Minister. Mirsky's scenario of the post-liberal era is of crucial importance to an understanding of *Brave New World* and the related play *Now More Than Ever*. He argues that after 1929, liberalism was replaced by organized capitalism, bent on big profit:

> the labour intelligentsia finally lowered itself to the function of open, conscious functionaries for the protection of capitalism . . . and large influential sections of the engineering and scientific intelligentsia kept their optimism by transferring it from "socialism" and democratic strivings to organized capitalism—to the function of an oligarchy of "enlightened" capitalists. A preponderating part of these people accepted the doctrines of Ford and Mond (mondism) as the very last word for the progressive leaders of civilisation. Wells became their principal literary spokesman, and the whole movement became one of the principal currents of the fascisation of the intelligentsia of Great Britain (Mirsky 34).

Most of the elements of Huxley's post-liberal, crypto-fascist regime in *Brave New World* appear in Mirsky's description of Britain in the early thirties. It is not necessary to share Mirsky's view that Labour was attempting to "fool the

working class" to concede that the Old Gang leadership of the Labour Party, which held 287 seats after the 1929 General Election (the highest total ever for Labour) had good reason to lose its stomach for costly social reform shortly after taking office, due to the repercussions of the Wall Street stock-market crash. Indeed, the record of the MacDonald-led governments from 1929 until 1935 showed little to contradict the description of these governments as functionaries of capitalism. MacDonald was widely acknowledged to have betrayed Labour's socialist principles. One need only consult such economic analyses as Ernest Davies' *'National' Capitalism: The Government's Record as Protector of Private Monopoly* (1939), *Industrial Construction and the Control of Competition* (1937) by American professor A. F. Lucas, or Keith Hutchison's *Decline and Fall of British Capitalism* (1951) to see how the interests of capitalism were upheld in that period to the detriment of socialist reform.

Wells's utopian-dystopian fantasy, *The Autocracy of Mr. Parham*, (1930) depicts the confrontation of an avowedly Fascist would-be dictator (Parham) and a Liberal Fascist faction of open conspirators led by Sir Bussy Woodcock (Wells's Upavon figure, also based upon Beaverbrook) and Camelford, the Mond-like director of a rationalized chemicals firm. The latter group triumphs and appears ready to create the Wellsian world industrial state until the scaffolding of the

novel's plot—based on the common utopian device of the dream—collapses, and the reader returns to the starting point before the dream—the crisis-ridden England of MacDonald's National Government.

Huxley's *Brave New World* posits a "Liberal-Fascist" open conspiracy, the kind of world-state envisaged in *Men Like Gods* (1923), *The World of William Clissold* (1926), and *The Autocracy of Mr. Parham* (1930). As in the Wells trio of novels, industrialism in the corporate state of *Brave New World* reigns supreme, but the satire in the novel reflects Huxley's growing distrust of the position which equates planning and the consequent material benefits as the whole duty of man. Huxley's main works from 1932 to 1936—*Brave New World, Now More Than Ever*, and *Eyeless in Gaza*—all posit the inadequacy of industriolatry as a cure for civilization's discontents, and all pit the demands of political man against those of solitary man. As Huxley said in an essay critical of planning as the modern panacea

> Let us admit that the principle of political planning is good. Does it therefore follow that a plan will do all that its more fanatical devotees seem to believe that it will do? Not so. Our superstitious plan worshipers seem to forget that the things which are Caesar's are not the same as the things which are God's—that individual goodness and happiness do not necessarily follow from efficient political and economic organization. . . . [I]t is sufficiently obvious that man is not exclusively a political animal; he is also a solitary animal; alone in face of the incomprehensible universe. In order to achieve happiness and goodness the individual must satisfy the

> demands of the solitary as well as the political animal within . . . (*HE* 177).

Huxley's hostility to collectivism emerges in the 1931 essay "The New Romanticism" where he criticizes communism as a photographic negative of Shelley's democratic libertarianism, seeing it instead as an extravagant creed "whose aim in Russia was to deprive the individual of every right, every vestige of personal liberty (including the liberty of thought and the right to possess a soul) and to transform him into a component cell of the great 'Collective Man'—that single mechanical monster who, in the Bolshevik millenium, is to take the place of the unregimented hordes of 'soul-encumbered' individuals . . . (*MN* 214). Although Huxley's quarrel in *Now More Than Ever* is primarily with laissez-faire capitalism, the hostility revealed above colours Barmby's refusal to endorse communism, not only because of its thoroughgoing materialism, but also because of the uncompromising zeal of its planners, whose Euclidean insistence on collectivizing agriculture led from 1928 to the mass extermination of dissident peasants by the Soviet state police (Ogpu), a grisly episode to which Huxley alludes in *Eyeless in Gaza*.

5. Now More Than Ever and the Novels: 1928-1936

Like *Now More Than Ever*, the three novels, *Point Counter Point* (1928), *Brave New World* (1932), and *Eyeless in Gaza* (1932-1936) all depict the futility of attempting to solve our industrial, political and social problems through exclusively politico-economic means. Increasingly, Huxley adopts the position that the realm of Caesar should be left to Caesar, and God's, to God.

In *Point Counter Point*, the D. H. Lawrence figure, Mark Rampion calls attention to the incompatibility of consumerism and the fully human life. In *Eyeless in Gaza*, Anthony Beavis similarly describes the dehumanizing effects of industrialism, whether it be practiced under the supervision of what Rampion called communist commissars or capitalist board chairmen. In *Now More Than Ever*, written between the two long novels, Barmby, like Rampion and Beavis, refuses to endorse either rationalized system: communism or capitalism because both rationalized systems are committed to the Pandora's box of industrialism.

One of Rampion's long speeches in *Point Counter Point* outlines an analysis common to all three characters. His solution is that toward which Barmby gropes and which Beavis will ultimately reach:

> Lenin *and* Mussolini, MacDonald *and* Baldwin. All equally anxious to take us to hell and only squabbling about the means of taking us. . . . Industrial progress means over-production, means

> the need for getting new markets, means international rivalry, means war (415-16).

But in the second part of this tirade, Rampion argues that the problem created by industrialism's dehumanizing effects can only be solved by a change in individual psychology, by the adoption of a salutary compartmentalization: giving in to the economic necessity of the machine ethos in a world whose increased population makes industrialism a necessary evil. He proposes a nose-holding eight-hour work shift, as machine-minding automaton, followed by a fully human life during the other sixteen hours of the day (417).

Philip Barmby uses much the same economic scenario in his debate with Spence and Lidgate in Act One of *Now More Than Ever* and comes to a similar conviction that neither economic system can prevent violence: the Communists under Lenin had recently embarked on a policy of wholesale slaughter of Russian resisters of communism, and the capitalists, he argues, will inevitably end up warring with each other because, after being compelled to reduce the wages of their own workers, they would need to invest their profits abroad, since their heightened production could not be absorbed by their own consumers. But, as Huxley argues in "Compulsory Suicide", capitalism is bound to create economic rivals:

> every successful industrial country is constantly compelled to finance new rivals—is compelled to close against itself the external markets of which it has so urgent a need. . . . For exactly what does investment . . . abroad mean? It means . . . lending money to agriculturists in order that they may blossom into industrialists—financing the consumers of your industrial products so that they may become producers on their own account.
>
> Thus we see that every successful industrial state is compelled, as things now are to spend its surplus money in restricting the existing outlets for its exports and financing rivals to compete with itself in such diminishing markets as remain . . . compulsory suicide all round. Certainly a drastic remedy! But under the existing system of ownership and distribution of wealth, it would seem to be the only remedy (*HE* 108).

Barmby puts the same argument to Spence:

> And what do you do when you've captured it [the export trade]? You take imports in exchange. But you can never take enough imports to balance your exports. Why not? For the good reason that consumers who haven't got enough purchasing power to buy what you produce at home are equally incapable of buying the equivalent of your production in imports. What do you do about it? You have no alternative. The only way you can take payment for your exports is in capital investments abroad. . . . But the more they sell, the less you sell. You've raised up a competitor against yourselves. . . . The government of the country in which you've invested your profits sticks up a tariff against you. You're shut out of yet another market. And not only that: you've got a new competitor for such markets as remain. . . . And after you've finally discharged all the wage earners that can be discharged, after you've reduced the wages of the rest to the point at which they can't consume anything but bread and water, then, when you're at last in a position to cut out your rivals and get through the tariff barriers, what follows?
> SPENCE: (Triumphantly.) Why, you capture the trade!
> BARMBY: No you don't; what follows is that the rest of the world starts talking about "unfair competition" and "dumping" and

> proceeds to close its frontiers. You won't be allowed to export a halfpennyworth of anything anywhere. After which there'll be nothing to do but declare war . . . (*NMTE* 168-69).

Thematically, the hostility of certain characters to parliamentary democracy marks another point of convergence between *Point Counter Point* and *Now More Than Ever*. Upavon—who approaches the Fascist position which Strachey and other Marxists attribute to Beaverbrook—has much more respect for Lidgate than for any elected politician. And in *Point Counter Point*, the Mosley character, Everard Webley, founder of the Brotherhood of British Freemen, puts the case for Fascism. Like the later Mosley, Webley speaks of his disillusionment with parliamentarism and invokes the future name of Mosley's weekly newspaper: his five years in parliament have convinced him that "England can only be saved by direct *action*" [emphasis mine] (77).

In all three works, one notices calls for direct action: advocated in *Point Counter Point* by the Fascist, Webley and the Communist, Illidge; in *Now More Than Ever* by Upavon, who wishes to circumvent Parliament and achieve his economic goals through an open conspiracy first with Lidgate, and later, with Lupton. In *Eyeless in Gaza*, Helen Amberley and her communist lover, Ekki Giesbrecht, offer "the usual communist argument—no peace or social justice without a preliminary 'liquidation' of capitalists, liberals, and so forth" (325).

Joan Lidgate and Walter Clough anticipate this more doctrinaire communist couple: the parallel extends even to Joan and Helen's shamefaced renunciation of the inanities of their Bright Young Things' circle. Joan had confided in Clough that she was ashamed of Monmouth's frivolities, and Helen remembers her socialite friend Cynthia, who counselled her to

> . . . .'go out more, see more people.' But people, Cynthia's people, were such bores. . . . Hopelessly stupid, . . . tasteless, slow.' [She continues to Beavis], 'I was brought up above my mental station. . . . So that now, if ever I have to be with people as silly and uneducated as myself, it's torture . . . (391).

Reflecting with disapproval upon Helen's plan for direct action—a "passion for liquidating the people who don't agree with them"—the maturing Beavis realizes that her position is only to be expected: "Regard the problem of reform exclusively as a matter of politics and economics, and you *must* approve and practice liquidation" (291). Beavis, in chapter 35, deals entirely with the problems and solution raised in the earlier novel by Rampion. Beavis acknowledges that industrialism has made possible the huge increase in the world's population and a corresponding increase in consumers and markets. The diminished purchasing power which goes with technological unemployment and rationalization has been offset by proliferating consumers: "Many small purchasing powers do as much as fewer big ones" (450). So far, Beavis's analysis

is congruent with nineteenth-century theories of a self-regulating marketplace. But when Beavis considers the stationary, even declining populations of advanced industrial societies, he is forced to admit that there will be "no more automatic solution of the economic problems. Birth control necessitates the use of co-ordinating political intelligence. There must be a large scale plan. Otherwise the machine won't work" (451). (These sentiments represent a variation on a theme by Mustapha Mond in the history lesson chapter of *Brave New World*, which justifies the regime's imposition of equilibrium economics.)

At this point in his analysis, Beavis demonstrates a deep ambivalence towards political planning, favourably comparing England's history of piecemeal reform to that of France under Robespierre or Russia under Lenin:

> Deal with practical problems as they arise and without reference to first principles; politics are a matter of higgling. Now higglers lose tempers but don't normally regard one another as fiends in human form. But this is precisely what men of principle and systematic planners can't help doing. A principle is, by definition, *right*; a plan, *for the good of the people*. . . . [T]hose who disagree with . . . your plans are enemies of goodness and humanity. No longer men and women, but . . . fiends incarnate. Killing men and women is wrong; but killing fiends is a duty. Hence . . . Robespierre and the Ogpu [secret police]. . . . A government with a comprehensive plan for the betterment of society is a government that uses torture. *Per contra*, if you never consider principles and have no plan, but deal with situations . . . piecemeal, you can afford to have unarmed policemen, liberty of speech, and *habeas corpus* (451-52).

Having betrayed a preference for spontaneity over planning, Beavis next raises the question of what happens when technology continues to advance while population starts to decline (as the Malthusian Huxley had noticed with concern).[10] The conclusion leads Beavis to a dilemma:

> Answer: it must either plan itself in accordance with general political and economic principles, or else break down. But governments with principles and plans have generally been tyrannies. . . . Must we resign ourselves to slavery and torture for the sake of coordination? . . . Breakdown on the one hand, Inquisition and Ogpu rule on the other. A real dilemma, if the plan is mainly economic and political. But think in terms of individual men, women, and children, not of States, Religions, Economic Systems, and such . . . abstractions: there is then a hope of passing between the horns (452).

Beavis is now espousing the Rampion "temporary solution" to the "individual madness that can only result in social revolution" (*PCP* 417) and so is on the road to conversion. Rampion had insisted on giving the necessary obeissance to the machine ethic before spending one's leisure hours

> in being a real complete human being. Not a newspaper reader, not a jazzer, not a radio fan. The industrialists who purvey standardized ready-made amusements to the masses are doing their best to make you . . . a mechanical imbecile in your leisure as in your hours of work. But don't let them. Make the effort of being human. . . . You've got to persuade everybody that all this grand industrial civilization is just a bad smell, and that the real significant life can only be lived apart from it (*PCP* 418).

So, too, Beavis speaks of people's need to develop into "full-grown human beings": unlike Clough's boring "movie-loving, jazz-loving, football-loving" neighbours (*NMTE* 221). He takes aim against ways of life which inhibit existential freedom: the "form of economic prosperity which consists in possessing unnecessary objects" and "passive amusements [which are not] a blessing" (453), particularly when that prosperity would lead to men's "being forced every few years, to go out and murder one another."

In 1931, Huxley had described the Achilles' heel of both capitalism and communism in "On the Charms of History". By catering exclusively to the needs of *homo oeconomicus* rather than to the "soul-encumbered" person, communism's zeal for radical reform must inevitably lead to more internecine violence of the sort unleashed against millions of dissident kulaks from 1928-1931 by the Soviet secret police, (OGPU), while capitalist competition must inevitably result in imperialist wars.

Roughly from the completion date of *Now More Than Ever* until he finished *Eyeless in Gaza*, nearly four years later, Huxley had been struggling to find a way to slip between the horns of the dilemma which had forced Barmby to call down a pox on both the capitalist and communist houses. Beavis's program of Constructive Pacifism, sketched in *Eyeless in Gaza* and more fully discussed in

the pamphlet *What Are You Going to Do About It?* (1936) marks Huxley's shift from cynic to activist. Shortly after completing *Now More Than Ever*, Huxley became an advocate for the cause implicit in Rampion's "temporary solution", a cause that had seemed unacceptable to Barmby in 1932, but which Huxley (and his alter-ego Beavis) accepted after events in Europe compelled the belief that the only hope for western civilization lay in an individual change of heart, consistent with a creed he could finally accept.

By the mid-thirties, Huxley had joined Canon H. R. L. Sheppard's Peace Pledge Union (PPU), and was advocating a program of pacifism which had several other components in addition to disarmament. As a prominent member of what was popularly known as Dick Sheppard's Army, Huxley propagandized for decentralised socialism, distribution and banking reform through the co-operative movement, reform of industrial management, educational reform, non-violent resistance as practiced by Gandhi in South Africa and India, open hostility to exploitation and racism, and, as a corollary, the promotion of international fraternity.

In a direct turn-about from the cynicism of Barmby, Aldous Huxley, like his mouthpiece, Anthony Beavis, began giving public talks, advocating group activity in support of Constructive Pacifism, and recommended variations on

local units made up of small teams that would meet regularly for common service and meditation: some would promote peace propaganda, charitable acts, education and the like.[11] The essential element in Huxley's new faith was that it must first of all be

> a personal ethic, a way of life for individuals; only on that condition will it come to be embodied . . . in forms of social and international organization. . . . It is easy to talk about a more excellent way of life, immensely difficult to live it. Five Latin words sum up the moral history of every man and woman who has ever lived: *Video meliora, proboque;/Deteriora sequor.* (I see the better and approve it: the worse is what I pursue.) (*What Are You Going to Do About It?*) (33).

For the rest of his life, Huxley attempted to speak against the worse and to follow the better.

Endnotes:

[1]David Bradshaw's edition of Huxley essays, *The Hidden Huxley* (London, 1994), makes available indispensable works which help clarify Huxley's changing political and social ideas, among them the essays referred to above (hereafter *HH*). In addition, several of the 173 essays in my edition of *Aldous Huxley's Hearst Essays* (New York and London, 1994) also illuminate Huxley's response to the social and economic crisis of the early thirties (hereafter *HE*).

[2]Aldous Huxley, typescript of *Now More Than Ever*, 7; hereafter, *NMTE*. The ninety-two page typescript is the property of the Harry Ransom Research Center, University of Texas, Austin. Huxley deleted the above reference to "administrative rationalization" as well as several lines of dialogue between Upavon, Lidgate, Lupton and Barmby. Those deletions also indicate that Lord Upavon was originally named Tom, a name later given to Lupton (Thomas).

[3]In April 1931, *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* ran an article, "'Tom'—Sir Oswald Mosley," signed by "A Member of Parliament." It was subtitled "An Estimate of that Dynamic Force in Politics—The Man who Called the Mother of Parliaments a Talking Shop" (38-39; 93-96). One month later Huxley's "Abroad in England" appeared in the same magazine (16-19; 84).

[4]*Punch* (17 December 1930), reproduced in Robert Skidelsky, *Oswald Mosley* (London, 1975).

[5]*After Democracy* (London, 1932) 24.

[6]Strachey referred to Wells as a fascist in *The Coming Struggle for Power* (London, 1932) 188. In "Inside the Whale", George Orwell linked Huxley with those who, like Pound and Eliot, "if forced at the pistol's point to choose between Fascism and some more democratic form of Socialism, would probably choose Fascism." *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters*, vol. 1, 509.

[7]See Skidelsky, 371.

[8]Hattersley disapprovingly cites such trusts as British American Tobacco, Lever Brothers, and the fifty allied companies of United Cold Storage—"which has a capital of £20,000,000 and controls practically the whole of the chilled-meat

traffic of Great Britain," as examples of companies whose "aim is to secure the absolute monopoly of some necessity of life so that it can, by eliminating competition, control effectively the price the public has to pay" (49). One remembers that Peggy Endicott's wealth is based on frozen meat, a monopoly commodity.

[9]J. B. Priestley, while convinced of the theoretical benefits of rationalization, feared its implementation without considering the human element:

> . . . these new ideas, which demand such terms as 'rationalization' and 'redundancy' . . . seem to me, who am no economist . . . excellent . . . if only because they hint at conscious definite control and planning, and are anti-muddle. But it is absurd that they should be put into operation without any reference to people. A rationalization of an industry that suddenly leaves a whole mass of men sinking into the bog of permanent unemployment, cannot be very rational. You may do a good stroke of work by declaring the Stockton shipyards 'redundant', but you cannot pretend that all the men who used to work in those yards are merely 'redundant' too . . . . [T]he men who formerly worked in the yards and engineering shops of Stockton, these English People are in a dreadful plight. Their labour, wages, full nutrition, self-respect, have been declared redundant. All their prospects on this earth have been carefully rationalized away . . . . We have done the dirty on them. We can plan quite neatly to close the doors of their workshops on them, but cannot plan to open anything. (*English Journey* 346)

[10]In 1925 the British birth-rate was the lowest on record. In France, the falling birthrate—from 30 per 1000 at the beginning of the 19th century to 15 per 1000 during the 1930s—induced M. Bokanowski, French cabinet minister in the Poincaré National Government, to agitate for an increased birth rate (*la politique de la famille*). See my article, "Huxley's Bokanovsky", *Science Fiction Studies*, 16, 1989, 85-89.

[11]Huxley's first talk for the PPU, "Pacifism and Philosophy", was delivered at Friends House, London, 3 December 1935.

II: THE THEATRICAL BACKGROUND

From 1919 until 1921, Huxley grudgingly reviewed plays; occasionally for *The Athenæum* and regularly for *The Westminster Gazette*. Sybil Bedford points out that because of the extra expenses entailed by the arrival of his son, Matthew, in April 1920, Huxley not only had to continue in his role as a full-time writer and part-time reviewer but was also compelled to take on a third job at the Chelsea Book Club (109). During this time of financial difficulty, "he never ceased to complain about the 'quite extraordinary badness of the ordinary play' and became more and more convinced that it ought not to be too difficult to beat the playwrights at their own game." By 23 June 1920, in a letter to his father, he seems to have fixed upon writing plays as a way out of what had become by then "this hectic life of activity" (*Letters* 187). He continued, "There is nothing but a commercial success that can free one from this deadly hustle . . . . I shall go on producing plays till I can get one staged and successful."

At least as early as 1918 Huxley had dabbled in the theatre. In a letter from Eton, dated 21 July, he told his brother Julian that he had been writing a play, "but it is wholly undramatic and the story . . . is so much more suitable for a

long-drawn Henry Jamesian short story that I shall abandon it and reshape it" (*Letters* 157).

What follows is the first clear indicator of Huxley's deliberately mercenary view of the stage, an attitude which helps explain his tenacity over the years in trying to write or adapt plays despite very limited commercial success:

> Plays are obviously the things one must pay attention to. Imprimis, they are the only literary essays out of which a lot of money can be made; and I am determined to make writing pay. Furthermore, infinitely crude as they are, they have distinct possibilities in the way of liveliness. I shall try and write a farce with a perfectly good machine-made plot—no easy task, I imagine; but it will be good practice and might, if acted, make money. After that, one can begin seriously considering some new and better stage convention by which some of the crudities of the theatre can be overcome. There is a very good play by Andreev in which the various conflicting characteristics in the hero are actually embodied and become acting characters in the piece. There seem to me to be possibilities in that method. Then one must certainly get rid of a great deal of the realism with regard to time and place. Then one must be permitted to have hundreds of scenes like Shakespeare—the cinema has already given a very good example in that respect (*Letters*, 157-158).

1. Huxley's Theatrical Apprenticeship

According to Grover Smith, that abortive play apparently evolved into the story "Happily Ever After" which appeared in the 1920 collection, *Limbo* (*Letters* 157). At the same time, Huxley published a one-act play, "Happy Families", which, in her book review, a perplexed Virginia Woolf found completely

incomprehensible, even on a second reading (*TLS* 5 February 1920, 83). Five years passed before it was staged, when an anonymous reviewer noticed "a full evening bill at the Court Theatre on Sunday [January 18] which the audience enjoyed greatly" ("Omicron", 581). Pirandello's sketch, *The Man with a Flower in his Mouth*, was followed by "Happy Families" in which "Mr. Aldous Huxley plays the sedulous ape to Pirandello with much wit and cunning." But the object of Huxley's imitation was not Pirandello but Leonid Andreev (1871-1919). Besides the reference cited above, Huxley's letter of 4 March 1920 to Eddy Sackville-West shows how Andreev offered strategic models for the budding playwright: "I'm glad *Limbo* has amused you: yes, the personages in "Happy Families" are facets of a single character—an application of the doctrine of the Trinity to psychological life" (*Letters* 182).

Ironically, as a novice playwright, Huxley was open to non-realist experiment regarding time, place, and characterization, but soon he determined that commercial success in the West-End theatre mode, and not innovation, was the only goal worth attaining. His later plays were dubbed old-fashioned, even in 1931, though some of his early attempts suggested the *avant-garde*. Following Andreev, "Happy Families" eschews realism by presenting the Freudian trinity of Ego, Id, and Superego in each of the two principal characters, a young Oxbridge

literary man named Aston Tyrell and the fashionably educated and coiffed Miss Topsy Garrick, who "paints charmingly, sings . . . and has read, or at least heard of, most of the best books in three languages, knows something, too, of economics and the doctrines of Freud" (*Limbo* 212-213).

Andreev's "very good play" which best fits Huxley's description was *Black Masks*, first produced in 1909 at the Moscow Art Theatre. Its theme is one of Huxley's favourites, the conflict between man's spiritual and animal natures, and the setting, a castle, symbolizes the protagonist's soul. In "Happy Families", Huxley similarly takes up that conflict between the spiritual and animal, and his setting, a hotel conservatory's tropical garden, also suggests the luxuriance of the human psyche. However, his major debt to Andreev stems from the way he draws various characters as different facets of the protagonist's personality. Aston (the reality principle) is literally shadowed by his Id-like manifestation, his black brother, Cain Washington Tyrell: "a Mendelian throwback to the pure Jamaican type" (214). The two are joined by a third brother, Sir Jasper, "a paler, thinner, more sinister and aristocratic Aston", clearly the superego figure (217).

Entering the conservatory after a turn round the hotel dance-floor with Topsy Garrick (Ego), Aston engages her in conversation while she, at appropriate moments in the dialogue, is transformed into her sister Belle (Id), a

carmine-lipped and large-breasted version of Topsy, or into her younger sister, prim Henrika (Superego), "dressed in a little white muslin frock set off with blue ribbons" (218). Huxley contents himself with some topical satiric dialogue and an intrigue which revolves around Aston's not very subtle but decorous preamble to seduction. A kiss is stolen, the blatantly sexual forms of plants evoke comment, Cain and Belle utter numerous *double entendres*, Aston's apology is offered and accepted, and the point is made: despite our seemly veneers, our social personae merely mask the animal within.

In addition to the play already mentioned, Huxley had written two others by April 1920. He referred to these dramatic efforts in a letter to Arnold Bennett in April, 1920. Bennett and Nigel Playfair had recently opened the Lyric Theatre at Hammersmith and had apparently asked Huxley to submit a play. Huxley responded:

> I have two plays on the stocks at the moment, neither, I fear, very suitable. One is a melodrama about Bolshevism—the breakup of the armies in 1917—what one would call a West End melodrama as opposed to a Lyceum melo. But it is hardly in the style of the Lyric. I will get the agent to send it there to be read. The other is a one-act farce . . . . I doubt if it's actable (*Letters* 183).

He co-wrote a play about Bolshevism with Lewis Gielgud, entitled *Red and White*, but it was never produced. In 1926 Heinemann published Gielgud's novel, *Red Soil*, an apparent reworking of the play's materials. The two later

produced a film scenario "adapted from their earlier experiments" (*Letters* 247n.). A farce, *Permutations Among the Nightingales*, appeared in T. S. Eliot's journal, *Coterie* (April 1920), and in Huxley's collection, *Mortal Coils*, in 1922. There followed two short parodies of John Drinkwater's historical dramas: "Albert, Prince Consort" (*Vanity Fair*, 18 March 1922) and "The Ambassador of Capripedia" (*Vanity Fair*, 18 May 1922); another comedy published in *Vanity Fair* in April 1923 was called "The Publisher". Huxley's evaluation of the farcical "Permutations" applies to the other plays—all strike one as mere apprentice work, though "Permutations" might well have gained an audience as a smart one-act play, especially in view of Huxley's status as one of the most fashionable young writers at the time.

However, a brief exercise in expressionism, the untitled "play within the novel" *Antic Hay*, is worthy of comment. Although short, it exists as a kind of mirror of the pursy times in *Antic Hay*. Its everyman protagonist, "The Monster", a symbol of fallen humanity, seeks salvation in the midst of his egotistical fellows. He first encounters a beautiful but empty-headed Beatrice-figure who turns out to be a heartless materialist interested in upgrading the quality of her underwear so that her loutish lover, "with curly hair and the face of a groom's", will continue to think she is "upper class". The Monster eventually finds solace in the arms of a

prostitute who insists on cash for services rendered. Huxley's playlet didactically depicts a modern wasteland and illuminates, however briefly, a similar theme in *Now More Than Ever.* Just as the last phrase uttered in that play—"frozen meat"—symbolically comments on the life-denying quality of the lost generation, represented by Ted, Duke of Monmouth, and Peggy Endicott, so do the setting and characterization in the playlet convey a striking sense of the corruption of the London inferno inhabited, in the novel, by Gumbril and Mrs. Viveash, and symbolically represented by their dramatic equivalents, The Monster looking for love, and his flapper *femme fatale.*

Unfortunately, "Happy Families" and the play within *Antic Hay* depict a dangerous trait in Huxley: his characters start as illustrations of a thesis rather than as people in their own right. Ibsen and Shaw also wrote thesis plays, but their characters often achieve the vitality that can override didacticism, whereas Huxley's characters usually do not. They are too often subordinate to the schema (as in a psychomachia).

In 1924 Huxley succeeded in having a play produced; it was not, however, an original work but an adaptation of Mrs. Frances Sheridan's eighteenth-century comedy in five acts, *The Discovery.* This had a brief run at The Lyric Theatre in Hammersmith. But the play which served to keep Huxley writing seriously for

the theatre was Campbell Dixon's *This Way to Paradise* (1930), an adaptation of *Point Counter Point*. After enthusiastically watching the final rehearsals of the production, Huxley contributed a foreword to the published edition of the play, in which he wrote that

> Mr. Dixon has given me an opportunity of vicariously tasting the joys and sorrows of the dramatist's life. The sip has been disquieting but heady. I am tempted in spite of my unshakeable affection for the novel, to renew the draught (*This Way to Paradise*, pref. 3).

The play ran from 30 January to 1 March 1930 at Daly's Theatre in London. Of the above-mentioned apprentice works, only "Happy Families" and the untitled playlet within *Antic Hay* deviate from realistic, formula-written drama, and, from 1924 onwards, Huxley abandoned experimentation in favour of conventionally realistic and potentially commercial plays.

2. Drama Reviews

Meanwhile, Huxley's theatre journalism revealed a canny assessment of the sort of play that might make money. Reviewing John Galsworthy's *The Skin Game*, he stated that "the literature of social problems . . . possesses life and value only insofar as its characters are real, individual human beings. The problem does not make the play; it is the characters that cause us to be interested in, or tolerant of the problem" (*Athenæum*, 4 June 1920, 733). He conceded that

Galsworthy's play was skillfully constructed but found fault with its characterization, discerning a falling off from earlier plays such as *The Silver Box* or *Justice*: "The problem . . . has definitely got the better of the human beings." Thus, early on, Huxley acknowledged in theory the primacy of character over thesis. He could see the weakness of the thesis play in the work of others. But in his own practice he repeated their mistakes. He tried to clothe ideas in human vestments because for him the idea was paramount, instead of starting with a character who developed a life of his own, so letting the ideas fall as they may.

Huxley's *Westminster Gazette* reviews echoed this critique. A review of Clifford Rean's *Ignorance* showed his dislike for this play and for its forerunner, the blatantly moral and didactic drama of ideas, *Damaged Goods*, by Eugène Brieux. Like that play, *Ignorance* attempted to shine the light of reason upon the twin social problems of venereal disease and slum landlords. But Huxley deplored both authors' use of characters who simply mouth ideas: in Rean's play, a sermonizing doctor exists solely to speak frankly about venereal disease. He also objected to the naive assumption that rational stage discussion could in itself defeat the causes of social ills, so deeply rooted as they are in "instinct and passion" (*WG* 7 December 1920). He dismissed Rean as a sincere, but naive

idealist whose "sort of drama of ideas . . . is so simple, so serenely above the complicated and inscrutable hurly-burly of human character" (9).

Two days later, Huxley reviewed a more successful play, *The Melting Pot*, by Israel Zangwill, pointing to an even more serious impediment to good theatre than sermonizing, which any would-be author of a drama of ideas must consider:

> The unsatisfactoriness of *The Melting Pot* . . . makes one think of the unsatisfactoriness of most of the so-called "drama of ideas". The drama is a form in which it is almost impossible to convey ideas of any complexity. To be understood at a first hearing by a mixed crowd of several hundred people an idea must be extraordinarily simple, and even then it must be repeated almost *ad nauseam* if it is to be thoroughly comprehended. Ideas of the least subtlety or novelty, controversial, difficult, obscure ideas simply escape a listening audience. The idea in every successful "drama of ideas" is always very obvious and is always very much rubbed in. In the best of such dramas it is rubbed in by action as well as by talk . . . [T]he difficulty of conveying an idea dramatically is so great, and the range of ideas that can be conveyed so limited, that one wonders why people who are interested in theories go to the trouble of writing a play when their notions could be far more subtly, accurately, and truly expressed in a novel or an essay (6).

If Huxley really held such a demeaning view of the theatre as a forum for serious ideas, it is difficult to understand why he would have attempted his own wordy play, *Now More Than Ever*, twelve years later. However, a review of Brieux's *The Three Daughters of M. Dupont* reveals a way in which discussion plays might be successful. Taking a more balanced view than Shaw, who called Brieux "incomparably the greatest writer France has produced since Molière"

(Holroyd II, 180), Huxley was less enthusiastic, dismissing *Damaged Goods* as having only "a certain moral and medical interest" (*W.G.* 4). He nonetheless felt that *The Three Daughters*, besides its moral lesson, was "also a dramatic work of art." For Huxley, the dramatic philosopher must yield to the dramatic artist. Throughout his reviews, he insisted on believable, self-motivated characterization. What made *The Three Daughters* superior to *Damaged Goods* was that, while the didactic element dominated the latter Brieux play, the moral surfaced only briefly in the former.

Huxley's review of J. Lynch Williams's comic problem play, *Why Marry?* (13 May 1920), takes a similar point of view. Yet, although he again faults a playwright for creating mere mouthpieces, he implies that, in the hands of the right dramatist, a play might succeed through "argumentative dialogue" if it had verbal brilliance. If Shaw had written *Why Marry?* then

> it might have been an amusing play; for Shaw has the secret of making the most aged . . . platitudes appear dazzlingly original, diabolically revolutionary. He has the secret of making his endless arguments and dissertations seem not only tolerable, but delightful. Why? Because he can write, because he has a style . . . . Mr. Williams has tried . . . to write a play, in which, as in *Man and Superman* and the rest, the interest depends not on action, but on argumentative dialogue. He has not succeeded in making his long debate on the merits and demerits of marriage interesting, simply because he has no style. His arguments appear . . . naked and unadorned. Shaw would have painted them up, put flaxen wings

> on them, clothed them in silks and jewels, and introduced them to us as exquisite young creatures, dashing, modern, provocative (6).

According to R. C. Churchill, Huxley's own discussion novels, such as *Brave New World* and *After Many a Summer* (1939), "make up for their artistic weakness in the exuberance of their ideas and fertility of comic invention" (228). It was, therefore, quite natural that his sort of mind should have responded to Shaw's witty and stylish ideas. Reviewing *The Doctor's Dilemma* (22 February 1921), he called Shaw "our best living dramatist" and praised him as "one of our best living writers of prose." In the same review, he commended him for resisting the naturalist theory that

> the dialogue of a good play ought to be written . . . in an exact imitation of the banalities, incoherences, and imbecilities of the ordinary conversation of ordinary human beings . . . . The function of an artist is to create, not slavishly to copy. An artist in fiction will make his characters speak as they would at their best and most articulate, not as they actually do. A love scene in real life is usually a speechless affair punctuated by remarks of a quite ineffable fatuity . . . . Reproduced without alteration on the stage, it is dismal. But touched by the creator's hand . . . it becomes . . . poignantly beautiful . . . . Mr. Shaw has transformed the inarticulate talk of men and women into a real and living eloquence (4).

Recalling the London theatre scene of 1929, in his 1979 memoir, Raymond Massey shared Huxley's contempt for the modish "naturalistic chatter favoured by many of the new dramatists", making the point that Maugham, Galsworthy,

H.M. Harwood, and Shaw were among "the few remaining playwrights who still wrote literate dialogue" (95). Huxley the reviewer praised all four, including the least celebrated of the group, Harold M. Harwood. In his *Westminster Gazette* review of 23 February 1921, he referred to him as "one of the few contemporary dramatists to whose plays one can look forward with the confident hope that they will be witty, well-constructed, and, psychologically, fairly true" (6). Huxley aspired to these three characteristics and succeeded at least in creating competent plays for which adjectives such as "well-constructed", "fairly true", and sometimes "witty" would not be inappropriate.

Still, Huxley's reviews betray an inordinate interest in "argumentative dialogue" and very little in the theatre's other elements, such as interesting situations, the pacing of speech patterns and stage movement. Indeed, Beth Wendell, a late dramatic collaborator with Huxley, made the revealing point that he was a poor visualizer, apparently "dependent on his collaborators to describe sets, entrances, exits"; in short, "in order to imagine the projection of a play onto the stage, he needed to have it described by someone else" (*Letters* 560 n.). Although it is true that Wendell made this remark in the 1950s, when she was working with Huxley on a stage version of *The Genius and the Goddess*, it is reasonable to assume that those visual deficiencies also plagued him in the

'thirties. Perhaps Huxley's poor eyesight had much to do with the way he favoured the verbal over the visual in all his plays.

On the other hand, part of the explanation for Huxley's apparent over-emphasis on ideas may also be found as early as 1 February 1931, when Huxley revealed to his interviewer, J. W. N. Sullivan, that his

> chief motive in writing has been the desire . . . to clarify a point of view to myself. I do not write for my readers; in fact, I don't like thinking about my readers . . . . I am chiefly interested in making clear a certain outlook on life (Sullivan 15).

In one sense, Huxley here admits to being indifferent to the audience and that his real interest in writing is the working out of his own philosophy of life.

There is an unusual element of autobiographical navel-contemplation in Huxley's three plays, an obsessive focus on the Huxley character's (or in the case of *Now More Than Ever*, the Huxley characters') coming of age. Huxley mentions to Sullivan the Greek ideal which cultivates a "balance and harmony amongst all [a man's] powers. He should not sacrifice any of his instincts and desires to others. They all have their rights to expression". A few months later, the protagonist of *The World of Light*, Hugo Wenham, draws the same conclusion as his creator, forsaking the exclusively intellectual life for a more provisional openness to other attitudes. And like Anthony Beavis in *Eyeless in Gaza*, so, in *Now More Than Ever*, Barmby and Clough represent those two

conflicting tendencies in Aldous Huxley himself. Similarly, in *The Gioconda Smile*, Hutton's struggle is Huxley's, one that pre-occupied him in all his fiction, plays, and many of his personal essays. He continually asks the same philosophical, non-dramatic question: "In life, what *should* one do?" But though he spoke of coming to a "provisional" outlook on life with each successive work, in effect, the conclusion stays the same. As in his own life, his characters move from aesthetic non-commitment to a willed, ethical commitment.

3. The Shavian Pedigree of Huxley's Discussion Plays

In *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, Shaw points out that, ever since *A Doll's House*, the chief characteristic of modernist plays has been the discussion of social ideas. Unlike well-made plays, with their "exposition in the first act, a situation in the second, and an unravelling in the third", plays by serious dramatists, according to Shaw, focus on discussion (*Q.I.* 160). In fact, he suggests that the discussion between Nora and Torvald, inserted in the last ten minutes of *A Doll's House*, is what clearly distinguishes it from the well-made French drama of the time (164). He continues:

> Since that time the discussion has extended far beyond the limits of the last ten minutes of an otherwise 'well-made play' . . . . Accordingly, we now have plays, including some of my own, which begin with discussion and end with action, and others in which the discussion interpenetrates the action from beginning to end . . . . The action of such plays consists of a case to be argued. If the case

> is uninteresting or stale or badly conducted . . . the play is a bad one. If it is important and novel and convincing or at least disturbing, the play is a good one. But . . . the play in which there is no argument and no case no longer counts as serious drama. It may still please the child . . . but nobody nowadays pretends to regard the well-made play as anything more than a commercial product which is not in question when modern schools of serious drama are under discussion (164).

Thus Shaw sets up a false dilemma, which perhaps hypnotized Huxley. For, according to Shaw, the alternatives are seemingly well-made trivia or thundering thesis.

Shaw also notes that exotic characters and improbable incidents common to melodrama are no longer required or even desired, but instead, as recognizable characters, the dramatist's personae should reflect "the spectators themselves". However recognizable Huxley's middle-class characters may be, Shaw's characters do not generally strike one as resembling the people next door. Rather, they are larger than life. One thinks of the Doolittles, Henry Higgins, Andrew and Barbara Undershaft.

Perhaps Huxley thought that by emphasizing stylishly argumentative dialogue, he was living up to the sobriquet given him by Derek Patmore: "The Bernard Shaw of Tomorrow" (*The Queen* 14). In fact, Huxley deviated from the master's path in many ways. First, he insisted on writing spiritual autobiography

rather than social propaganda. For Huxley the individual psyche was all whereas Shaw invariably turned his gaze outward to society.

Moreover, Shaw's other dramatic gifts compensated for what William Archer insisted was his being "too much concerned with ideas to probe very deep into character" (379). For Shaw, unlike Huxley and other imitators, was careful to ensure, at least in works such as *Major Barbara*, *Pygmalion* and *Saint Joan*, a dynamic use of stage business to underscore or undercut the main topics in so much talk.

Taking *Major Barbara* as an example, one might cite Stephen's changing position with respect to the chair in his mother's drawing room—how his eventual decision to remain seated, rather than bounding in and out of it, conveys his gradual mastery of Lady Brit. A similar character development is signalled by the brilliant blocking in Act 2, beginning with Bill Walker's outrageous, yet believable punching and hairpulling of Rummy Mitchens and Jenny Hill and ending with his triumph after Snobby Price's sly theft of Bill's pound. Act 3 contains the amusing spectacle of Lomax's playing with fire near the gunpowder shed and Undershaft's confiscation of the latter's matches.

In contrast, Huxley's *Now More Than Ever* is particularly bereft of interesting stage business. Compared to Shaw's depiction of swirling class

interaction in Covent Garden in the first act of *Pygmalion*, Huxley's Hyde Park scene seems curiously devoid of dynamic action. Then, too, not only is his eye less acute, but his ear is less receptive to the music of language. His proletarians remain an amorphous group, unlike Shaw's deftly-sketched personae who are often distinguished by their richly comic turns of phrase and accent. For example, Alfred Doolittle's native woodnotes wild—"I'm willing to tell you: I'm wanting to tell you: I'm willing to tell you" (56)—find no equivalent in Huxley.

In addition, Huxley is over-dependent on the box set, especially in *The World of Light*, with its repetitious drawing-room scenes. Shaw, on the other hand, makes dynamic use of the sets in the three Acts of *Major Barbara*, contrasting the upholstered enclosure of Wilton Crescent with the bleak discomfort of the courtyard at West Ham and the futuristic vista of Perivale St. Andrews.

Certainly in *The Quintessence*, Shaw stressed that discussion and its development "must so overspread and interpenetrate the action that it finally assimilates it, making play and discussion practically identical" (173). Such a recipe served as a deadly model for an intellectual, non-visualizer like Huxley. Shaw became popular by deliberately advocating a serious theatre made seemingly unserious by his sparkling, perverse vitality. But his followers, like

Huxley, were misled into producing genuinely unpopular (because untheatrical) discussion plays.

In 1924, Huxley distanced himself from the well-made playwright, aligning himself with Shaw, praising the idea-laden discussion play, *Back to Methuselah*, as "one of the capitally important works of our time" ("Mystery of the Theatre" 43). And in the same article he disparaged Pinero's well-made comedy, *His House in Order*, marvelling at a dramatist who could

> get away with a play in which there is no characterization subtler than caricature, no beauty of language less coarse than ranting rhetoric, no resemblance to life, only an effective situation . . . . I envied the lucky playwrights who can turn out a popular play in which nine out of ten of the personages are mere puppets, either without characters or else crudely caricatured, and where the plot is hardly more than a kind of epigrammatic trick . . . . All he need do is to invent one or two effective situations and leave the actors to make the most of them (114).

Three years later, Huxley still referred to the "magazine serial" quality of Pinero's plays ("Why I Do Not Go to the Theatre" June 1927).

Shaw was aware that the discussion play as launched by Ibsen was not likely to flourish in the commercial theatre, and he concluded his *Quintessence of Ibsen* with a plea for an endowed theatre:

> For this sort of enterprise an endowment is necessary . . . . [N]obody will endow mere pleasure, whereas doctrine can always command endowment. It is the foolish disclaiming of doctrine that keeps dramatic art unendowed . . . . When we have the sense to . . .

> promise that our endowed theatre will be an important place, and that it will make people of low tastes and tribal or commercial ideas horribly uncomfortable by its efforts to bring conviction of sin to them, we shall get endowment as easily as the religious people who are not foolishly ashamed to ask for what they want (175-76).

In 1921, Huxley expressed a similar concern when reviewing the work of the newly-formed St. Martin's-in-the-Fields Players and their hope to establish "a permanent theatre of their own in central London, where Shakespeare . . . and all that is best in our art and literature will be regularly performed" (*WG* 29 April, 20). Huxley then offered a more general indictment:

> It is necessary to combat the bad commercial theatre on its own ground, to join battle in the West End of London, pitching good plays against bad, intelligence against the serried ranks of waving legs, pearly grins, slobbering sentiment, and aged farce.

In light of that call to arms against the banality of the commercial theatre, Huxley's first two full-length plays stress intelligent discussion amongst the standard middle and upper class drawing rooms of Cambridge and London.

The World of Light could be seen as a satire on then-faddish spiritualism, but Huxley's play is more suited to the private domain of the reader's study, not to the public playhouse. For Huxley is writing a psychological case study: his own. Spiritual autobiography, not spiritualism has his attention. In *The World of Light* he sets out to examine his own psychological malaise. As in *Eyeless in Gaza*, he explores his Oedipal feelings toward his father, who, like Wenham in the

play, married a younger woman and had two children by her. Both works trace the protagonist's agnosticism to unpleasant childhood memories of the smell of congregations on wet Sunday mornings; both depict the son's aversion to paternal attempts at affection. Not only does Huxley bring in his father and stepmother, but his closest intellectual influence, D. H. Lawrence, whose Dionysian philosophy of life-worship becomes the dominant idea in *The World of Light*.

Although Huxley agreed with Shaw's theoretical advocacy of discussion, he was less convinced that the implementation of state socialism would usher in the millenium. In his 1929 review article of Shaw's *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism* ("A Disagreement With Mr. Shaw") he took exception to Shaw's simplistic belief in the efficacy of equal incomes. Nevertheless, the two authors do share a remarkably similar dissatisfaction with an unwieldy and anachronistic parliamentary system.

Huxley's concerns in the "Abroad in England" series and *Now More Than Ever* parallel those of Shaw in *The Apple Cart* and *On The Rocks*, as well as in the speech entitled "In Praise of Guy Fawkes" which Shaw gave the month after Huxley completed *Now More Than Ever*. Indeed, it would be fair to say that, during this time, Huxley and Shaw embark on what could be seen as congruent analyses of the problems besetting England in their "condition of England" drama

and prose. Both flirt with the idea of dictatorial rule as a countermeasure to what both call parliamentary "twaddle", and both deplore the ascendancy of plutocratic interests and a lack of selflessness in the corridors of power. Finally, both see the print and radio media as propagandists for the plutocracy.

In his preface to *The Apple Cart*, (published in 1930), Shaw notes:

> . . . the conflict is not really between royalty and democracy. It is between both and plutocracy, which, having destroyed the royal power by frank force under democratic pretexts, has bought and swallowed democracy. Money talks: money prints: money broadcasts: money reigns; and kings and labour leaders alike have to register its decrees, and even . . . to finance its enterprises and guarantee its profits. Democracy is no longer bought: it is bilked. Ministers who are socialist to the backbone are as helpless in the grip of Breakages, Limited as its acknowledged henchmen: from the moment when they attain to . . . power (meaning the drudgery of carrying on for the plutocrats) they no longer dare even to talk of nationalizing any industry, however socially vital, that has a farthing of profit for plutocracy still left in it . . . (10, 11).

Shaw's imaginary leap into the future in *The Apple Cart* depicts a world well on the road to the ten economic spheres of influence described in *Brave New World*. Like Shaw's Breakages, Limited, the economy of Huxley's Fordian dispensation is a world economy, its ten broad economic and political units administered by facsimiles of Mustapha Mond. Nine other such leaders guard the economy of the world corporate state in their respective zones. Just as Huxley sees America as the progenitor of the brave new world, so Shaw satirizes

American economic expansionism in the person of the American ambassador, Vanhattan, who, in effect, attempts to annex Great Britain through amalgamation. Since Crassus and Nicobar, Cabinet Ministers in Prime Minister Proteus's cabinet (read Ramsay MacDonald's Labour Cabinet), are in the employ of Breakages, Limited, Proteus's words to King Magnus ring hollow: "We can't have you saying you're the only safeguard against the political encroachment of big business whilst we are doing nothing but bungling and squabbling" (*AC* 59).

Huxley had warned that "bungling and squabbling" and parliamentary "twaddle" had caused a "grave national crisis". Two years later, in *On The Rocks* (1933), Shaw used similar language in the same context of economic crisis:

> The people of this country, and of all the European countries, and of America, are at present sick of being told that, thanks to democracy, they are the real government of the country. They know very well that they don't govern . . . and know nothing about Government except that it always supports profiteering, and doesn't really respect anything else, no matter what party flag it waves. They are sick of *twaddle* [emphasis mine] about liberty when they have no liberty (249).

Huxley referred to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a virtuoso performer (90), foreshadowing Shaw's idea that much of Proteus-MacDonald's parliamentary behaviour was mere play-acting.

The grave crisis which prompted *The Apple Cart*, *Brave New World*, and *Now More Than Ever* was, of course, unemployment. In *The Apple Cart*, the

chancellor of the exchequer, Balbus (Snowden), reveals himself as a willing tool of Breakages, Limited by blaming the economic crisis on the high wages of the worker (and by so doing, going against the theories of Henry Ford, Lord Leverhulme, and other enlightened employers): "Wages are too high. Anybody can earn from five to twenty pounds a week now, and a big dole when there is no job for him. And what Englishman will give his mind to politics as long as he can afford to keep a motor car?" (60). As in *Brave New World*, the consumption of transport serves to distract the populace from thinking about democracy.

In *Now More Than Ever*, Lupton fulfills roughly the same role as Balbus in *The Apple Cart*; that is, he represents Huxley's version of Breakages, Limited: namely, the entrenched but increasingly passé gang of politicians, industrialists (old Wagstaff of Middlesbrough), and rapacious financiers like the sinister American moneylender Wertheim. Moreover, like Balbus, Lupton maintains that lower wages are the answer to British capitalism's woes. Lidgate, on the other hand, is a cross between the new breed of international capitalist-rationalizer (like Ivar Kreuger-Alfred Mond-William Clissold) and Shaw's American ambassador, Vanhattan, who seems prepared to abandon democracy to the backroom machinations of American-controlled trusts, calling the nation state a "queer old geographical expression" (107). In response to Magnus's opposition to the idea

that England should merge with America into a "bigger and brighter concern", Vanhattan refers to an agreement that will see

> the clever people at Moscow and Berlin and Geneva . . . trying to federate . . . and it is fully understood between us that if we don't object to their move they will not object to ours. France, by which I take it to mean the Government at New Timgad, is too busy in Africa to fuss about what is happening at the ends of your little Channel Tube. So long as Paris is full of Americans, and Americans are full of money, all's well in the west from the French point of view . . . . The French want us to feel at home here [in England] . . . After all, we are at home here . . . . we find here everything we are accustomed to: our industrial products, our books, our plays, our sports, our Christian Science churches, our osteopaths, our movies and talkies. Put it in a small parcel and say our goods and our ideas. A political union with us will be just the official recognition of an already accomplished fact . . . (107).

The Apple Cart takes place in the later twentieth century—Sempronius's father is said to have died of solitude in 1962—and, as in *Brave New World*. poverty and hardship have been abolished by the Grand Inquisitors of government. Nicobar, a cabinet representative of Breakages Limited, says, "We stand for high wages . . . the voters like high wages. They know they are well off, and they don't know what you [Magnus] are grumbling about" (61).

But Magnus questions the safety of an economic prosperity based on non-resource industry: Middlesbrough and Birmingham are now the chocolate cream and Christmas cracker capitals of the world; unemployment has been

abolished, but only because England lives on the tribute of third world countries she exploits. Magnus fears revolution:

> Our big businessmen have abolished poverty by sending our capital abroad to places where poverty and hardship still exist—where labour is cheap. We live on the comfort of the imported profits of that capital. We're all ladies and gents now (61) . . . . [T]he more I see of the sort of prosperity that comes of your leaving our vital industries to big business men . . . the more I feel as if I were sitting on a volcano (63).

Here Magnus sounds much like Shaw in chapter 38 of *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism*, where he warns that such a nation as Britain in 1928 has become

> too idle and luxurious to be able to compel the foreign countries to pay the tribute on which it lives; and when they cease to feed it, it has lost the art of feeding itself and collapses in the midst of genteel splendor (*Guide* 146).

Huxley makes the same point in his essay "Compulsory Suicide" and in *Now More Than Ever*. So, too, Shaw fears that a policy of *panem et circenses* will mean the end of responsible government. As Proteus says, "I had rather be a dog than the Prime Minister of a country where the only things the inhabitants can be serious about are football and refreshments" (73).

Another similarity is the role of the press as agent of Breakages in the earlier play, while Upavon (Beaverbrook) uses his newspapers to campaign on behalf of Lidgate's rationalization schemes and for Empire unity. King Magnus

clearly is against Britain's becoming a mere appendage of American-dominated international capitalism, as embodied in the internationally-funded Pentland Firth Syndicate, "the gang of foreign capitalists who will make billions" from the "supply of power from the tides in the north of Scotland" (63).

Ultimately, Shaw laments the standardization of the modern world, a world of Fordian, Taylorized interchangeableness that obliterates national character and uniqueness:

> Nowadays men all over the world are as much alike as hotel dinners. It's no use pretending that the America of George Washington is going to swallow up the England of Queen Anne. The America of George Washington is as dead as Queen Anne. What they call an American is only a wop pretending to be a Pilgrim Father. He is no more Uncle Jonathan than you are John Bull . . . (122).

And Magnus replies: "Yes: we live in a world of wops, all melting into one another; and when all the frontiers are down London may be outvoted by Tennessee . . . . " This world without frontiers is the world of *Now More Than Ever*, one in which a high-minded British industrialist must resort to chicanery because of the deviousness of international finance.

Whereas Lupton acts like an agent of Breakages, Limited, trying, like Shaw's irresponsible plutocrats, "to make as much money out of us as possible" (21), the Marxist, Clough, offers a nineteenth-century analysis of world economy

based on inevitable class struggle, a world characterized by "zero-sum conflict, in which the gain of one party could be extracted only from the sacrifice of the other" (Maier 31). Lupton works for capitalists' gain at the expense of the workers; Clough, for the opposite. On the other hand, Lidgate's utopian espousal of Americanism (viz., Taylorism and Fordism) promises an escape from zero-sum conflict. Through his policy of the optimal allocation of production and income, an expansion of output through improved industrial organization, both sides—capitalist and worker, producer and consumer—would benefit. Lidgate is an advocate of a different kind of revolution, best defined in F. W. Taylor's phrase as "complete revolution on both sides":

> The great revolution that takes place in the mental attitude of the two parties under scientific management is that both sides take their eyes . . . off the division of the surplus as the all-important matter, and together turn their attention toward increasing the size of the surplus until this surplus becomes so large . . . that there is ample room for a large increase in wages for the workman and an equally large increase in profits for the manufacturer (Taylor, *Testimony* 27, 30).

With Taylor's scientific management comes that long-sought wish common to Huxley's two main sources for *Now More Than Ever*, Shaw's *Guide* (1928) and Fred Henderson's *The Economic Consequences of Power Production* (1931): increased production and juster distribution. Symbolically, Lidgate marries eighteenth-century paternalism (suggested by Romney's portraits and

Voltaire's leather-bound books) to the modern technology of long-distance telephony and global finance.

Shaw's other state-of-the-nation play, *On The Rocks* (1933), is even talkier than *Now More Than Ever*. The play is very much rooted in the economic crisis, and addresses the same issues; namely, Britain's economic drift, with a cabinet equivalent to the old gang of which Huxley spoke in "Greater and Lesser London" (1931). As in *Now More Than Ever*, many of the characters are based on living figures: the Prime Minister is MacDonald, the chief of police resembles Oswald Mosley, Alderwoman Aloysia Brollikins is Labour M.P. for Jarrow, Ellen Wilkinson. There is even a Clough-like, well-born Marxist from Oxford, Viscount Barking, who stands up for the unemployed.

Thematically, this play deals with some of the themes of *Now More Than Ever*; for example, Shaw's veteran socialist warhorse, Old Hipney, echoes Huxley's concern with third-world competition. In response to Chavender-MacDonald's anodyne that economic crises are unavoidably cyclical, but that "trade revives", Old Hipney sounds very much like the Huxley of "Compulsory Suicide":

> It used to. We was the workshop of the world then. But you gentlemen went out of the workshop business to make a war. And while that was going on our customers had to find out how to make things for themselves. Now we shall have to be their customers

> when we've any money to buy with . . . . What can we do against labor at a penny a day and power for next to nothing out of the burning bowels of the earth? (209).

Like Upavon, Prime Minister Chavender reveals his inadequate leadership and paucity of creative thinking about the crisis by parroting, "Our workers must make sacrifices" (209), a reminder of Upavon's position after he joins forces with Lupton late in *Now More Than Ever*. Shaw also makes the point Huxley made in "Abroad in England" and "Greater and Lesser London" that Parliament is just a talk-shop: "People don't look to Parliament for talk nowadays, that game is up."

Shaw helped create a different kind of theatre, one which satisfied the taste for an élitist dramatized lecture. He started from the premise that he knew better than the audience—knew better politically and morally—and the audience had come to the theatre for instruction. Huxley adopted this Shavian model.

4. The Political Plays of Munro and Galsworthy

One of the few contemporary playwrights besides Shaw that Huxley admired was C.K. Munro (1889-1973), whose successful West-End comedy, *At Mrs. Beam's* (1921), Huxley twice praised in his drama reviews. However, Munro's more serious plays of the 'twenties won him critical respect but little box-office success. Huxley certainly knew Munro's *The Rumour* (1923), a play which is even more cynical about capitalist manipulations than *Now More Than*

Ever. In 1930, Huxley read and contributed a preface to Alderton Pink's pessimistic book, *A Realist Looks at Democracy.* A minor source for *Brave New World,* the book praises Munro for warning of the dangers of

> amalgamating large firms into huge combines manipulating an enormous capital . . . . The principal industries transcend national limits and have become powerful extra-political organisations. In their world-wide competition for raw materials and markets they may at any time provoke international conflicts. Mr. C. K. Munro, in *The Rumour,* has given us a simplified picture of the baneful working of cosmopolitan financial groups. Whether a few heartless money-makers . . . are actually working with such complete callousness to human issues as Mr. Munro suggests is beside the point: the fact that it is possible for a few people to work in this way, while entirely masking their activities, gives sufficient cause for alarm (24).

Huxley's Hearst journalism of the early thirties reveals that he shared Munro's concern over the competition for international markets and its possible result in world war, but Munro appears to be the first British playwright to call attention to such dangers, although the warning was later written into plays by Galsworthy in 1924, Shaw in 1928, and Huxley in 1932. Referring to *The Rumour* and Galsworthy's *The Forest* (1924) in unpublished lecture notes, Una Ellis-Fermor links the two plays, noting that the capitalists in both plays have a common problem: "making a certain corner of the globe safe for speculators."[1]

In *The Rumour,* a prologue and epilogue provide a frame which advances the theme that the world is in the power of manipulating stock-market speculators

and multi-national munitions firms. The prologue is set in the sumptuous London drawing room of a fleshy capitalist named Luke, who is negotiating a marriage with Kitty, a precursor of the rich socialite, Peggy Endicott, in *Now More Than Ever*. Kitty is a cigar-smoking Bright Young Thing, "of the most modern and sophisticated type, heavily made-up, and dressed in the most expensive clothes" (11). Luke's capitalist partner, the chief shareholder in the Przimian Development Combine, Ned, joins them, and Kitty learns and approves of the plan to spread a rumour that will ensure Luke and his partners will continue to exploit the wealth of the central European state of Przimia (pronounced "Shimia"). Ned uses Moodie, the easily-worked young chief of the British legation in Przimia, to spread the rumour that Loria, Przimia's non-industrialized neighbour, plans to invade. The rumour will force the government to move to protect British capital interests in Przimia, and the fear of invasion will panic Ned's competitors for stock in the Przimian Development Combine. He proposes to buy up those shares cheaply as the rumour takes effect.

Moodie predictably approaches the Briton, Charles Lennard, central European director of the Imperial Armament Association, asking him to divert to Przimia some of the arms for which Loria purportedly has contracted. Lennard apparently is bound by what Shaw called the Armourer's Code in *Major Barbara*,

for he insists that a contract is a contract. When he later learns that Loria has not, in fact, ordered any arms, he pointedly fails to disabuse Moodie, thereby guaranteeing two new and eager clients in the governments of Przimia and Loria. His observation that in his official capacity he has "nothing to do with Britain" introduces the theme of the international combines' lack of loyalty to anything other than the profit motive.

One character to speak the truth only to be ignored or discredited is La Rubia, the Przimian Prime Minister, who is aware of the master-slave relationship between his country and The Great Powers. He suspects a capitalist conspiracy and distances himself from the scare-mongering by refusing to order armaments. However, the escalating disturbances in Przimia and Loria make it impossible not to arm for war, and, within months, a lobby group of City business interests, led by the newspaper tycoon Sir George Darnell, insists that the British government commit troops to the Przimian war effort against Loria. Darnell's jingoist press campaigns for war, and, as a result, the trades-union delegates, initially unwilling to sacrifice proletarian soldiers in a war to protect capitalists' profits, are silenced by the Prime Minister's dire warning of the potential loss of £350 million in British investment in Przimia and consequent unemployment at home. The accidental death of a British national living in Przimia is blamed upon Loria, and

Britain sends troops to Przimia to aid it in a "just war", a move that is also designed to forestall French interest in Britain's sphere of influence. Ned buys up the cheap shares in Przimian resource industries, and inevitably the armaments manufacturers decide to sell more arms to Przimia and fewer to cash-drained Loria. Britain and France impose a draconian peace settlement on Loria, ceding much of the richest Lorian land to Przimia. In lieu of war reparations, the defeated Lorians will be obliged to work as sweated labour in the re-built, British-owned factories. The play ends as it began with the complacent capitalists, Ned and Luke, happily telling Kitty of their gains.

Munro's technique approximates that of the documentarist. He sacrifices character to quick, sweeping montage. None of the characters could be described as anything other than a stock type, but the four Acts with several scenes each give a cross section of capitalist society, from the backroom manipulations of the financiers, to the colonialized Przimian and Lorian proletarians, to grey armaments dealers and privileged aristocrats, to a choric pair of middle-class clerks, Smith and Jones, who believe everything they read in the capitalist press.

But Huxley was more interested in probing the psyches of highly-educated upper-middle-class individuals than in conveying Munro's kind of portrait of the various classes' reactions to the manipulations of corrupt capitalists. Munro

examines the effects of newspaper propaganda on the middle-class clerks, Smith and Jones. He also shows how newspaper propaganda inflames youth to turn the accidental shooting of a British girl into a cause for war. On the other hand, Huxley is more interested in the motives of the newspaper propagandist and, instead of Munro's four-Act structure, contents himself with the traditional three-Act play containing, on average, two scenes in each Act, and rarely more than three.

Undaunted by Munro's financial failure, Huxley attempted a similar kind of political play in 1932. The fact that the commercially astute John Galsworthy wrote two plays in the twenties that could be dubbed political—*The Forest* (1924) and *Exiled* (1929)—may well have encouraged Huxley to attempt in *Now More Than Ever* a play that mines the same socio-political vein. Leon Lion, the director of *Exiled* and *The World of Light*, had asked Huxley for a dramatized version of *Brave New World* (Lion 114). With its cinematographic, documentary sweep, Huxley's novel might well have been suitable for adaptation by a playwright like Munro, but Huxley rejected Lion's suggestion in a letter of 27 August 1932 on the grounds that it seemed "hopelessly difficult owing to the all-but impossibility of giving the *background* its necessary value on the stage" (115). His rejection is instructive. By offering Lion *Now More Than Ever*, a play

with "a good deal of talk—but on subjects in which everybody is now interested", Huxley revealed his understandable wish to capitalize on his skill at dialogue. His problem in adapting *Brave New World* was apparently how to dramatize the science behind the three techniques for that society's stability: ectogenesis, hypnopaedia and neo-Pavlovian conditioning. Huxley's disembodied narrator had conveyed this complex material effortlessly in the first two chapters, but conveying this necessary exposition without lecturing would have challenged even an experienced playwright. Here one recalls Huxley's lack of confidence in the attention span of the typical audience member in his review of *The Melting Pot*. Thus, lacking the expressionistic proclivities of a Munro, as in the troops' embarcation scene in *The Rumour*, and apparently uninterested in adopting the lengthy, novelistic stage directions favoured by Shaw and Granville Barker, Huxley found an alternative in the Galsworthy mode.

The Silver Spoon (1926) and *Swan Song* (1928) are Galsworthy's fictional response to "the parlous state of England" (*Silver Spoon* 758), whereas *The Foundations* (1917), *The Forest* (1924), and *Exiled* (1929) form his dramatic response, the latter two plays being particularly germane to a discussion of Huxley's critique of capitalism in *Now More Than Ever*.

Allardyce Nicoll ventures the opinion that "perhaps *The Forest* owed something to the experimental forms of C. K. Munro" (406). What is more certain is that Galsworthy's theme in *The Forest* is the same as Munro's: manipulative and dishonest capitalists who perpetrate their crimes with impunity. But Galsworthy eschews Munro's documentary sweep and multiplicity of characters. Instead, he chooses a focused, novella-like plot: his own version of *Heart of Darkness* (The play is set in 1898.) Like Munro, he begins and ends his play in the comfortably appointed sanctum of a wealthy capitalist in the City of London.

In Adrian Bastaple's "lion's den", opulent images of Divinos cigars, and deep, upholstered armchairs serve as a symbolic counterpoint to the later jungle scenes where the relative discomfort of the primitive, mud-plastered hut of the expedition's first jungle camp, bereft of furnishings save for the "white-man's kit and mess tins", progressively yields to images of darkness, disease, and misery. Yet for all that contrast, "a spirit flame (as in tobacconists' shops)" perpetually lit in Bastaple's den specifically sets up the symbolic parallel to the ensuing infernal imagery of the jungle. That permanent flame, together with the smoke from the cigars, underscores a parallel between the jungle of the City and the jungle of the

Congo. Symbol and action recall Marlow's observation in *Heart of Darkness* that London "also has been one of the dark places on the earth".

Like the corrupt capitalists in *The Rumour*, Bastaple deliberately spreads false news in order to increase the value of his shares, in South African Concessions. But his initial subterfuge pretends to support a British expedition that will expose the Belgian government's traffic in slave labour in the Congo. Bastaple joins forces with the imperialist Beton who dreams of a South African home for British emigrants which would require a vast supply of coolie labour. Both Beton and Bastaple see the expedition as a diversionary tactic which will make the coolie scheme seem more palatable and therefore more likely to gain acceptance from the shareholders. With the availability of sweated labour, Bastaple looks forward to a huge increase in the value of his shares.

But Strood, the explorer hired by Beton and Bastaple to discomfit the Belgians, learns of a huge diamond find in South Africa and soon decides to press his own claim against that of a Belgian, the only other person to know of that discovery. He drives his carriers to the brink of exhaustion, exposing them and the three British members of the expedition to malaria, malnutrition, and the poison arrows of hostile cannibals. Strood and most of the expedition eventually die at the hands of the cannibals, and, amidst rumours of an impending war with

the Boers, Bastaple must act quickly to divest himself of the South African shares. He sells most of them before they begin to tumble, then buys them back after he plants a newspaper story of another DeBeers find in South Africa, netting over £200,000 on the strength of his false report. One critic sums up the effect of Bastaple's chicanery:

> Love of money and the suffering that it causes . . . . Several investors are cheated, [several] lose their lives . . . a number of native carriers . . . fall by the wayside. All this happens so that a master financier, sitting in his "den" in London, may pocket an enormous . . . profit. Bastaple, however cannot be punished (Shukla 92).

In the last scene, Bastaple's antagonist, Tregay, tries unsuccessfully to expose him: "There goes a tiger. But he's right . . . we shall never bring it home to him. His pads leave no track" (*Forest* 790).

The thematic parallels between *The Rumour*, *The Forest*, and *Now More Than Ever* are telling. Their pedigree might be traced to Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* (1882), whose theme deals with the filthy sources of profit in business. Other plays which form a kind of "enemy of the people" group include Shaw's *Widowers' Houses* (1892), Maugham's *The Tenth Man* (1911) and *Spread Eagle* (1928). All deal with corrupt capitalists who allow self-interest to take precedence over the common weal. *The Rumour*, *The Forest*, and *Now More Than Ever* also show tigers of industry exploiting labour by ruthless cuts in wages.

By the time Huxley began *Now More Than Ever*, he, like Galsworthy, had established a close working relationship with director Leon Lion. Galsworthy's condition of England play, *Exiled*, had been directed by Lion two years before he directed Huxley's *The World of Light* in 1931. Similarities of plot, character, theme, slang and aphorism suggest that Galsworthy may have influenced the direction of Huxley's second full-length play. In terms of technique, *Now More Than Ever* resembles *Exiled* more than, say, *The Apple Cart* or Munro's *The Rumour*. Unlike Shaw and Munro, Galsworthy and Huxley adhered to realistic characterization and conventional stage directions.

Sir John Mazer in *Exiled* is, like Arthur Lidgate in *Now More Than Ever*, a newly-rich capitalist who has acquired a luxurious property from an aristocratic family whose fortunes have been depleted. But the most important similarity between Lidgate and Mazer is that both advocate rationalization: Lidgate in the steel and textiles industries; Mazer, in the coal industry. Mazer would willingly see twenty thousand workers forced onto the dole as a result of his plan to use new technology in his ten-district combine, callously leaving the government to deal with the technologically displaced. In response to the ruined aristocrat, Sir Charles Denbury's position that "Big business isn't entitled to scrap human beings wholesale", Mazer responds, "It's the whole hog or nothing in these times. It's up

to government. We can't carry eight hundred families on our backs. It's bad enough losing our capital" (1069). Moreover, like Lupton, Mazer complains that labour costs are higher in Britain than elsewhere.

Another thematic device common to both plays is that both captains of industry have daughters named Joan, each of whom falls in love with her father's natural antagonist. Galsworthy's Joan Mazer is enamoured of Sir Charles Denbury whose family's ancient estate has been purchased by Mazer. Joan Lidgate, whose father has recently purchased the Duke of Monmouth's Berkeley Square mansion, falls in love with the man intent on overthrowing her father's sort of capitalism. Interestingly, both Joans think of themselves as modern, pleasure-seeking new women, but, in fact, both are attracted to the integrity of their respective men and seem eager to abandon their own superficial hedonism.

Not surprisingly—considering their composition dates—both plays bring up the possibility of a Bolshevist future for England in the face of growing economic crisis. Mazer confronts an aggressive miner with the denigrating, "If you think you're going to be any better off by getting rid of men like me, you're going balmy . . . . Fact is, you're balmy already" (1082).[2] Although the colloquial term was and is a common synonym for "mad", the presence of the rarer

colloquialism, "quod" (jail), and the locution "first catch your hare" is common to the two plays.

As in Huxley's journalism of 1931, the final scene of *Exiled* calls for the abandonment of party politics in favour of national government. It does not necessarily follow that Galsworthy's minor disparagement of parliamentary bickering translates into the urge for a national government to join in common cause against the evils of unemployment, but nevertheless, by giving Denbury's call for national government such prominence at the end of the play, Galsworthy reveals yet another idea common to Shaw and Huxley, notably, a lack of confidence in traditional party politics to solve exceptional economic crises. About to go into voluntary exile in Africa, Denbury reveals himself as an advocate of Foggartism, calling for agricultural self-sufficiency and the emigration of British youth to the Dominions.

5. *The World of Light* and *The Gioconda Smile*

"Can one add a cubit to one's moral stature?" asks Huxley in a letter to Sidney Schiff in 1925. Schiff, a novelist who wrote under the *nom de plume* of Stephen Hudson, had praised *Those Barren Leaves*, and Huxley graciously accepted the compliment, adding, however, that he thought the book "all right so far as it goes" but that one day he hoped to write a "Good Book" (Robert 25).

Perhaps the novel that Huxley would have considered worthiest of the label is *Eyeless in Gaza*, his fictional autobiography, whose protagonist, Anthony Beavis, sets out to enlarge his moral stature. Beavis, in fact, emerges from the Keatsian vale of soul-making with a soul. Clémentine Robert detects a similarly autobiographical streak in *The World of Light* and notes that during the ten-month gestation period, which saw four separate drafts of that play, Huxley was preparing *Eyeless in Gaza*. She fails to develop the autobiographical and thematic parallels between the two works. But surely those parallels exist. Moreover, it can be shown that not only *The World of Light* but Huxley's other plays, *Now More Than Ever* (1932) and *The Gioconda Smile* (1948), all deal with the same basic question of soul-making or the attempt to increase one's moral stature. Each of these three dramas is a satellite to *Eyeless in Gaza*. Like Anthony Beavis, each of the three protagonists of the plays strives to forge a soul and thereby extricate himself from a kind of death-in-life. Despite using a variety of dramatic genres—comedy, tragi-comic discussion, psychological thriller—Huxley asks the same question in each: "How should one live?" In addition, the two later plays, like *Eyeless in Gaza*, betray a structural debt to Kierkegaard's *Either/Or*.

In the first play, Huxley explores the same existential issues, but mines his own personal experiences to provide the structural schema. Looking back in 1967, Denis Blakelock, who first played Hugo Wenham, the protagonist of *The World of Light*, referred it as "one of the most distinguished and provocative pieces of writing for the theatre of that decade. People often remind me of it still and say how stimulating they found it" (84). The play also appealed greatly to H.G. Wells, possibly flattered by Huxley's use of the séance motif which Wells had employed the previous year in *The Autocracy of Mr. Parham.* He told its director, Leon Lion, that he had seen the play twice during its run, calling it "the most interesting play in London" (Lion 114). More importantly, the play was a great success with the critics. Writing in *The Week-end Review* of April 11, 1931, Ivor Brown called it "the most exciting play of the year" (538). James Agate likened Huxley to Ibsen in that *The World of Light* "is in two storeys, an upper one of thought and a lower one of action", and went on to compliment Huxley's characterization: "On the lower levels one ventures to congratulate Mr. Huxley upon having conceived his story for the stage and invented characters who are people as well as mouthpieces" (35).

Like Agate, Ashley Dukes put Huxley in distinguished company:

> Huxley's passion for unmasking spiritual shams is no less than Shaw's passion . . . for unmasking social and institutional shams;

> and there is a great deal in common between their two dramatic methods, though Huxley, lacking the more irrepressible kind of wit, has a real emotional pull through his capacity for loving and hating his characters. Otherwise it is curious to see a novelist, who is influenced by nobody and pursues the statement of truth with absolute disregard for any consequences, adopting the dramatic form of thirty years ago almost in its entirety. This absorbing piece about Spiritualism may prove to be the *Widowers' Houses* of some new revival of intellectual drama. (Dukes 459, 460).

Desmond MacCarthy defended the play from a minority of critics who ran it down, calling for an encore from Huxley, who, he said, shows "a remarkable talent for the stage" (99). Despite finding fault with an inadequately resolved ending, he called the play "absorbing, rich, pointful, superior . . . the situations so taut, the dialogue so true"(100). But, unfortunately, the play lost Lion six thousand pounds, a situation he described as "worth every ha'penny for the joy I had of it" (Lion 109).

Although this comedy appears to have little in common with *Now More Than Ever*, a discussion play with tragic undertones, Huxley's comments in a letter circa April 1931 provide a thematic link between the two:

> I was struck, when paying some visits in small Midland mining towns lately, to see the number of Spiritualist Chapels recently built or in course of building. The day-dreaming of the masses has two alternative outlets—in Communism and spiritualism, earthly paradise in future time or heavenly paradise in posthumous eternity. Earth is more popular at the moment: but heaven still has an important clientèle (*Letters* 347).

Originally, Huxley's first full-length play bore a resemblance to Galsworthy's *The Forest.* Just as the dominant contrast in *The Forest* was Civilization versus Jungle, so, too, Huxley originally intended to balance the scenes in the Wenham home with a last Act which was to have been set on a tropical island. The first scene of Act 4 was to have contained a philosophical discussion between Hugo and Bill, and the second scene was to have depicted a "Voodoo ceremony which has got to be as thrillingly impressive as the stage can make it" (Robert 64). Apparently, the unsettling vision of seething Nature in the Borneo Jungle, so effectively described in *Jesting Pilate* (1926), still weighed heavily on him in 1929, as is evidenced by his graphic description in "Wordsworth in the Tropics", a clear source for the "upper storey of thought" in *The World of Light.* Huxley sent the four-Act draft to Theresa Helburn of the New York Theatre Guild, hoping that her initial interest in earlier drafts would continue, and would result in a New York production. However, after two New York readers rejected the four-Act version, Huxley eventually offered the play, minus the fourth Act, to Leon Lion.

Another useful guide to Huxley's structural intent is the essay "A Meditation on the Moon", reprinted in *Music at Night* (1931). In a letter to T. S. Eliot, dated 22 March 1930, Huxley writes,

> I have the idea in my head of an essay . . . which is to serve as introduction to a play I am now writing—an essay developing more or less, the theme of R. Otto in his *Idea of the Holy.* If this goes well, I'd like to let you have a look at it for the *Criterion* . . . (*Letters* 333).

As "Meditation on the Moon" is the only Huxley essay to mention Rudolf Otto before 1931, the play in question is clearly *The World of Light*, the first reference to which is contained in a letter to D.H. Lawrence, dated 11 February 1930. In that letter, he laments the choice of Daly's, "one of the largest theatres in London with very expensive actors" for the production of the dramatic version of *Point Counter Point*, *This Way to Paradise* (*Letters* 328). His taste for playwrighting had obviously been whetted, and he observed that this production's final scene had used Beethoven's A minor quartet to good theatrical effect:

> The music created an extraordinary effect of mystical tranquillity in the midst of the prevailing horror. It showed me what very astonishing things can be done on the stage by somebody with a little imagination and the necessary minimum of technique. If I could have gone over the last scene, rewriting the whole thing, I could have made it quite prodigious, I believe. Even as it was—a kind of patchwork made up of fragments of the book [*Point Counter Point*] . . . stitched together . . . [I]t went remarkably well and held the audiences—even the popular Saturday night audience—absolutely spell-bound . . . . I'm tentatively writing a play at the moment (*Letters* 328).

Lawrence might have been surprised to find that the life-worshipping character in the new play was modelled on himself.

In a letter to Sydney Schiff, dated 28 March 1930, Huxley referred to the play, thinking it "producible" and, by May 1930, he had posted the first three Acts to Schiff. In early February 1931, shortly before the play began its run at The Royalty, Lion wrote Huxley, telling him that he considered it a thinker's play, one that in the old days would have been produced by the Stage Society, adding that, "I dare not flatter you or myself that it will make an appeal to more than a limited public" (Lion 113).

A thinker's play it certainly was: short on action and long on discussion. The philosophy don, Hugo Wenham, lives a life of quiet desperation, trying to interest undergraduates in Platonic philosophy. In deference to the wishes of his conventional parents, and partly because of a habitual passivity, he consents to marry his long-time friend, the aggressively spiritual Enid Deckle, now twenty-eight. But, after proposing to Enid under duress, Hugo abruptly accepts the offer of his Lawrentian friend, Bill Hamblin, to accompany him on a trip to Guiana, and thereby escape an inevitably tedious life. When the family receives the news of the presumed demise of Bill and Hugo in a sea-plane crash near Haiti, they eventually enter into apparent contact with Hugo during a series of séances, led by the spiritualist medium, Hubert Capes. Capes eventually replaces Hugo in Enid's affections, and they become clandestine lovers. All the while, the séances

continue with such success that Hugo's father writes a best-selling book about the consolations of Spiritualism, dubbing it a religion based on verifiable fact: documented cases of contact with the dead who have talked to their loved ones from "the world of light", in the great beyond.

The authenticity of Wenham's claim is called into doubt when Bill and Hugo, suddenly returned home, interrupt Hubert in mid-trance. After an awkward but happy reunion, Wenham decides to recant the findings in his book, to the chagrin of his publisher, the money-grubbing Mr. Gray. Neither Hugo's former relationship with Enid nor with his father promises to be any more fulfilling than before, and, after Huxley plays with the comic trope of the two suitors (Hugo and Hubert) fobbing off the no longer desired female onto a third party (Bill), Hugo decides to decamp, leaving the now blind Bill in Enid's loving care.

Disagreeing with Ashley Dukes' notion that the play sets out to unmask spiritual shams, James Agate noted that *The World of Light* is no more "about" spiritualism than *Romeo and Juliet* is about the bad mail service between Verona and Mantua. Yet this discussion play does have a thesis. Huxley's purpose is not to satirize a modish fad but to work out in dramatic terms the theme of his 1929 essay, "Wordsworth in the Tropics": man must deliberately choose to give a

hearing to both the Dr. Jekyll and the Mr. Hyde within. The former is a denizen of the intellectual and spiritual realm, the latter, a purely physical being who distrusts reason. In fact, a reading of the tropics essay and the essay which was conceived as a companion to *The World of Light*, "A Meditation on the Moon", prepares the reader for the play's main conflict. Its structure hinges on Hugo's choice between the rationalized spirituality embodied by Enid/Mr. Wenham and the Dionysian alternative represented by Bill Hamblin. Hamblin's surname rather too obviously suggests his role of Pied Piper to Hugo, an intellectual stifled by his "academic prison" (156). By following Bill in his passionate, physical life of adventure and by shunning the cerebral, Hugo does what Huxley exhorts us to do in "Wordsworth in the Tropics". Bill's "amphibian" sea plane serves the same symbolic function for Huxley as it did for Sir Thomas Browne: "Thus is man that great and true *amphibium*, whose nature is disposed to live . . . in divided and distinguished worlds . . . the one visible, the other invisible" (Browne 361). Huxley, like Hugo, had been living the kind of life described in 1929 as "a life lived . . . exclusively from the consciousness and in accordance with the considered judgements of the intellect [which] is a stunted life, a half-dead life " (*DWW* 124). Similarly, in Act 1, Hugo refers to himself as "dead, . . . empty. A dead vacuum" (153).

In many respects, Bill Hamblin represents the life-worshipping D.H. Lawrence. On 17 February 1931, the day after Aldous and Maria Huxley had dined with the Woolfs, Virginia Woolf unfavorably contrasted her uneventful life with Leonard to the experience-grasping life of the Huxleys:

> And I feel us, compared with Aldous and Maria, unsuccessful. They're off today to do mines, factories . . . black country; did the docks when they were here; must see England. They are going to the Sex Congress at Moscow, have been in India, will go to America, speak French, visit celebrities,—while here I live like a weevil in a biscuit . . . . Lord, how little I've seen, done, lived, felt, thought compared with the Huxleys . . . . Aldous takes life in hand . . . is endlessly athletic and adventurous. He will be able to say he did not waste his youth (*Diary* IV, 11-12).

Huxley's desire to see, do, live, feel, think was the culmination of a phase which might best be described as his Lawrentian life-worship period. Describing the aftermath of Huxley's tour of India and the Far-East as "a watershed in his intellectual development", David Bradshaw notes in his essay, "The Best of Companions", how, by May 1926, Huxley had demonstrated his disenchantment with the views of his earlier guru, the scientist-spiritualist J.W.N. Sullivan, by dismissing "all this rigmarole of Light from the East" as "genuinely nonsense . . . . For the time being, idealism and mysticism had been found wanting and were rejected." (Bradshaw, "Companions" 362).

Lawrence's life-worship soon filled the void left by Sullivan's discredited idealism. Much attention has been given to the Lawrentian ideas embodied by Mark Rampion in Huxley's *Point Counter Point* (1928), but Lawrence was to receive another treatment in Huxley's life-worshipping Bill Hamblin in *The World of Light.* He is described as thin, and his blindness and furious outbursts suggest the long, debilitating illness which Huxley witnessed first hand from 1928 until the day of Lawrence's death from tuberculosis in 1930. The Bill we see before he and Hugo depart for Guiana recalls the Lawrence who tempted Huxley to go with him to New Mexico: "He [Huxley] was tempted to fall in with Lawrence's idea and go out to live for six months on his ranch in New Mexico" (Bedford 194). Bill's view of the universe as "well draped with transcendental mystery . . . white mystery, black mystery" recalls Lawrence, especially as Huxley describes him at the time of the play's composition (*WOL* 157). Bill's accounts of the Borneo jungle and devil worship, as well as his derisive reference to Hugo's temperance and chastity are consistent with the assessment Huxley made in 1928 of Lawrence's beliefs: "[H]e believed that more power exercised by the 'dark loins of man', greater freedom for our instincts and intuitions would solve the world's troubles" (Bedford I, 192). Moreover, Huxley told his interviewer, John Chandros, in 1961 that he thought Lawrence, had he lived longer,

> would have come round to . . . a more balanced view—I mean this *whole* thing that we have to make the *best* of both worlds . . . . The point is that you *must* have both. The blood and the flesh are there—and in certain respects they are wiser than the intellect . . . . But on the other hand, we have to do a lot of things with the conscious mind. I mean, why *can't* we do *both*—we *have* to do both. This is the whole art of life: making the best of all the worlds. Here again is one of those fatal examples of trying to make everything conform to the standard of only *one* world. Seeing that we are amphibians, it's *no good* (Bedford 211).

Not only does the above passage clarify Huxley's use of the amphibian symbol, but the allusion to Lawrence's extremism recalls the crux of Huxley's essay, "Meditation on the Moon", where he cites Lawrence's preference for the numinous over the scientific, and where he deplores "the philosophies of nothing but", be they the "nothing-but spirit" philosophy of Enid/Wenham or the "nothing but sex" and the dark gods of Bill.

Desmond MacCarthy missed the point in desiring a tighter resolution for the play. The major point is that no single extremist philosophy is adequate for personal salvation. Hugo refuses to be bound by any of the "philosophies of nothing but" and so, in the absence of a more inclusive philosophy, all he can do is to escape the clutches of those who, like Enid, Wenham, or even Bill, accept straitened, exclusive ways of living.

Wenham is a sketch for Beavis's father in *Eyeless in Gaza*, and, like Leonard Huxley, Aldous's father, both characters exhibit an emotional

maladroitness. Wenham's smug belief that his spiritualism is the only scientifically valid religion, based on measurable contact with the spirit world, recalls Huxley's long attack on such rationalism in the 1929 essay, "Pascal", in *Do What You Will.* Huxley decries such a "monolithic philosophy of life", and Wenham is just the sort of person attacked in "Pascal" who "fail[s] to resist the temptation to fall down and worship the intellectual images carved by ourselves out of the world (whether objective or subjective, it makes no difference) with which experience has made us familiar" (229). Moreover, the play reflects Huxley's own shift from belief in the compatibility of metaphysics and modern physical science, a position held by Huxley's first guru, J. W. N. Sullivan, and by E. A. Burtt, whose book, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science* (1928), attacks the nineteenth-century materialistic foundations of science. Wenham represents the Sullivan-Burtt position, and Bill Hamblin's sway over Hugo reflects the ascendancy of D. H. Lawrence shortly before Huxley wrote the play.[3]

In 1931, Huxley had not yet found the positive creed of Constructive Pacifism. In 1929, he still considered himself a pyrrhonist, but his scepticism was tempered by an acceptance of what he called life-worship, as opposed to what he saw as Pascal's life-hating asceticism. He defined life-worship as a willingness to

give vent to the many people within us, a diversity of responses to life, rather than a single-minded one: a system of balanced excess, suggested by Blake, as well as by Lawrence. By play's end, Hugo has made an existential choice to escape from the illusory monolithic systems of Wenham/Enid towards that of the anti-rationalist, Bill Hamblin.

The position Huxley articulated in "Pascal" approximates that of Hugo: "I prefer to be dangerously free and alive, to being safely mummified. Therefore, I indulge my inconsistencies"(*DWW*). MacCarthy wrongly attributes to Huxley an attempt to show the differing responses to death by the young (Hugo) and the old (Wenham). But this is not Huxley's goal: rather, he quarrels with those who choose the philosophy of "nothing but." A younger Wenham would have been just as much the "ancestor of his Absolute" (*DWW* 243). His actions illustrate Huxley's impatience with wishful, procrustean thinking:

> The wish creates; it is desirable that there should be noumena; therefore, noumena exist and the noumenal world is more truly real than the world of everyday life . . . . It is by an exactly similar process that children invent imaginary playmates. The difference between children and grown-ups is that children do not try to justify their compensatory imaginations intellectually (*DWW* 240).

Like *The World of Light*, Huxley's *The Gioconda Smile* was built in two storeys. In the later play, Huxley used the crook-drama format, replete with arsenic poisoning, a love triangle, and the eleventh-hour rescue of Hutton from

the hangman's noose as the foundation for a further presentation of existential issues. The protagonist, Henry Hutton, must come to grips with the question: "How should one live?" The formula certainly worked, as the play ran for 296 performances, first at The New Theatre and later at Wyndham's—the most successful run of any serious play in 1948. Moreover, when one considers that such plays as Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*, Miller's *All My Sons*, and Rattigan's *The Browning Version* did more modest West-End business that year, Huxley's success was particularly noteworthy.

As early as June 1946, Huxley was at work on a screen treatment of *Gioconda* for Zoltan Korda and told Leon Lion that he was engaged in a "translation and development of an old theme . . . [a 1922 short story] into and through two different media . . . a play and also a movie script" (Bedford 70,79). The play's reviews were much better than those for the film, released in 1948 with the uninspired title, *A Woman's Vengeance*. It is possible that the play's existential theme, like that of *The World of Light*, might have originated in Huxley's reading of Sören Kierkegaard's *Either/Or*. Writing to his germanophile friend, Eddy Sackville West, on 15 February 1932, Huxley noted that "Kierkegaard is very queer, I think. I read some selections in German last year and a French translation of that episode in the huge novel *Enten Eller* [*Either/Or*]

called *Le Journal du Séducteur*, a very odd and good book" (*Letters* 356). But that influence is certainly clear and structurally significant in *Eyeless in Gaza*, the novel he was working on at that time. As Jerry Wasserman has demonstrated, Anthony Beavis embodies both the aloof aesthete and the emotionally committed, ethical man in *Either/Or*, differentiated as A and B.

> So Anthony becomes "A.B.": the embodiment of both the aesthetic and the ethical lives he has led. Like Kierkegaard before him, Huxley contains the two points of view in a single book and to some extent in a single character, showing both personal fragmentation and a means for resolving it into a unity via a literary structure that is itself both random and coherent (142, 143).

In *The Gioconda Smile*, Henry Hutton embodies both Kierkegaardian types: the aloof aesthete and, later, the committed ethical man. Speaking to the warder in the penultimate scene, he quotes Kierkegaard: "Life has to be lived forwards but it can only be understood backwards" (113). In 1932, Huxley had been so taken with the line that he included it in the "Memory" section of his anthology with commentary, *Texts and Pretexts*, reversing the order of the clauses (154).

Hutton at first nicely fits the mold of the aloof aesthete. To represent the early thirties, the set depicts a "characteristically 'modern' home" with wall-to-wall plate glass windows and paintings by Matisse, Braque, Léger, and Modigliani. Hutton is described as a handsome man, full of charm, a good talker. But his personal relationships are superficial. He merely tolerates his invalid wife,

Emily, and is so egocentric as to be unaware that her younger friend, Janet Spence, is in love with him. His wife's nurse, a narrow-minded moralist, hints to Janet that he is a lecher: "Miss Spence, I could tell you things that would make your hair stand on end . . . . Sex—that's all they care about. Nothing but sex . . . . Did Mrs. Hutton ever talk about . . . you know?" (9). Initially, Hutton, a self-described "seducer" (19), is a cynical adherent of the "nothing but sex" philosophy described in "Meditation on the Moon." When Hutton's teen-aged mistress, Doris Mead, asks for an avowal of love, he parries metaphysically:

> Do I *really* love you? Well, I must first know what your definition of reality is. Are you an empiricist? Do you believe exclusively in concrete particulars—such as this ear, that absurd little nose, this delicious mouth? . . . Or . . . are you a Platonic idealist? Do you believe that Love with a large L exists before any particular love with a little l? . . . Do you regard concepts as prior to percepts? (18)

And, like so many Huxley characters, he is given to cynical epigram: "There are two ways of being a martyr to ill-health. The first way is to suffer from it. The second is to suffer from the sufferers" (4).

Returning from a tryst with Doris, Hutton is informed by the family doctor that his wife is dead. Dr. Libbard attributes the cause of death to Nurse Braddock's feeding Mrs. Hutton red currants against his instructions. In reality, Janet Spence had laced Emily's coffee with weed killer. Guilt-ridden, Hutton reveals to Libbard his whereabouts at the time of his wife's death and decides to

change his ways, vowing to break off with Doris. He later describes himself to Janet as a slave to passion, always knowing the better, but choosing the worse:

> I'm no more free than Emily ever was. No freedom, no goodness, no order, no sense or meaning . . . . Just futility and squalor . . . . That's what my life has been and, . . . I've always known it. But I wouldn't ever face the fact. Now it can't be ignored anymore (33).

Act One ends with Hutton's decision to use Emily's money to establish a charitable foundation for impoverished young artists, and, ironically, he asks Janet to help him "open a few graves before I die. Including my own perhaps" (35). Janet interprets his request for her help as a declaration of love, and later, alone with Hutton during a power outage in a thunderstorm, she confesses her passion for him. That forces Hutton to reveal that he has married Doris. His noncommittal response to Janet's discussion of the charitable foundation also convinces her of his movement away from charity back to sensual enslavement. From this moment, she plots revenge and, with the aid of Nurse Braddock, eventually succeeds in having Emily's body exhumed, Hutton accused and then found guilty of poisoning his wife.

The metaphysical roots of *The Gioconda Smile* can be traced to the third chapter of Huxley's *Grey Eminence* (1944), the biography of Cardinal Richelieu's aide, Father Joseph. The third chapter of that book briefly summarizes the fundamentals of mystical thought from the time of the Upanishads. The key

terms of this chapter appear and re-appear in *Gioconda* with a frequency and sameness that precludes coincidence. The play chronicles Hutton's development from aloof, Kierkegaardian aesthete and seducer into an ethical, committed man. One of many clues to Huxley's thematic intent is the symbolism in Act III, Scene 1, where the stage is divided equally between Hutton's stark prison and the Spence drawing-room, decorated with a gilded wooden Buddha and a dancing bronze Krishna (78). Thus the division of the stage itself wordlessly conveys the either/or states of the human soul: the former, the prison of the ego; the latter, non-attached liberation from the self.

Libbard later comments, "They had a pretty realistic view of the world, these Hindus" (109). The enlightened Libbard is himself something of a mystic, his name a pointer to that state of liberation. He becomes for Henry Hutton what Dr. Miller is to Anthony Beavis, a guru, from the moment in Act One when Hutton confides in him, "Do you think I'm capable of change?" (29) Libbard's reference to Hindu mysticism is by no means gratuitous. Huxley systematically incorporates several key terms from chapter 3 of *Grey Eminence* into *Gioconda*'s dramatic texture. The fundamental concept of Hindu mysticism which Huxley treats along with the neo-Platonic and British mystical tradition is that

> ultimate reality is at once transcendent and immanent. God is the creator and sustainer of the world; yet the kingdom of God is also

> within us, as a mode of consciousness underlying . . . the ordinary individualized consciousness of everyday life, but incommensurable with it; different in kind, and yet realizable by anyone who is willing to 'lose his life in order to save it' (*G.E.* 56).

A second concept which Huxley imports into *Gioconda* is the notion of the divine spark dwelling in all men, though they might not realize that because they pursue "objects of craving and aversion" (61). Huxley also observes that mystical minds are rare because "the world is mainly populated by Micawbers, optimistically convinced that something or somebody will . . . get them out of the difficulties . . . from which they can be saved only by their own efforts" (63, 64). Finally, Huxley compares the state of "distraction" to "dust, to swarms of flies" (65). He continues: "Every human being has at one time realized the pointlessness and squalor of the common life of incessant . . . distractions" (69). Thus the *Grey Eminence* chapter is a crucial structural resource for *Gioconda*. Hutton describes his intemperance as "no freedom, no goodness, no order, no sense or meaning . . . . Just futility and *squalor*, the moral equivalent of a slum. That's what my life has been"(33). And in Act Two, scene two, we hear of his feelings at being brought to trial: "It's all a confusion. Like a *dust storm*. No, worse than that. Like being in the middle of *a swarm of insects* . . . " (emphases mine 66).

In view of these mystical underpinnings, the drawing-room set also takes on symbolic overtones. Speaking to Janet Spence, Libbard refers to Hutton's

previous everyday life as equivalent to living "behind plate-glass" (87), and, as a result, being cut off from the ultimate reality beyond or within. The plate-glass symbol suggests a comforting "wall of money and privilege" that renders one oblivious to the existential question of death. Hutton has been distracted from attending to the overwhelming question; he has failed to "come to terms with the terrible facts" (86), having been preoccupied by the "objects of craving and aversion" mentioned in *Grey Eminence*. The chief distracting object of craving is, of course, Doris, and later, the object of aversion, a hangman's noose, threatens to distract Hutton from coming to grips with his lack of humanity. Almost until his final day, he had demonstrated his Micawberism, optimistically clinging to the hope that Libbard might miraculously extricate him from his predicament (95). Instead, Libbard counsels him to "come to terms with the facts", rather than the illusions of the passions. He urges him to "stop holding onto" himself (95) and so "make a human being" out of an erstwhile automaton. He has welcomed Hutton's growing love for Doris and the news of her pregnancy, seeing that growing commitment to love as a signal of incipient humanity.

Endnotes

[1]This quotation is taken from Una Ellis-Fermor's annotated copy of *Three Plays* by C. K Munro. It contains lecture notes on an inside-front cover. The book is the property of the University of Alberta.

[2]Although Galsworthy uses the variant spelling "balmy" to denote "foolish" or "insane", the *Oxford English Dictionary* lists only "barmy" as synonymous with "foolish." However, *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary* prefers "balmy" in the sense used above. The *OED* notes that "barmy" means "full of, or covered with, barm or froth"; fig. "full of ferment, excitedly active, flighty." Compare Robert Burns, "Just now I've taen the fit o' rhyme/My barmie noodle's working prime" (*Works* III, 85) and David Lodge's novel *Ginger, You're Barmy* (1962).

[3]For an account of the Sullivan-Lawrence influence on Huxley's thought circa 1929-30, see David Bradshaw, "The Best of Companions: J. W. N. Sullivan, Aldous Huxley, and the New Physics," *Review of English Studies*, April and September 1996.

III: *NOW MORE THAN EVER*

Were *Now More Than Ever* a play solely concerned with England's economic woes during the darkest days of the depression, it would still be of interest as a measure of Huxley's ideological development, but it is more than that. David Bradshaw dismisses *Now More Than Ever* as a "woefully inept" play and values it only for the light it sheds on Huxley's interest in planning and related socio-economic ideas (Diss. 218). Such a judgement is unfair. To be sure, some of Barmby's speeches are too long and lecture-like, but these excesses could have been reduced by judicious pruning. Despite occasional long-windedness, the play is competent. Huxley's failure to gain financial backing in New York and London reflects the precarious economics of the times rather than the play's inherent defects. Could anyone have blamed Leon Lion for not wanting to mount the play the year after he lost £6000 on Huxley's *The World of Light*? Nor should Doone and Medley's rejection of *Now More Than Ever* for the *avant-garde* Group Theatre be taken as entirely dismissive. The play was simply not experimental enough for them, as indeed would have been their assessment of virtually every West-End play at the time.

Had his play been signed Shaw, not Huxley, impresarios would have stood in line to produce it. The plays it most resembles—namely Shaw's two political extravaganzas from the same period, *The Apple Cart* and *On The Rocks*—both enjoyed relatively long runs, and the former, at least, some measure of critical acclaim. Both have taken their place as minor additions to the Shaw canon, and both have been successfully revived by professional companies. Yet neither play offers a plot that is more than a vehicle for Shaw's political and economic ideas. Both plays could be seen as throwbacks to the kind of Stage Society piece which appealed to audiences which had ". . . not a theatre going, but rather, a lecture-going, sermon-loving appearance" (Barnes 209).

Now More Than Ever seems positively commercial in comparison, offering not only timely discussion of the parlous state of England but interesting existential character-development. Within its solidly realistic trappings, the play affords the set designer considerable variety: from the sumptuous elegance of the drawing rooms of the rich and famous, to a contrasting scene of kitchen-sink seediness, and an outdoor scene set in autumnal Hyde Park. Unlike Shaw's political extravaganzas, the plot offers much more than scaffolding upon which to hang speeches containing socio-political critiques. It also contains credible characterization and timely satire on the Bright Young Things. But a "feel-good"

play it was not. The theatre-going élite that tolerated or even expected Shaw's nose-tweaking was not likely to be interested in Huxley's soul-searching play, any more than it proved to be interested in what is arguably one of Maugham's best plays, though a box-office failure, *For Services Rendered*, which was on the boards in 1932 for a brief run at the time Huxley was completing *Now More Than Ever*.

1. Lidgate Agonistes

The idea for a serious drama about a financier like Ivar Kreuger may well have been suggested to Huxley upon reading Zamyatin's article, "L'avenir du théâtre" in May 1932. In this article, which Huxley discussed in a July 1932 Hearst essay, Zamyatin observes, "Et les échéances ne s'avançaient-elles pas plus terriblement sur Ivar Kreuger que la forêt de Birnam sur Macbeth?" (146).[1] In any case, *Now More Than Ever* was an ambitious play. Like its predecessor, *The World of Light*, it has an autobiographical element, but for the most part, Huxley successfully controlled his usual tendency to examine the condition of his own soul and focused instead on the condition of England. Sybil Bedford, who read the typescript in the early thirties, remembers it as being "rather exciting and without the ambiguities of *The World of Light*" (257). Yet the plot is complex, containing two more major characters and several more extras. It also has a

subplot, the love story which traces Joan's movement away from the ambit of the Bright Young Things into a love relationship with Clough. In the topical main plot, Huxley only partly avoids the fault which he attributed to the later Galsworthy—letting the problem get the better of the characters. Nonetheless, the gravity of the problem assures interest, for the continued well-being of England is at stake and the solution is Lidgate and Upavon's plan to rationalize industry and so stave off revolution from either the left or right. Apart from Barmby, whose speeches about the folly of creating trade competition abroad could be pruned, the characters are characters in their own right—not mere mouthpieces. Lidgate is recognizable as the aging capitalist less interested in the acquisitive side of finance than in its opportunities to exercise visionary planning and social benevolence. Like Kreuger and Mond, he is a utopian, but he is also credible as a father and a daring financier. Moreover, he reveals a vulnerable side to his personality when he admits to Barmby his ignorance of culture. Huxley might well, however, have retained the deletion he made in the epilogue which asserted that Lidgate kept no mistresses. That would have even further differentiated him from Lupton, who, as *l'homme moyen sensuel*, provides moments of humour at his own expense in his persistent wooing of Joan and as a

connoisseur of other people's sherry. Monmouth's foppish antics as gossip columnist and would-be man about town also provide much comedy.

Then, too, Huxley's play was surely ambitious in attempting to examine existential as well as social themes. Indeed, the existential aspect of *Now More Than Ever* is a continuation of the central theme of *The World of Light*, and Kierkegaard's Either/Or is embodied by Barmby's cynical aestheticism/Clough's social morality. In particular, Huxley's typescript deletions clarify an important thematic parallel between Wenham, Sr. (who had originally been described as "a captain of industry",) and Lidgate.[2] The tragically-conceived Lidgate learns what the comic father before him did not: that he has sacrificed his life and the lives of others to mere abstraction. Shortly before his suicide, he discovers the catastrophic truth about Lupton's betrayal, but this recognition leads to another, more important one. When Spence tries to defend Lidgate's choice of a lesser evil (forgery) over acquiescence in Lupton's self-interested schemes, Lidgate finds no comfort in such justification: "But, sir, you had the industry to think of. . . ." Huxley deleted many of Lidgate original lines in this scene. Lidgate originally responded to Spence's justification, "It was your duty", with the words,

> Was it? Well, perhaps it may have been. But all the same, one had no right to sacrifice realities for abstractions. And that's what I've been doing all these years; Barmby was quite right. Sacrificing living realities

> to the abstractions of money and power, to a theory of industrial efficiency, sacrificing my own life—sacrificing other people's lives, which is worse.

In the ensuing text, Lidgate recognizes that he had been treating Spence as a mere abstraction, failing even to notice his impending nervous collapse: "Human pride, human dignity. But what about human sensitiveness? God, how hopelessly stupid I've been . . . ." Moreover, he realizes that by pressing a pearl necklace and, later, an expensive coat on Joan he has also failed to treat her as a person rather than as abstract proof of his own worldly success.

The full extent of Lidgate's Lear-like recognition that he had "taken too little care" of those human abstractions below him is demonstrated by his remembrance of the slippers that Spence's sister had made for him and his insistence that he get some rest and convey thanks to his sister. Huxley comes uncomfortably close to sentimentality here. Another deleted line has Lidgate admit that he has been living like "prisoners on a mill (del. ts 80)." The probable allusion to *Samson Agonistes* here, later to resurface in *Eyeless in Gaza*, reinforces Lidgate's recognition of his tragic blindness. Like Wenham before him, he has substituted an idolatrous vision of industrial

efficiency for real engagement with others. And just as Hugo learns from Wenham's sin against Life, so does Lidgate's "son", Clough. Both Lidgate and Clough had been industriolaters, ascetic missionaries of the new dispensation, sacrificing themselves "*ad majorem Industriae gloriam*" as Huxley describes Henry Ford's career (*MN* 91). The fact that Clough returns to Joan in the last scene of the play indicates that he may be prepared to risk entering into a loving relationship with a real person. Throughout the play he had been too intent on reaching the lofty moral precincts described by Keats, which are reserved for "those to whom the miseries of the world/. . . will not let them rest/Who feel the giant agony of the world/And . . . like slaves to poor humanity/Labour for mortal good."[3]

2. Idolatries

One month before he completed *Now More Than Ever*, Huxley wrote a letter to Naomi Mitchison in which he meditates, as does Keats, on the human condition:

> . . . any dispassionate consideration of individual human destiny must be pessimistic. Because the moment the individual becomes conscious he cannot remain contented with his lot. He is aware (a) of what he believes to be a better lot beyond his reach (b) of his own steadily declining powers to achieve the better lot and (c) of death

> as the end. The only remedies are (a) working for a good cause, (the by-product of such work being happiness) . . . but it is a temporary intoxication. The Russians are trying to supply a new cause . . . every 5 years . . . .
> (b) The next remedy is love, for an individual or one's neighbours in general. This is the most powerful antidote against the misery of individual existence. If one has luck, one may find an individual to be true to: and if one is born with the right temperament and undergoes a suitable training one may be able to love one's neighbours in general. For people with temperaments and endowments that are in any way exceptional, the trouble is that they have so few real neighbours. See Lawrence's *Last Poems* for some very good remarks on this subject (*Letters* 362).

The above passage, which to this reader recalls the unhappiness with the human lot which permeates the "Ode to a Nightingale", is most revealing as a kind of guide to the structure of *Now More Than Ever*, and, indeed, of *Eyeless in Gaza*.

Much of this often brooding play lends itself to analysis in theological terms such as "charity", "cupidity", "idolatry", "humility", "accidie" and the like. Indeed Clough invites such a direction: "Queer the way one finds oneself using religious language. But they knew a lot about human beings, those Christians" (69). In the same speech to Joan early in Act 3, he shows himself a true Lawrentian by referring to the heroism required to feel affection for one's movie-loving, jazz-loving,

football-loving neighbours: "They bore me. They make me impatient. Why are their minds so limited and impersonal?" (*NMTE* 69).[4]

Act 2, Scene 1, set in Hyde Park, provides a symbolic tableau of three different "idolatries", a term Huxley applied in one of his Hearst essays to some of the causes which give purpose to an adherent's life: Clough's Marxism, the four women's religion, and the lunatic's struggle against imaginary injustice. Barmby views all three as wish fulfilments. We soon see that Lidgate, too, lives his life for a cause: his attempt to make capitalism "efficient at the top", exhausting though the task must be. Clough and Lidgate, both described as "ascetic", are prepared to devote their lives to systems that they feel will usher in a materialist heaven: Lidgate's presided over by a "tyrannical plutocrat," Clough's by a "tyrannical bureaucrat", as Barmby witheringly remarks (56).

Both are father figures for one of the few other loving characters in the play, Joan, who early in her relationship with Clough speaks of his "responsibility" for her new political philosophy. This willingness to forego personal responsibility for her own choices is consistent with her remarks to her father about her having to shoulder the burden of terrible freedom (22). Joan's main characteristic is a desire to relinquish

the burden of choice: hence her receptivity to Freudian analysis and Marxism—the two leading enemies of the world of the soul, which, in April 1932, Huxley contrasted with the world of politics ("Christ and the Present Crisis" Appendix A.8). In that essay, Huxley points out that, in their respective realms, both Caesar and God are in the right, although he claims that Christ's realm is under attack by the forces of communism and Freudianism: the former would politicize the individual soul out of existence, while the latter "would dissolve it by analysis."

Taking a hint from this essay, one sees that Joan is eager to forsake what Huxley calls "the world of souls", with its "free will . . . and moral judgement", for "the world of groups with its determinism and the brute force of statistical averages." She trendily analyses human behaviour with reference to the Oedipus complex and gladly foists onto Clough her responsibility for choosing the path of Communist activism. Ironically, Clough and his newest convert are the only characters in the play who cleave to abnegation and the voluntary limitation of possessions, traits Huxley associates with a "certain type of spiritual living." He goes on to say that

> Jesus's preaching of them was consonant, at the time, with sound economics as well as with sound spirituality. The pre-industrial age was an age of under-production. A religion which preached under-consumption was therefore economically admirable. Ours is an age of over-production, and the first duty of the good citizen . . . is over-consumption. Abnegation is spiritually wholesome and Jesus, if he returned, would certainly preach it. Would his preaching prevail against the economic forces encouraging unlimited acquisitiveness?

The character who embodies unlimited acquisitiveness is Lupton, and he prevails. He is a predator, whose cupidity is clear to all, but whose treachery, not altogether believably, is clear only to Lidgate's secretary, Spence. If Clough struggles to love his neighbour, Lupton is naturally predisposed to exploit his. He embodies the nineteenth-century red-in-tooth-and-claw *laissez-faire* capitalism as symbolized by "old Wagstaff of Middlesbrough", the real Middlesbrough having meant to Huxley approximately what the fictional Coketown did to Dickens in *Hard Times*. A representative of "the Old Gang", Lupton will, once he gains ownership of the iron and steel factories, unabashedly exploit his workers, cutting back their wages in order to sell his wares in an increasingly competitive world marketplace.

The seemingly kinder Upavon, however, reveals in the epilogue the cupidinous instincts of his "great public economy campaign" (244). Now that Lidgate, his partner in rationalization and amalgamation is dead, Upavon does not scruple to back the main chance, opting for reduced wages and benefits as the most direct way to lower production costs. Under the Old Gang's system, sacrifices will continue to be made by the working class.

However, Barmby gradually distances himself from Upavon's methods. Early in Act 1 he had indicated a willingness to work on Upavon's newspaper, but he later turns down the offer of a lucrative editorship, just as in 1929 Huxley had spurned a similar offer from Beaverbrook (*Letters* 307). During the course of the play, this cynic reminds us of the stock Huxley character who—from Walter Bidlake (*Point Counter Point*), through Anthony Beavis (*Eyeless in Gaza*), to Will Farnaby (*Island*)—exemplifies what Huxley called "the moral history of every man who has ever lived", struggling to break from the tendency to choose the worse after having seen and approved the better (*What Are You Going to Do About It*? 33). Like Clough, Barmby holds himself aloof from common humanity, but gradually he makes

some progress towards charity: he promises Lidgate that he will try to help Joan and disobeys her by giving Clough her new address, thus helping to bring about their reconciliation. Unable to love, he at least helps two lovers to come together.

Like Anthony Beavis, Barmby refers to himself as a court jester or resident philosopher to plutocrats, but, unlike Beavis, his moral history is cut short at the first faltering steps towards love and compassion. His besetting vice is probably spiritual sloth or accidie, which Huxley saw as "a sense of the universal futility . . . boredom and despair" (*OM* 22). Like Francis Chelifer in *Those Barren Leaves*, Barmby deliberately wills himself not to think about the human condition lest the floor open up and he be "launched into the abyss" (*TBL* 108). Late in Act 3, after Lidgate unburdens himself to Barmby, the latter reveals his own existential angst:

> But how hopelessly silly any kind of action is, if one stops to think about it. Moral: don't stop to think . . . . Because all thinking brings you in the long run to the same place. At the end of every corridor you open the same door and find yourself looking over the edge of the same black precipice—Down into the darkness of death . . . . And when one looks into the black hole, everything else seems silly. Not only your absurd finance but my ridiculous literature and Walter Clough's idiotic communism. Yes, even Shakespeare's poetry and

> Newton's science and St. Francis's religion—all utterly and hopelessly silly, so far as the individual is concerned .... Because . . . the individual is mortal. Condemned to death . . . into the black hole (234).

To the eminently rational Barmby, being *should* be intelligible, yet for him the terrifying and inescapable fact of death and oblivion renders life absurd. Alone among the play's characters, he can find no anodyne in such modern idolatries as rationalized capitalism, communism, or nationalism, nor is he comforted by traditional Christianity. He will have nothing to do with Lidgate's cause, nor with Clough's. Like Anthony Beavis, he believes implicitly in the paradox that "men with strong religious and revolutionary faith, men with well-thought out plans for improving the lot of their fellows . . . have been more systematically and cold-bloodedly cruel than any others (*EG* 451-52). He no doubt feels that both Lidgate and Clough are idolators. To use Lidgate's words (later deleted in Huxley's revision), they are both "trying to do the same thing. Trying to bring a little sense into the muddle—a bit of order and tidiness" (Ts 54). Like the virtually indistinguishable world-controllers of *Brave New World* (amalgams of capitalist board chairmen and communist commissars), they, in their insistence on catering exclusively to the material needs of *homo*

oeconomicus, ignore what to Barmby is undeniable: the individual's solitude and evanescence in an absurd universe. Perhaps his name, Barmby, suggests a kind of "barminess." From the perspective of the twentieth-century "idolator", his madness lies in disdaining to adopt a cause. Thematically, however, his barminess lies in his non-involvement, an inability to love, against which Anthony Beavis of *Eyeless in Gaza* struggles more successfully.

Monmouth and Peggy Endicott, the perpetual party-goers, represent extreme versions of Barmby's non-commitment. Whereas Upavon and Clough are associated with a time-consciousness, both Monmouth and Peggy are habitually late for appointments. We last see them as they prepare for a ski trip to St. Moritz, having casually consigned the once-beloved Joan to their pasts, without a word of commiseration, retreating to the safety of their money.

The question remains: just how good or bad is *Now More Than Ever*? Granted, the play is sometimes lecture-like, especially when Barmby expatiates on the danger of British overseas investment. But certainly the play's topical treatment of a national crisis and its sharply

conflicting characters might have won it larger audiences than for *The World of Light*, a tepid comedy with a dash of spiritualist hocus-pocus.

One test of the two plays' relative merits is whether either could be revived for a contemporary audience. What Irving Wardle said about a revival of *The Apple Cart* in 1977 would apply equally to *Now More Than Ever*: "*The Apple Cart* . . . forecasts the economic rebellion of the Third World . . . . The crisis he is writing about is still our crisis" (In Holroyd III, 161). While a glance at almost any daily newspaper in the developed world will confirm the power of economic crises to command attention, it must be admitted that the topicality of séances is very limited and that the identity crisis theme of *The World of Light* is by now old hat. While I agree with Christopher Newton that *Gioconda* is the most likely Huxley play to be revived, I think *Now More Than Ever* still worthy of a modern audience's attention.[5]

Evidence of Huxley's lengthy pursuit of theatrical success can be seen in his last letter, dictated on 17 November 1963, five days before his death. He optimistically informed his agent of "a new interest in a theatrical production of *After Many a Summer*. I will let you know whatever progress is made over here" (*Letters* 964).

3. *Now More Than Ever*: The Play Text

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ARTHUR LIDGATE, a financier.

JOAN, his daughter.

SPENCE, his secretary.

SIR THOMAS LUPTON, a speculator.

LORD UPAVON (JACK), newspaper magnate.

PHILIP BARMBY, journalist.

WALTER CLOUGH, Communist activist.

TED, DUKE OF MONMOUTH, gossip columnist.

PEGGY ENDICOTT, socialite.

BUTLER.

FOOTMAN.

LUNATIC.

4 FEMALE SALVATION ARMY HYMN SINGERS.

MALE SALVATION ARMY HARMONIUM PLAYER.

MEMBERS OF HYDE PARK CROWD.

SCENE

Act I	The library at Monmouth House, Arthur Lidgate's London residence.	
Act II	Scene 1.	Hyde Park, three weeks later.
	Scene 2.	The library at Monmouth House, six weeks later.
Act III	Scene 1.	Clough's living room, one month later.
	Scene 2.	The library at Monmouth House, same evening.
	Epilogue.	The same, four days later.

Period of the play, 1932.

ACT I

*The library at Monmouth House, Berkeley Square. A noble, late Georgian room, lined with bookshelves. There are busts on pedestals. On the left a marble fireplace surmounted by the full-length portrait of an eighteenth-century **DUKE OF MONMOUTH**. Two windows in the back wall, set in deep embrasures, with shelves between them; a door on the right, a large writing table in the centre of the room. All the furniture is in eighteenth-century mahogany. It is an evening in winter. The curtains are drawn, the lights are turned on. A fire burns in the grate. On a small table near the fireplace stands a tray with bottles and glasses. JOAN is alone in the room when the curtain rises. She sits, reading, in one of the window embrasures, where she cannot be seen from the door. Enter **FOOTMAN**, followed by **SIR THOMAS LUPTON**. **LUPTON** is a gross, red-faced, greasily prosperous looking man in the fifties.*

FOOTMAN: Mr. Lidgate will be down in a moment, sir. I'll go and tell him you're here.
(*LUPTON crosses the room and, standing in front of the fire, begins meditatively to pick his teeth, interrupting the process only to belch. JOAN meanwhile puts her book down on the seat beside her and rising tries to tiptoe away unheard and unseen towards the door. A sound causes LUPTON to turn round. JOAN says "Damn!" under her breath, then resigns herself to being caught.*)

LUPTON: Why, Joan, my dear child! Where were you hiding? (*He hurries across the room towards her, putting away his toothpick as he goes.*) This is a pleasure, Joan. (*He shakes her hand and continues to hold it, interminably.*) By the way, I suppose I still may call you Joan—in spite of your being so grown-up. May I?

JOAN: You can call me Jehoshaphat, if it gives you any pleasure.

LUPTON: (*Goggling sentimentally.*) When I think that you were a little girl with a pig tail, when first I saw you. (*He is still holding her right hand in his; now, with his left, he pats it. JOAN meanwhile is visibly trying to break loose.*) It seems only yesterday. And now . . . now you're a woman, Joan. A beautiful woman. It's extraordinary. (*He sighs.*)

JOAN: (*Freeing herself at last and walking towards the fireplace.*) Extraordinary? But what did you expect me to grow into? A beautiful chimpanzee? (*Looking at her watch.*) Uh, it's late. I must go and dress. Good-bye, Sir Thomas.

LUPTON: Why don't you call me Uncle Tom, as you used to?

JOAN: (*Shrugging her shoulders.*) All right, then. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet, Uncle Tom. I shall think of you in your cabin—Uncle Tom's cabin in Upper Brook Street.[1] With all the piccaninnies.[2] And the black mammy. (*Her laughter becomes uncontrollable.*) Oh dear, oh dear. It's a lovely thought. Good night, Uncle Tom.

LUPTON: Won't you keep me company for a moment?

JOAN: Sorry. We're going to the theatre. Dinner's early. I've got to go and get dressed. (*She walks towards the door. LUPTON follows and lays a hand on her arm.*)

LUPTON: One evening you must come out with me, Joan. We'll have a nice little dinner first. . . .

JOAN: At the cabin?

LUPTON: And then we'll go to a show.

JOAN: With black mammy as a chaperon. I insist on that.

---

[1]Upper Brook Street. In London W1. Extends from Grosvenor Square to Park Lane, almost entirely residential until 1939. Distinguished by a number of 18th-century houses. Stanley Baldwin resided on this street from 1930-32.

[2]Piccaninnies. Variant of "pickaninnies." From Spanish *pequeño*, adj., "little", or Portuguese diminutive *pequenino* (very little); or Spanish *pequeño niño* (little child). Negro child. The reference is to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), Harriet Beecher Stowe's anti-slavery novel. Perhaps the theme of wage-slavery and the need for reform is first suggested through this allusion.

LUPTON: Now do be serious, Joan. (*Sentimentally.*) It would be such fun, wouldn't it? (*He waits for her to reply; but she says nothing.*) What about next Tuesday.

JOAN: (*Moving again towards the door.*) Tuesday I'm engaged.

LUPTON: Wednesday, then.

JOAN: No, that's no good either.

LUPTON: Well, Thursday.

JOAN: Now look here, Sir Thomas—I mean Uncle Tom—I really can't settle it now. I shall have to look in my engagement book. Besides, it's so terribly late. (***LORD UPAVON***[3] *is announced by the* ***FOOTMAN****, and enters.* ***JOAN*** *runs towards him.*) Oh, hullo, Uppy darling. Daddy's not down yet and I've got to go and dress. And poor Sir Thomas is feeling lonely; so it's a godsend you've come to keep him company. Good night, Uppy. Good night, Uncle Tom. (*She runs out.* ***LUPTON*** *meanwhile has gone off, cross and dignified, to the little table near the fire-place, and has poured himself out a glass of sherry.* ***UPAVON*** *follows him.*)

UPAVON: Well, Lupton.

LUPTON: Evening. (*They shake hands.*) How's yourself?

UPAVON: Not so bad, thanks.

LUPTON: And the papers?

---

[3]Lord Upavon. The character is based upon press baron Lord Beaverbrook, (William) Max(well) Aitken, (1879-1964). Huxley seems to play on the river-brook parallel. Beaverbrook is said to have been, at least in part, the original for the protagonist of Arnold Bennett's *Lord Raingo* (1926); H. G. Wells's Sir Bussy Woodcock, *The Autocracy of Mr. Parham* (1930); and Evelyn Waugh's Lord Copper, *Scoop* (1938).

UPAVON: As usual. Circulation up and advertising down. Still, I won't complain. Meanwhile, you're looking very jolly and prosperous.

LUPTON: Jolly and prosperous—me? Why, man, I'm losing money every day, and now these cursed doctors are threatening me with diabetes—damn their eyes! (*He drinks indignantly; then makes a wry face.*) Pugh! What filthy sherry! (*He throws the remainder of the glass into the fire.*) But that's typical of Arthur Lidgate. Living in this ridiculous great palace, (*he makes a circular gesture*) and then drinking sherry from Woolworth's. I shall have to drink some gin to take the taste away. The man's a lunatic, I tell you.

UPAVON: You and he don't happen to have the same vices, that's all. Arthur wants power—nothing but power. Whereas you're primarily a sensualist.

LUPTON: Here, I say, Upavon! Steady on!

UPAVON: It's easy enough to understand and forgive one's own vices. But when it comes to other people's—no. Why, it's hard enough, I always find, to forgive other people's virtues. (*Pause.*) Arthur told me on the telephone that you'd had some good news from New York.

LUPTON: Not bad.

UPAVON: Old Wertheim's[4] agreeing to back Arthur's scheme?

LUPTON: Conditionally. I had a letter from him today.

UPAVON: You think he really means business?
(*The door opens. Enter LIDGATE.*[5] *He is a man in the early fifties,*

---

[4]Banker Maurice Wertheim was a director of New York Theatre Guild, whose executive director, Theresa Helburn, read and commented upon the drafts of both *The World of Light* (1931) and *NMTE* (1932). Neither play was ever produced by the Guild.

[5]Lidgate. His Christian name links him with the archetypal king; his surname, with medieval poet John Lydgate, whose best known work, *The Fall of Princes*, (1430-38) takes as its theme the *De Casibus* motif, not unlike *NMTE*. Possibly

commanding, powerful, but with an extraordinary charm of manner; he is handsome, with the face of an ascetic.) Ah, here's Arthur!

LIDGATE: How are you, Lupton? So sorry I've kept you waiting. And you, Jack, it's good to see you. Sit down, sit down. And help yourselves. *(**LUPTON** remains standing, the others sit.)*

UPAVON: *(Offering him a drink.)* What's yours, Arthur?

LIDGATE: Well . . . No, I don't think I'll have any.

LUPTON: You're grand enough here, I must say. *(Looking at the label on the portrait over the mantel.)* "George, Third Duke of Monmouth. By George Romney. (1734-1802)."[6] You've leased the place furnished?

LIDGATE: Heirlooms and all.

LUPTON: Must cost you a pretty penny, eh?

LIDGATE: *(Shrugs his shoulders and smiles.)*

LUPTON: Well, no doubt you find it worth the money. *(He sits down.)* Though I must say, I don't think much of these ducal chairs of yours. *(He tries to*

Huxley alludes also to Lydgate, George Eliot's innovative physician in *Middlemarch*. He is based mainly on Swedish financier, Ivar Kreuger (1880-1932), as well as Clarence Hatry (1888-1964), and to a lesser degree on Alfred Mond, Lord Melchett (1868-1930). See Huxley's "Proletarian Literature", August 1933: "The protagonists of all the ancient epics and dramas were invariably kings and queens . . . the great ones of the earth. Oedipus the Tyrant, King Agamemnon, the Prince of Denmark and their like have disappeared from our plays. . . . Imaginative literature still deals with the great ones of the earth, but the great ones are no longer nobles. They are financiers, manufacturers, professional men." (Rpt. *Aldous Huxley's Hearst Essays*, 209.)

[6]George Romney (1734-1802). Fashionable portrait painter for late eighteenth-century society. Self-portrait (1782) hangs in the National Portrait Gallery.

stretch himself out in the Hepplewhite[7] *arm chair as though it were the sofa in a club smoking room.*)

LIDGATE: Well, Lupton, what can we expect from New York?

LUPTON: Wertheim's are keen on the idea. I was just telling Upavon when you came in: I got a letter from the old man this morning. If the scheme goes through satisfactorily, they'd be ready to put up six and a half millions of the purchase price.

LIDGATE: Six and a half? I wish they'd been able to make it eight. (*He gets up and walks about the room, stroking his chin and frowning pensively.*) Still, it ought to be quite feasible to raise the rest here; anyhow, it's satisfactory to have a definite figure. You know where you are and you can act accordingly. Six and a half . . .

UPAVON: Meanwhile, what about the iron and steel people?

LUPTON: Yes; first catch your amalgamation, then cook it.[8] How near are you to catching, Arthur?

LIDGATE: Pretty close. Closer than anyone thinks. They've got to come in, whether they want to or not. Circumstances are on my side. It's their only way of reducing production costs.

---

[7]George Hepplewhite (d. 1786). Famous for his graceful neo-classical furniture, incompatible with Lupton's taste for *le confort moderne.* "Comfort, as we know it" says Huxley, "dates from after the French Revolution." ("Comfort", *Aldous Huxley's Hearst Essays,* 68.)

[8]Amalgamation. The economic slump after 1929 gave impetus to the vogue for rationalization in industry. The adage, "First catch your hare," is also used by Galsworthy in his play, *Exiled* (1929). Origin putatively attributed to Mrs. Glasse in her *Art of Cookery* (1747).

LUPTON: The only way? What about wages?[9] Wages have got to come down, I tell you. They've got to come down. If only we had a government with a bit of courage and . . . and vision . . . .

LIDGATE: Yes, yes. But let's stick to facts. Given the facts, amalgamation is their only method of reducing costs. They're being pushed towards it, as I pull. The worst trouble is with the older men.[10] I offer them an alternative to bankruptcy. But you'd really think they preferred bankruptcy. Anything rather than change their habits and resign their powers. Going down with the ship is all very well, as I was saying to old Wagstaff only today. (You know, Wagstaff from Middlesbrough.)[11] Very well indeed, I said. But keeping the ship afloat is still better. But he doesn't want the ship to float unless he's the captain.[12] He just refuses to understand.

UPAVON: Probably he can't understand, poor old devil. How much do you suppose you'll understand when you're a tottering old fossil of eighty?

---

[9]Lupton's assault on wages was associated with the older, more anarchic capitalism. On the contrary, Henry Ford and Lord Beaverbrook were proponents of high wages. See Bernard Shaw's *Intelligent Women's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism*, 307.

[10]Older men. Huxley attacks the "Old Gang" of politicians and financiers, whose perceived muddling was a common object of satire in the early 'thirties. See Huxley's "Greater and Lesser London" (1931) rpt. in David Bradshaw, *The Hidden Huxley: Contempt and Compassion for the Masses*, London: Faber, 1994, 91.

[11]Middlesbrough. In Huxley's article "Sight-Seeing in Alien Englands", (1931), rpt. Bradshaw. The Teesside industrial city symbolizes industrial blight and mismanagement, as well as Britain's decline from its nineteenth-century industrial preeminence. See also Shaw's *The Apple Cart* (1929) and J. B. Priestley, *English Journey* (1934) for similar symbolic treatment of Middlesbrough.

[12]Ship of state metaphor. Compare Shaw, *Heartbreak House* (1918) and *On the Rocks* (1933); also J. B. Priestley, *Bees on the Boat Deck* (1936).

LUPTON: (*Who is helping himself to more drink.*) I don't see why one should necessarily become a fossil when one's old.

UPAVON: No, I agree; you'll get out of the difficulty by becoming a corpse first.

LUPTON: What?

UPAVON: Diabetes and high blood pressure.

LUPTON: High? What do you know about it? It's not in the least high. (*But he puts down the bottle without filling the glass.*) Not in the least. (*Looking at his watch.*) Six-twenty-five. I must be off.

LIDGATE: Must you? (*He rings the bell on the fireplace.*) I'm sorry.

LUPTON: If there are any new developments, you'll keep me posted, won't you?

LIDGATE: Of course.

LUPTON: Well, good-bye, Arthur. So long, Upavon.

UPAVON: (*Waves his hand, grinning, as he does so, with mischievous irony. LUPTON goes out.*) You know, Arthur, you have some awful friends.

LIDGATE: (*Apologetically.*) He has the most astonishing nose for speculation. I've never known anyone like him. Besides, he's Wertheim's representative here.

UPAVON: I know, I know, but that doesn't make him more appetizing, does it?

LIDGATE: Poor old Lupton!

UPAVON: Poor old Arthur, on the contrary. The trouble with business associates is that they will insist on being treated as friends. If you won't pretend to be friendly, they're annoyed and refuse to do any more business.

LIDGATE: Lupton's not such a bad chap, really.

UPAVON: Yes, he is. But unfortunately, he's useful. And now let's disinfect the mental atmosphere and talk about something else. How's your battle with the issuing houses going?

LIDGATE: It's over; I've won. They wouldn't reduce their commission, and I've undercut them. I'm issuing three big municipal loans this winter. Portsmouth, Coventry, Nottingham.[13] Over five millions in all. It won't mean a great return in cash, with the commission down to where I've brought it. But it'll mean a lot of fresh credit—the chance to launch out somewhere new.

UPAVON: (*Laughing.*) That's the spirit, Arthur! What's it to be this time?

LIDGATE: Well, there's cotton. I've been nosing around a bit. Gosh, the chaos. You've no conception. But I've made some friends up there in Lancashire. And I've got the rough outlines of a plan. I'll explain it to you, Jack. The thing is to begin on the selling organizations. Once we've got those under control, we can . . .

(*Enter **FOOTMAN** with a card and salver.*)

What is it?

FOOTMAN: A gentleman has called for you, sir. He says he has an appointment.

LIDGATE: (*Looking at the card.*) Yes, of course. I'd forgotten. Show him in. (*Exit **FOOTMAN**.*) Do you mind, Jack? I've made the man come up specially from the country. You understand?

UPAVON: Of course. I'll clear out. (*He makes as if to rise; but **LIDGATE** pushes him back in his seat.*)

---

[13]Portsmouth, Coventry, Nottingham bond issues. In 1929, swindler Clarence Hatry illegally inflated the values of municipal bonds for Swindon, Gloucester, and Wakefield, precipitating a major financial crisis in the City of London. Hatry is the original for Huxley's Chawdron in the eponymous story, reprinted in *Brief Candles*, 1930.

LIDGATE: No, no, don't go. I'll tell you who the fellow is. He's a sort of writer. Not that I've ever read anything he wrote. But they say he's quite good in his line. I met him at Lady Hinksey's. He's an amusing fellow. Interesting too. I'd an idea of taking him on as a sort of secretary.

UPAVON: Another secretary?

LIDGATE: A different kind of secretary. You see I . . . but here he is. (*The door opens. The **FOOTMAN** announces, "Mr. Barmby."*[14] *Enter **PHILIP BARMBY**.*) So glad you were able to come, Mr. Barmby. Do you know my old friend, Lord Upavon?

BARMBY: Only from the caricatures. (*Shakes hands with UPAVON.*)

LIDGATE: Sherry, Mr. Barmby. Or vermouth? Or gin?

BARMBY: Vermouth, please. (*He looks round him.*) My word, this is a magnificent room! (*Glancing at the portrait over the mantelpiece.*) Romney, alas! Why did he have to go and choose the worst painter of the period? Thank you. (*Taking the glass from Lidgate.*) I say, these books! What a superb set of Voltaire! (*He puts down his glass and pulls out a volume.*) Oh, it's the Kehl edition of 1785—the one Voltaire himself worked on.[15] Lovely! (*Puts it back and takes up his glass again.*) I must say, I envy you this library, Mr. Lidgate.

LIDGATE: I'm ashamed to say I've never yet taken a book out of the shelves. I don't ever seem to have the time. And even if I had, I shouldn't know where to begin. You'd know, because you're an educated man. I'm not. I never had a proper education[16].

---

[14]Barmby. The cynical intellectual protagonist recalls Philip Quarles (*PCP*), Anthony Beavis (*EG*), (1936) and Jeremy Pordage (*AMS*), (1939). Like Barmby, Pordage also enjoys the run of his rich employer's extensive and valuable library.

[15]Kehl edition. Huxley refers to a "treasured" first edition of Voltaire's *Candide* in *On the Margin*, 12.

[16]The ensuing discussion recalls the thesis of Huxley's Hearst essay, "The Use of Uselessness", 55-56, wherein Huxley points to the greater prestige received by

BARMBY: No proper education on my line, if you like. But then I'm equally uneducated on yours. I mean, if you were to ask me what the difference was between a Bill of Exchange and a Bill of Lading, I simply shouldn't be able to answer.

LIDGATE: And nobody would think any the worse of you for that. But they would think the worse of me, if I said I'd never read a word of your Voltaire there. (*Pointing towards the bookshelf.*)

BARMBY: Yes, I admit my kind of education has more prestige than yours. It has more even than scientific education. Here I am—just a dilettante with a gift of the gab; and yet I cut much more ice than any scientific man short of a first-class genius. Most convenient for me, of course. But it's intrinsically, rather absurd. Well, (*he raises his glass*) long may the absurdity persist! (*He drinks.*)

UPAVON: It'll persist as long as ignorance and stupidity persist. Take my job, Mr. Barmby—newspapers. Who are the people I pay the big prices to? Not to the men who actually discover things, but to the ones who know how to make the public understand—or at any rate, make them think they understand—what it's all about. Just consider the economics of scientific discovery. The first account of it is published in some technical journal. Needless to say, the contribution isn't paid for. Then comes somebody like you, somebody with a general education and a gift of the gab; he reads the original communication, makes a re-hash of it for popular consumption, sends it to one of my papers and promptly receives a cheque for twenty guineas. But that's only the beginning. If he has any sense, he'll write another article for one of the high-brow weeklies—six

---

humanistic versus practical, technical knowledge. In a related vein, Upavon's observation above that the popularizing journalist gets more money than the expert, recalls Huxley's remark to Louise Morgan, "The great thing about starting off in journalism is that it gives you confidence. You find yourself writing a very good article on something you know nothing at all about. One week in the London Library puts you on an equality with all but 100 people in Great Britain. . . . Another thing—you find out that the people who know all about it can't write. The experts are always unreadable. Yes, journalism is a fraudulent but amusing profession." (Louise Morgan, "Aldous Huxley: Who Wrote his First Novel in Complete Darkness" *Everyman*, September 25, 1930, 264).

guineas—another for syndication in America—thirty or forty—a broadcast talk—twenty-five—and a lecture, which he can go on repeating indefinitely at anything from five to fifteen or twenty guineas an evening. By the time he's finished, he may have made a small fortune out of a discovery, for which the original discoverer has received exactly Nought pounds, zero shillings and no pence.

(Enter MR. SPENCE[17]*, a grey little man around 60. He walks on tiptoe. His manner is deprecating. He holds up a batch of letters and faintly whispers, "Letters to sign, sir" to LIDGATE, who beckons him to the table, where he sits down, reading and signing throughout the succeeding scene.)*

BARMBY: That's what's called distributive justice.

UPAVON: It's got nothing to do with justice: it's simply the functioning of the law of supply and demand. The great public demands an easy explanation. The man with the gift of the gab knows how to give it to them, and the scientific discoverer does not. Society pays people according as they supply its needs. Gab is as much a need as bread, and the gift of the gab is as sound a property as a wheat field.[18]

LIDGATE: A good deal sounder at the moment, Jack.

---

[17]Spence. Recalls fellow economic theorist, Thomas Spence (1750-1814), advocate of land redistribution in *The Real Rights of Man* (1775).

[18]Wheat field. Agricultural overproduction concerned Huxley greatly at this time. See his regret over the deliberate burning of surplus wheat in "Victory of Art Over Humanity", p. 81, Bradshaw. There he asserts, "Every wheat farmer in Europe, Australia, and North and South America is more or less completely bankrupt", evidence that "we are vanquished not only in the factories, but also in the fields . . ." (80). Julian Huxley, upon his return from a visit to the Soviet Union in 1931 (Aldous was to have accompanied him, but he had to cancel because of difficulties with the in-progress *Brave New World*), saw the overproduction of food and goods as evidence that economic co-ordination was vital. "Russia and the World", *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine*, May 1932, p. 55, rpt. in *A Scientist Among the Soviets*, New York and London: Harper, 1932.

UPAVON: It's the same in any society, even a Communistic one. Take Russia; nobody earns more in Russia than a good journalist. Men like you can look forward to the Revolution with perfect equanimity, Mr. Barmby.

BARMBY: What a very consoling piece of news!

UPAVON: I wish I could say the same for men like you, Arthur, or like myself. We shall just have our throats cut. No, the best thing we can do is to see that the revolution doesn't happen.

BARMBY: Do you really think you'll succeed?

UPAVON: Yes, I do. There's still a lot of life in capitalism.

LIDGATE: Provided it can be made efficient at the top.

UPAVON: (*Pointing to LIDGATE.*) Which is exactly what our friend here is doing for it. I don't know if you fully realize, Mr. Barmby, what a remarkable man you're dealing with in Arthur Lidgate, what a great man, I'd say.

SPENCE: (*Smiles and nods, whispers "Hear, hear."*)

LIDGATE: Oh, for goodness sake, Jack, shut up.

UPAVON: I shall not shut up, Arthur. Because I'm saying what I believe, and what I think this young man ought to know. Arthur Lidgate's a great man, Mr. Barmby, and don't you make any mistake about it. He's doing more for his country, I tell you, than all the politicians put together.[19]

LIDGATE: Is that meant to be a compliment, Jack?

UPAVON: No, don't laugh. I won't have you laughing. I'm talking about something serious. The most serious thing in the world—England. England!

---

[19]Upavon here voices modish dissatisfaction with politicians. See Huxley, "Forewarned is not Forearmed", *HE* 33, and Shaw, "In Praise of Guy Fawkes" 1932.

This man's working for England, Mr. Barmby. Working to put the country back in the place where it was fifty years ago. Working for English prosperity—which is the same as working for English power and prestige. And while he practises, I preach. While he fights, I blow the trumpet. Noisy, but necessary. (*He gets up.*) And if ever you feel inclined to do any trumpeting yourself, come round and see me at my office, Mr. Barmby, and we'll have a talk about the tune. Meanwhile . . . (*He shakes him by the hand.*)

BARMBY: Good-bye, and thank you. One day I shall certainly accept your invitation.

UPAVON: So long, Arthur.

LIDGATE: See you on Saturday for golf.[20] (*UPAVON goes out.*) Jack talks a bit wildly when he gets worked up. There's an enthusiast somewhere in his make-up.

BARMBY: So I realize. And my respect for him diminishes accordingly. I gave him credit for being just a professional newspaper man. But he wags his absurd flag with conviction.

LIDGATE: Do you want him to be insincere, then?

BARMBY: No; I want him to be intelligent, that's all.

LIDGATE: I'm almost afraid to confess it; but, you know, I wag my flag with conviction too.

---

[20]Golf. Beaverbrook was an ardent golfer. See the profile by Sheilah Graham in the November, 1931 issue of *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine*, "Lords of Literature: What Manner of Men are These who Wield the Power of the Press in Britain?": "After one year of golf, he would frequently go round the Walton Heath Golf Course in the eighties. . . . He would struggle and fight just as if the game of golf were the same as the game of life" (13, 14).

BARMBY: There's more excuse in your case; the fallacy isn't quite so obvious. The trouble with Upavon's self-sufficient empire[21] is (a) that it won't work (b) that, if it did work, it would infallibly involve us in war with the rest of the world. Whereas your plan for reviving British industry is superficially a bit more specious; one has to look a little closer to see its hopelessness.

SPENCE: (*Who has been listening to this sacrilegious attack on his god with horror, cannot refrain from bursting out.*) Really, sir, really!

LIDGATE: (*Laughing and, with a gesture, checking SPENCE.*) You're severe, Mr. Barmby. May I hear why my plan's hopeless? (*He goes on reading and signing.*)

BARMBY: Well, in the first place, I don't know in detail what your plan is; and, in the second, I haven't got time to launch out into a discourse on economics. But surely it must be sufficiently obvious by this time that any plan based on the private ownership of industry is quite hopeless.

LIDGATE: May I ask why?

BARMBY: Well, for all the obvious reasons. For you private owners, wages are a cost. You've got to keep them down. You're forced to introduce machines to displace wage-earners. In other words, you're forced to reduce the number of people who can consume your products. Under the profit-making system, you can never distribute enough purchasing power to absorb your production. So you've got to have exports.

SPENCE: Exports! Exactly! That's what we're working for—to capture the export trade.

---

[21]Self-sufficient empire. A reference to one of Beaverbrook's press crusades: known as Empire Free Trade. See A. J. P. Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, chapters 11-13, esp. 12, "The Crusader, 1930-31". He initially joined forces with Alfred Mond, Lord Melchett, to promote Empire Economic Union. See H. G. Wells's article in *The Realist*, September, 1929, "Imperialism, the Open Conspiracy, Lord Melchett and Lord Beaverbrook", 3-13. Huxley served on the editorial board of *The Realist*.

BARMBY: Of course, you are. And what do you do when you've captured it? You take imports in exchange. But you can never take enough imports to balance your exports. Why not? For the good reason that consumers who haven't got enough purchasing power to buy what you produce at home are equally incapable of buying the equivalent of your production in imports. What do you do about it? You have no alternative. The only way you can take payment for your exports is in capital investments abroad. For example, you export a certain number of million pounds' worth of iron and steel; you take imports for as much as, under your idiotic financial system, the home consumer can afford to buy; and the remainder you invest in the country to which you've exported your stuff.

SPENCE: And very sensible, if the investment's sound.

BARMBY: Wait a minute, Mr. Spence! What does it mean exactly when your investment is sound? It simply means this: that these new industries that you've financed, are so efficient that they can sell large quantities of their products.

SPENCE: Exactly.

BARMBY: But the more they sell, the less you sell. You've raised up a competitor against yourselves.[22] There's a struggle, which ends, invariably, in the same way: the government of the country in which you've invested your profits sticks up a tariff against you. You're shut out of yet another market. And not only that: you've got a new competitor for such markets as remain. And, of course, they don't remain very long. There are fewer and fewer of them every year. Because, inevitably, you go on doing exactly the same thing—investing what you won't allow your home-consumers to take as imports in new production abroad. Financing more and more rivals; driving more and more governments to set up protective tariffs against you.

SPENCE: (*Breaking out again.*) But if you reduce costs enough, tariffs don't matter. Nor does competition. It's all a question of reducing costs. And that's

---

[22]Much of this discussion covers issues dealt with in Huxley's source, Fred Henderson, *The Economic Consequences of Power Production*, London: 1931, and in Shaw, *Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism*, 1928, as well as in Huxley's essay, "Compulsory Suicide", *HE* 107. See Appendix A.

just what we're doing; aren't we, sir? (*To LIDGATE. Then, turning again to BARMBY.*) I don't think you realize what we've done already. I could give you figures about electrical equipment, and coal,[23] and artificial resins—you'd be astonished. And then the savings we're planning for iron and steel. I tell you, you don't realize.

BARMBY: On the contrary, Mr. Spence, I know how conscientiously you're trying to reduce the purchasing power of the home consumer so as to compete with your rivals abroad. It's admirable! And what huge sums you're investing overseas, in spite of the slump![24] Millions and millions to finance still more competitors! And when you've put them on their feet, you'll have to reduce home purchasing power still further in order to be able to compete with them. And after you've finally discharged all the wage earners that can be discharged, after you've reduced the wages of the rest to a point at which they can't consume anything but bread and water, then, when you're at last in a position to cut out your rivals and get through the tariff barriers, what follows?

SPENCE: (*Triumphantly.*) Why! you capture the trade!

BARMBY: No you don't; what follows is that the rest of the world starts talking about "unfair competition" and "dumping" and proceeds to close its frontiers. You won't be allowed to export a halfpennyworth of anything anywhere. After which there'll be nothing to do but declare war.[25] May I take a drop more vermouth?

LIDGATE: (*Still reading and signing.*) Do.

---

[23]Journalist Huxley visited the Lucas electrical equipment factory in Birmingham during 1931 and Durham coal mines in 1931.

[24]Slump. The year Huxley wrote *NMTE*, 1932, was considered the height of the economic crisis, with unemployment reaching its greatest ever number of 2.5 million.

[25]Shaw, "Common Sense About the War" and Huxley, *Beyond the Mexique Bay* (1934), cite economic competition as an important cause of war.

SPENCE: (*Very much agitated.*) You make it sound all very plausible, I know. But you're wrong somewhere. I feel it in my bones that you're wrong.

BARMBY: You're like all the politicians and business men I've ever talked to, Mr. Spence. They always feel things in their bones. Never by any chance in their heads.

LIDGATE: (*Putting down his pen.*) There! Now I'm ready to come to the rescue. (*He pats SPENCE'S arm. SPENCE smiles at him with a dog-like devotion.*) You've been mangling my poor lieutenant in the most bloodthirsty way, Mr. Barmby.

SPENCE: He's wrong. I'm convinced he's wrong.

LIDGATE: Right in theory, perhaps. But wrong in practice.

BARMBY: Practice? Heaven preserve me from practice! I've never done any practice in my life.

LIDGATE: Which is why you're in the wrong. Because when you practice, you're always feeling your way towards compromises and working arrangements. Theoretically, capitalism may not work under a system of power production.[26] But in practice, somehow or other we make it work.

BARMBY: Do you? I confess I hadn't noticed it.

LIDGATE: Well, the proof is that you've still got an income.

BARMBY: Once more, alas, I hadn't noticed it.

LIDGATE: According to the rules of logic, we've doubtless got no right to exist. But all the same, we do exist. (*He looks at his watch.*) Nearly a quarter to,

---

[26]Notice Lidgate's use of term "power production" and Huxley's letter to Leonard Huxley on 22 July 1932, praising Henderson's book, *The Economic Consequences of Power Production*. (*Letters* 359).

Spence. Time to ring up the American office.[27] Go and get me New York, will you?

SPENCE: Very well, sir. (*He picks up the letters and prepares to go.*)

LIDGATE: Thank you so much. (*Exit SPENCE.*) It's a great boon, this trans-Atlantic telephone.[28] You've no idea how it simplifies matters if one's operating on the stock market.

BARMBY: Does it?

LIDGATE: It makes all the difference.

BARMBY: Faraday and Clerk Maxwell[29] haven't lived in vain.

LIDGATE: It's no good making that kind of joke to and uneducated man, Mr. Barmby. Who was Clerk Maxwell? I've never heard of him.

BARMBY: Well, yes, I admit, that does slightly blunt the point of the remark.

---

[27]Significantly, America is seen as the sinister financial power in *The Apple Cart*, and in *NMTE*, the crucial source of needed capital is based in New York. See also Georges Duhamel, *America the Menace* (1931).

[28]Transatlantic telephone. Here the invention is used to conduct business rapidly.

[29]James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879), British scientist whose researches into electricity and magnetism, along with those of Michael Faraday, (1791-1867) resulted in advances in long distance radio and telephone transmissions. In "Science—the Double-Edged Tool", Huxley notes, "The abstruse researches of Faraday and Clerk Maxwell have resulted, among other things, in the jazz band at the Savoy Hotel being audible in Timbuctoo", *Listener*, 20 January, 1932, 112. Elsewhere, Huxley cites the two again to illustrate that the pair's researches made possible the shipboard radio reception of Hollywood gossip. Thus, Huxley insists on the irony derived from the often unexpected (and, to his mind, meretricious) results of scientific inquiry ("Gods Propose, Men Dispose", *Harper's Magazine*, 153 (Oct. 1926) 646-47.

LIDGATE: There's a terrible list of things and names I've never heard of. And, as a matter of fact, Mr. Barmby, it's about that I asked you to come up and see me. I had an idea—perhaps it's a hopelessly stupid idea—I give you leave to laugh at me if you think so—I had an idea that perhaps you might be persuaded to come and be—well, I don't know how to describe it exactly—a kind of resident philosopher here in Monmouth House—a kind of secretary for culture, if you see what I mean.

BARMBY: I confess I don't, exactly.

LIDGATE: I'll explain to you what I want. I want to live in this house as though—well, as though I belonged to it—as though I weren't what in fact I am: just a rich upstart, without education, without culture, without traditions. You may ask why I went and shoved myself into a place where I obviously don't belong. Partly for publicity's sake: it's a good advertisement. Partly vanity, no doubt. And then the pleasures of taking a kind of revenge on all these umpteenth dukes. (*Waving his hand towards the portrait over the mantelpiece.*) Me, the son of a Brondesbury[30] ironmonger, sitting in Monmouth House, while His Grace cools his heels outside. It's childish, no doubt, but the thought gives me a certain satisfaction.

BARMBY: I know it would give me an enormous pleasure.

LIDGATE: And then there's another reason—the chief reason—and that's my daughter. You've never met Joan, have you? (***BARMBY*** *shakes his head.*) Well, she's an only child. Her mother died when she was quite a baby. I've spoilt her, of course. I dare say I'm a bit weak-minded about her. But, after all, what a blessing it is to have something one can be weak-minded about! Anyhow, there she is, just coming out into the world. I wanted her to make her entrance in the best possible style. Monmouth House was to let. So here I am.

BARMBY: Of course. Most comprehensible.

---

[30]Brondesbury. Once a district of London, in 1909 it became a ward of the Willesden Urban District. Lidgate's father had been a dealer in iron and hardware.

LIDGATE: Good. You understand why I'm here. And now can you also understand that, being here, I don't want to seem too grotesquely out of the picture?

BARMBY: Perfectly.

LIDGATE: For Joan's sake even more than for my own. Well, my idea was this: to persuade you to come and help me adjust myself to these surroundings.

BARMBY: How?

LIDGATE: We shall have to find out by experiment. Meanwhile I can only make a few suggestions. Take art, for example. Why is that picture a good one, or a bad one, whichever the case may be? What's the difference between Chippendale and Jacobean? Who was Michelangelo? How do I tell, without looking at the name underneath, which of those busts is a Roman Emperor and which is an umpteenth duke? You could begin by teaching me to answer those questions. At present I have to be dumb when educated people are talking—hold my tongue for fear of saying something ludicrous. I want you to give me a little coaching, so that I needn't be afraid.

BARMBY: Well, I've no doubt something might be done.

LIDGATE: That's one side of the business: making me fit for civilized society. Another side, no less important, would be persuading the civilized society to come to me.

BARMBY: What?

LIDGATE: I find it so horribly difficult to get into touch with any intelligent, interesting people. Titles, yes; and the sort of people you see pictures of in the *Sketch*[31]—they're easy enough to get hold of. Too easy. They seem to come in

---

[31] *The Daily Sketch* was owned by Lord Rothermere. Waugh's friend, Patrick Balfour (1904-77), who became Lord Kinross in 1939, was its "Mr. Gossip". Balfour, nicknamed Pauper, is the probable model for Monmouth, the impecunious gossip-writing Duke. Huxley elsewhere laments the presence of

swarms. But, my God, they're boring! Worse even than City men. And uneducated! I want to meet people who've got an idea in their heads. And I want Joan to meet them. She's worth more than these imbecile young creatures she sees now.

BARMBY: That must be the one great disadvantage of being rich—having to associate with the other rich.

LIDGATE: Exactly. Well, I don't want to associate with the other rich.

BARMBY: You can't help it. Deep calls to deep. There's no escape.

LIDGATE: But at least I can take an occasional holiday. And that's what I want you to arrange for me. Invite your friends to the house here. Could you do that?

BARMBY: Give them food and drink, and there'll be no holding them back.

LIDGATE: You don't take a very high view of your fellow men, do you, Mr. Barmby?

BARMBY: The low view is safer. You don't have so far to fall, if they let you down. And if they ever let you up, what an unexpected pleasure! Well, as I was saying, they'll come all right, if you ask them.

LIDGATE: And would you be prepared to carry the invitations?

BARMBY: Well . . . (*He hesitates.*)

LIDGATE: But of course, there's no reason why you should decide at once.

"those pages of stuff about the Rich, all those deeply ignoble columns of Gossip, . . . the standing disgrace of modern English journalism. . . . [W]hen I read the Gossip Columns in one of our million-circulation newspapers, I *don't* feel particularly proud of being an Englishman." "Sight-Seeing in Alien Englands", *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine*, June, 1931, p. 51. See Appendix A.1 for the gossip section of this essay.

BARMBY: I'll be frank with you. The job tempts me. It's comfortable, it's easy. No work to speak of; and I do so detest every form of work! And then this library—it makes one's mouth water. The only disadvantage . . . (*He hesitates.*)

LIDGATE: Is what?

BARMBY: Well, that I shall be a parasite, a kind of court jester.[32]

LIDGATE: No, no. The resident philosopher.

BARMBY: It comes to the same thing. Philosophers who reside at courts automatically become jesters.

LIDGATE: I assure you . . .

BARMBY: (*Shrugging his shoulders.*) But, after all, what does it matter? Why shouldn't one be a parasite? (*Turning to LIDGATE.*) What had you thought of as a wage, Mr. Lidgate?

LIDGATE (*Embarrassed.*) Oh, I don't know. Say, fifty pounds a month.

BARMBY: Done! When do you want me to come?

LIDGATE: Whenever you like. The sooner the better.

BARMBY: All right, then. The day after tomorrow.

LIDGATE: Excellent. And now please don't let me hear any more talk about parasites. I don't want you to feel that you've sacrificed the smallest particle of independence. If you did feel that, I tell you frankly that you'd lose a great part of your value for me. I like these savage criticisms of yours. They are stimulating; they keep my mind awake. You mustn't think you've got to stop criticizing, just because I'm paying you a salary. On the contrary.

---

[32]Court jester. In *Eyeless in Gaza*, p. 129, Anthony Beavis uses the same term to describe his role in the entourage of wealthy Gerry Watchett and friends, young aristocrats and plutocrats whom Beavis must amuse.

BARMBY: Don't worry Mr. Lidgate. Being rude is one of the main functions of the court fool. I promise you I'll . . .
(*Enter JOAN LIDGATE; she has changed into an evening frock.*)

JOAN: Oh, I'm sorry, Daddy, I thought you were alone.

LIDGATE: Come in, come in. This is Mr. Barmby, Joan. (*BARMBY and JOAN shake hands.*) Mr. Barmby has consented to come and be my secretary.

JOAN: What? Instead of Mr. Spence? You've not sent away poor old Mr. Spence!

LIDGATE: No, no. Of course not.

BARMBY: Mr. Spence still remains the grand vizier. I've been taken on as the court fool.

JOAN: You're not the Barmby who writes things in the *Week-End Review*, by any chance?[33]

BARMBY: Alas, I am.

JOAN: There's no alas about it. I think some of them are most frightfully good—your articles, I mean. Have you ever written a book?

---

[33] *Week-End Review.* Weekly newspaper founded in 1930 as a result of *Saturday Review* editor Gerald Barry's disgruntlement over the proprietor's unilateral promise to support Beaverbrook's Empire Crusade. According to Max Nicholson, "its lively band of young contributors . . . set themselves to exposing the 'Old Gang' and their out-of-date, ineffectual ways of running the country." Cited in *Fifty Years of Political and Economic Planning*, London: Heinemann, 1981, p. 6. Nicholson, a sub-editor of *WER*, wrote the "National Plan For Great Britain", a sixteen-page supplement for the 14 February 1931 issue. Huxley mentions it as a "rather more fully worked-out plan" than that of Sir Oswald Mosley, for economic and political reform as a response to the economic crisis. In Bradshaw, p. 63.

BARMBY: Never.

JOAN: You ought to.

BARMBY: I know I ought to.

JOAN: Then why don't you?

BARMBY: Laziness, that's all.

JOAN: I don't think that's any excuse. My goodness, I wouldn't be lazy, if there were something I could do well. But there isn't. How I envy people like you and Daddy—people who know what they ought to do because they've got some talent that drives them on! People like me are in the hands of chance. There's no reason why they should do one thing rather than another. If they do finally end by tumbling into some groove, it's just because they happen to get married, or have to make a living. I think it's humiliating.

LIDGATE: (*Putting his arms round her, affectionately.*) How disgustingly insipid life would be, if there weren't something to grumble at!

JOAN: (*Indignantly.*) I'm not grumbling. I'm just stating facts.

BARMBY: But that's the definition of grumbling.

LIDGATE: Tell me, who are we going out with tonight?

JOAN: Only Peggy and Ted Monmouth.

LIDGATE: What, His Grace?

JOAN: But he's quite harmless, Daddy.

LIDGATE: That's just what he isn't. He'll go and stick us in his horrible gossip column tomorrow.

JOAN: I've made him promise he wouldn't.

LIDGATE: Gossip-writing dukes! I do think it's a bit thick, don't you Mr. Barmby?

BARMBY: Well, I confess, it's not exactly my idea of *noblesse oblige*.

JOAN: But the poor lamb's got to make his living.

LIDGATE: Well, let him choose another profession.

JOAN: But which? He's never been educated, he's got no talents. What else can he do except write gossip? And if the people who read Uppy's papers want that sort of drivel, why shouldn't he give it them?

BARMBY: Unanswerable, Miss Lidgate! (*Getting up from his chair.*) But I must be going, I'm afraid. Good-bye. (*Shakes hands, then turns to **LIDGATE**.*) Good-bye.

LIDGATE: Then I can expect you the day after tomorrow.

BARMBY: Without fail.

LIDGATE: Excellent. (***BARMBY** goes out.*) What do you think of him, Joan?

JOAN: Somehow he makes me rather sad.

LIDGATE: Sad?

JOAN: He's so . . . I don't know . . . so resigned. The way he laughs at everything including himself. People oughtn't to do that. They ought to look ferocious, and put down their heads, and charge, like a bull. (*She makes as if to charge into the middle of her father's waistcoat.*)

LIDGATE: (*Keeping her off.*) Here! Hi! I'm not a toreador.

JOAN: (*Straightening herself up, and still laughing.*) But you are. You are. And that's just why I adore you. (*She throws her arms round his neck and kisses him.*) The most ferocious old matador. (*In another tone.*) Seriously, you know, I could never marry a man who wasn't a bit of a bull fighter.

LIDGATE: Well, I hope that rules out His Grace.

JOAN: What, Ted? Do you mean to say that you'd imagined. . ..

LIDGATE: (*Rather embarrassed.*) Well, I'd noticed him buzzing round a good deal recently.

JOAN: But did you think I was listening to the buzz?

LIDGATE: (*Shrugging his shoulders uncomfortably.*) One never knows.

JOAN: Well, all I can say is that you ought to know. Ted, indeed! My good man! You must have an Oedipus complex to imagine such things. Jealous of poor little Ted!

LIDGATE: (*Shocked.*) Joan! How can you talk like that?

JOAN: Seriously, Daddy, I couldn't stand a man who was content to sit and do nothing. People who do nothing—you know, they're terrible really—even when they're nice people. Peggy and Diana and Ted and Sibyl and all the rest of them. I like them a lot, you know. But all the same they're terrible. And I'm frightened of becoming like them. And if I did, you know it would be a bit your fault, Daddy.

LIDGATE: *My* fault? Why?

JOAN: For bringing me up in such a ridiculous way.

LIDGATE: But, my darling, you had the best education I knew how to give you.

JOAN: I know. That's just what I complain of. Years and years of the most expensive schools; and at the end of it all, there's nothing I know how to do. Absolutely nothing. You'd have done better to pitchfork me into the world at sixteen—the same as was done to you. Then I should have damn well had to learn something—if only to darn my own stockings. As it is . . . (*She shrugs her shoulders despairingly.*)

LIDGATE: But, Joan, you speak as though everything were over and finished. It isn't. You're still at the beginning. You can study what you like, wherever you like. Surely you know that. I'm ready to do anything you want—anything that will make you happy.

JOAN: Oh, I know you are, Daddy. And I'm grateful. Only somehow it only makes things worse. When there are such a lot of alternatives, one ends by choosing none of them. One just drifts along, doing nothing.

LIDGATE: Doesn't that mean you're happier doing nothing?

JOAN: No, of course it doesn't.

LIDGATE: But then why . . .

JOAN: It's all this damned freedom you've given me. Freedom's terrible you know. Freedom's a burden. The burden of being able to do whatever one wants. I sometimes think it would be nice to be a nun. Only of course I couldn't stand all that going to church. Oh dear! (*She sighs.*) Let's change the subject. I don't see why I should make you miserable with my silly complaining. (*She sits on his knee.*) How was the bull-fighting today?

LIDGATE: Oh, not so bad.

JOAN: I hope you punctured a lot of those greasy old oxen from Lombard Street.[34] Lousy brutes! My word, how I should like to stick a banderillo into old Lupton, for example! (*She makes the gesture of jabbing home the dart, accompanying the movement with an expressive click of the tongue.*) Do you know that he actually tried to hold my hand this evening?

LIDGATE: (*Indignantly.*) You don't mean to say he dared to . . .

JOAN: Oh, it was all very pure and uncle-ish. But he's one of those people whose hands are always *wet*. Ugh! (*She makes a grimace and shudders.*) Too

---

[34]Lombard Street. The City of London's main banking area.

revolting! Next time he wants to do that uncle business, I shall ask him to put on gloves.

LIDGATE: (*Still angry.*) It's outrageous. I shall tell him he's got to behave himself.

JOAN: Now, don't start being Oedipus-ish again. You'll make yourself ridiculous. Leave me to deal with my own uncles. I'm perfectly capable of looking after myself. Don't you believe it?

LIDGATE: Yes, I suppose you are. But all the same . . .

(*Enter* ***FOOTMAN****, who announces, "His Grace the Duke of Monmouth."* ***THE DUKE*** *is a rather silly looking, but elaborately affected, young man in the early twenties.*)

JOAN: (*Going to meet him.*) Hullo, Ted.

MONMOUTH: Joan darling!

JOAN: Welcome to the home of your ancestors. I wonder what *they* think of you, by the way. (*She lays her hands on his shoulders and, at arm's length, looks intently into his face; then shakes her head.*) Poor ancestors! I'm glad I haven't got any. (*She turns away, and* ***MONMOUTH*** *goes and shakes hands with* ***LIDGATE****.*)

LIDGATE: Good evening, Ted.

JOAN: Needless to say, Peggy's going to be late.

MONMOUTH: She does it on purpose.

LIDGATE: What on earth for?

MONMOUTH: To make people take notice of her. When you've got no other way of attracting attention, unpunctuality will always do the trick.

JOAN: Well, of all the catty remarks! (*Enter SPENCE.*) Hullo, Mr. Spence. I haven't seen you for days. How are you?

SPENCE: Very well, thanks, Miss Joan. And I was to give you kindest regards from my sister. She *did* enjoy your visit, Miss Joan. She really did. (*To LIDGATE.*) Your call's just coming through, Mr. Lidgate.

LIDGATE: The New York call? (*MR. SPENCE nods. He gets up and turns to JOAN.*) I shall be five minutes at least. If Peggy comes before I'm through, start dinner without me.

JOAN: Anyhow *you*'ll stay with us, Mr. Spence, and tell us about your sister.

LIDGATE: No, I'm afraid I'll need him. There'll be things to take down.

SPENCE: I'm sorry, Miss Joan. (*They go out.*)

MONMOUTH: Why were you so anxious for that old fool to stay, Joan?

JOAN: He's not an old fool. And I'm very fond of him. And he looks after his invalid sister—which is more than you'd ever do, if you had an invalid sister, Ted.

MONMOUTH: Oh, damn his sister! You asked him to stay because you didn't want to be alone with me.

JOAN: No, I didn't.

MONMOUTH: I tell you, you did.

JOAN: All right then I did. And please, now, don't start proving I was right in not wanting to be alone with you.

MONMOUTH: (*In a languishing tone.*) Listen, Joan. (*She averts her head.*) Joan, I beg you . . .

JOAN: Must we go through all this again?

MONMOUTH: But, Joan, I love you.

JOAN: No, you don't. Not more than you love Peggy, or Diana, or Sybil.

MONMOUTH: Darling, I swear . . .

JOAN: And much less than you love that little tart who's dancing at the Hippodrome.[35]

MONMOUTH: (*Startled and indignant.*) Really, Joan . . .

JOAN: Well, isn't she a tart?

MONMOUTH: (*Who has recovered his presence of mind loftily.*) To start with I really don't know who you're referring to.

JOAN: O-O-OH! (*She puts her hand over her mouth.*) That's a good one, Ted!

MONMOUTH: I assure you . . .

JOAN: Ted, I think it would be safer if we changed the subject.

MONMOUTH: (*With dignity.*) Just as you like, Joan.

JOAN: Oh, not for my sake. I'm quite ready to go on talking about your little friend at the Hippodrome. I only thought that perhaps you weren't quite so keen.

MONMOUTH: (*Sounding the pathetic note once more.*) Why are you always so cruel, Joan? Making a joke of my deepest feelings . . .

JOAN: Hippodrome, Hippodrome! (*MONMOUTH covers his face with his hands.*) Now look here, Ted, don't be an ass. Why must you go and spoil everything? It was all such fun, before you started this stupid business. Why shouldn't we go on having fun? If only you'd behave like a reasonable creature! I don't want to quarrel with you. I hate quarreling. I want to be friends with you.

---

[35]Hippodrome. A popular music-hall theatre in London.

MONMOUTH: (*Looking up at last, and in a resigned voice.*) All right then Joan, let's be friends . . .

JOAN: But not in that tone, man. That's not being friendly; that's being more in sorrow than in anger. Cheerful! (*She gives him a terrific slap on the back that makes him gasp.*) More spirit! (*Yet another smack.*) More guts! (*Another.*)

MONMOUTH: Here, steady on, Joan!

JOAN: Guts! (*She gives him a still more violent slap. The Door opens and the footman announces, "Miss Endicott." Enter PEGGY ENDICOTT. JOAN flies to meet her.*) At last, Peggy darling! At last! I thought you were never coming.

PEGGY: Sweet, I'm *so* sorry. But if you knew what complications! In *Chelsea*, of all places. Ted, darling, you look more *radiant* than ever.

MONMOUTH: Radiant? Of all the damn insults!

PEGGY: Such a *Dostoevskyan* cocktail party at the Johnstone's. I can't *describe* to you the state poor Madge was in. Because, you see, Tony Lamond was there—Tony of all people! *And* Patricia! Yes, my dear. *And* Patricia.

(*Enter BUTLER.*) **BUTLER**: Dinner is served.

JOAN: (*Moving towards the door.*) And what happened?

PEGGY: What *happened*? Well, really, can I *possibly* tell you in front of Ted?

MONMOUTH: Please, please, you know how discreet I am.

PEGGY: Oh, it's not *that* I'm bothering about. It's my maiden blushes. Well, I'll tell you . . . (*They pass through the door, and the CURTAIN which has been slowly descending finally blocks them out.*)

ACT II

Scene 1

Hyde Park[36] on a Sunday afternoon three weeks later. The distances are grey and filmy with mist. The bare trees are faintly seen across the expanses of grass. In the foreground a wide gravelled path. Half way up the stage, from right and left project two promontories of evergreen shrubbery, fenced off from the gravel, leaving at the centre a wide opening, through which one sees the misty distance. This opening gives access to another path running parallel to the first behind the shrubberies.

Front, left, stands a small portable harmonium, which is being played, as the curtain rises by a melancholy looking man, while four devoted females stand round singing a hymn.

Perched on a soap box in the middle of the stage stands a harmless LUNATIC with long, flowing hair, who smiles to himself, radiantly happy, while he pours out the interminable history of his martyrdoms. He has a way, while he speaks, of shutting his eyes as though he were contemplating some inward vision; then briefly opening them to look at his audience.

Behind the shrubbery on the right we see WALTER CLOUGH.[37] He is standing on a fairly high platform, so that he is visible from the waist up. On the extreme right also, behind the shrubbery, are visible the heads of the people standing in the front line of the crowd that is listening to him. One must imagine the rest of the crowd extending far back into the wings. CLOUGH is talking straight out of the stage towards the right, presenting his right profile to the audience. Above his head, a board on a pole bears the emblem of the hammer and sickle and the words "Communist Party of Great Britain." On the side of the

---

[36]Hyde Park. Huxley describes an actual visit in "Hyde Park on Sunday", *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine*, 2 December, 1931. The experience provided him with the details which appear in Act 2, Scene 1 such as the angry communist orator, the phlegmatic crowd, and the "Salvation Army lasses". See Appendix A.2.

[37]Clough. Possible allusion to another agnostic, nineteenth-century poet, Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-1861).

shrubbery nearer to the audience stands a row of green iron chairs. Throughout the scene people are continually strolling up and down the two paths on either side of the shrubberies, forming groups round the ***HYMN SINGERS*** *or the* ***LUNATIC*** *or the Communist, then drifting on again. The singing is heard before the curtain rises and as it goes up, we find the harmonium in full blast, the four females warbling open-mouthed. There are only two or three people listening to them.*

SINGERS: Art thou weary, art thou languid,
Art thou sore distrest?
Come to Me, saith One, and coming,
Be at rest.[38]

(*They go on singing faintly, so that one can hear what the others are saying.*)

CLOUGH: . . . to the oppressed millions of the working classes—it's to them we make our appeal. Oppressed millions, I repeat. But it seems a contradiction in terms. Millions are stronger than a few. Then why are the millions oppressed by the few? Because they let themselves be oppressed.[39] Because they haven't got

---

[38]"Art thou weary, heavy-laden". Hymn by J. M. Neale (1818-1866). Huxley misquotes the first line. The lyrics of verse 4 provide an ironic parallel to the communist Clough's promise of hardship for the faithful: "If I find Him, if I follow,/What His guerdon here?/Many a sorrow, many a labour,/Many a tear." *Hymnary*, 164.

[39]"Let themselves be oppressed." In the Hyde Park essay, Huxley, like Clough, was struck by the proletariat's good-natured acceptance of hardship. Bradshaw cites a related Huxley essay: "I was in Hyde Park . . . on the anniversary of the October Revolution, and again this First of May. I left on both occasions feeling glad I wasn't a Communist speaker. Against the gentle and humourous indifference of the London crowd the fiercest enthusiasm seems to hurl itself in vain." "Notes on the Way", *Time and Tide*, 13, (7 May 1932), 514-516. Bradshaw elsewhere cites Huxley's answer to an interviewer after his return from his 1931 trip to the coal mines of Willington: "[H]e had been more appalled by the patience he found among the unemployed on the North-East coast than by their miserable conditions." J. L. Hodson, "The Brilliant Brothers", *News Chronicle*, 30 December 1931, p. 6. Cited in Bradshaw, John David, *Aldous Huxley's*

the guts to turn against their oppressors. Where there's a will, there's a way. What you English working men need is will, will, will! (*Applause from the crowd.*) Yes, you applaud. But when you've done applauding you slouch home and you do nothing—Nothing! Now, listen here. (*He speaks in a lower voice, more argumentatively, leaning down towards his hearers, so that we no longer hear what he says.*)

LUNATIC: And then, my friends, (*three jeering hobbledihoys*[40] *are all his audience*) to the eternal disgrace of British Justice—to its eternal disgrace, I tell you, my enemies were allowed to accomplish their fell designs upon me. I was dragged away—yes, ladies and gentlemen, dragged away from hearth and home—and flung into a noisome dungeon, in the common asylum.

BOY: Garn, they ought to have kept you there.

LUNATIC: Yes, ladies and gentlemen, the common asylum, the . . . (*The boys take up his refrain and repeat with him in unison, "the common asylum."*)

LUNATIC: But justice must prevail in the long run, ladies and gentlemen. Justice must inevitably prevail.

BOY: Oh, shut it! (*They move away.*)

LUNATIC: All I want . . . (*Opens his eyes and looks around; perceiving that he has no audience, he stops speaking, but continues to smile to himself, to make strange gestures; his lips move. The* ***HYMN SINGERS*** *raise their voices a little and we hear:—*)

SINGERS: If I find him, if I follow,
What His guerdon here?
Many a sorrow, many a labour,
Many a tear.

Ideological Development 1919-1936, unpublished D. Phil. dissertation, Oxford University, 1987, p. 220.

[40]"Hobbledihoy", n. awkward, gawky youth.

(*Enter, in the course of their singing of this verse, **BARMBY** and **JOAN**, from the right, along the front path.*)

BARMBY: (*Indicating the singers.*) We *must* listen to these. Such perfect specimens!

JOAN: They don't have much success, poor wretches! Do they?

BARMBY: No; the next world doesn't cut any ice nowadays. How I adore the harmonium.

SINGERS: (*Starting a new verse.*)
If I still hold closely to Him,
What hath he at last?
Sorrow vanquished, labour ended,
Jordan passed!

BARMBY: (*Joins in the singing of the first two lines, then turns to JOAN.*) Aren't you singing? You must sing. (*Then continues in unison with the rest . . . "labour ended Jordan passed!" Taking JOAN'S arm, he leads her away towards the centre of the stage. During the singing of this verse CLOUGH'S voice is heard again in snatches of oratory. The LUNATIC, finding a knot of people round him, also begins to speak again.*)

CLOUGH: (*during the singing of the hymn*) I tell you, men and women, I tell you, all possibilities are in your own hands. If you consent to the evils of the present world, you can go on living as you're living now—like dogs, like beasts of burden. If you want injustice, you can have it. If you want oppression, you can be oppressed to your heart's content. If you want slums and smoke and bad food, you can have them. But if you want a decent world fit for decent men and women to live in, you can also have it. But you must fight for it first. Yes, you must fight for it . . .

LUNATIC: Yes, ladies and gentlemen, in the common asylum. But justice must prevail in the long run, ladies and gentlemen. Justice must inevitably prevail. All I want is a little justice, ladies and gentlemen.

BARMBY: (*To JOAN as he leads her away from the group of hymn singers.*) "Sorrow vanquished, labour ended." Well, one can't grudge them their wish-fulfilments. Poor old creatures! They're trying to find some compensation for life in Peckham. (**CLOUGH**: *His voice is heard saying: "And what of the future? Yes, what of the future?"*) Ah, the hammer and sickle! (*He points at the communists.*) Compensation in *this* world.

CLOUGH: It's for you to decide, I tell you. Is the future to be like the present and the past? Or is it to be different, better, happier? Is it to be the earthly paradise? Or is it to go on being hell?

BARMBY: (*Surprised.*) Well, I'm blowed!

LUNATIC: (*Speaking at the same time.*) Justice, ladies and gentlemen, only justice.

BARMBY: It's Walter Clough.

JOAN: Who?

BARMBY: The man who's speaking. I used to see a lot of him at one time. We were at Oxford together. But then he abandoned civilized life and took to living like a workman. He doesn't much approve of me now. I wouldn't embrace the true faith.

JOAN: What true faith?

BARMBY: Why, communism, of course. He's preaching the holy war. Talk of the Salvation Army! (*They have crossed the stage and are standing on the right, in front of the shrubbery, on the other side of which CLOUGH is standing. The singers conclude their hymn. There is a long drawn Amen.*)

CLOUGH: The revolution isn't a tea party. You can't make it in kid gloves. You've got to fight. And what's more difficult, you've got to go on fighting. Yes, even when the fight seems hopeless. You've got to go on, grimly, through thick and thin. The revolution wants men and women with courage and determination and faith.

BARMBY: Faith! Faith! Why not reason for a change?

JOAN: Do be quiet! I want to listen.

CLOUGH: We've no use for cowards, or doubters, or the superior people who think they've got something better to do. We've got no use for fine-weather enthusiasts,—the ones who slink away the moment things go badly. We've got no use for playboys and sensation-mongers: revolution isn't a sport or a thrill-factory. It's a religion, it's a man's whole life, it's the reason why he exists—and if it isn't these things, then it's nothing, it's not worth making, not worth asking recruits for. We don't want anybody, I tell you, who isn't capable of some sort of heroism. The revolutionary has got to be a hero—an intelligent and disciplined hero. If you don't feel capable of heroism, then we don't want you. Not at any price. You can go and listen to the band in St. James's Park. You can go and admire the uniforms of the sentries outside the Horse Guards. Lovely uniforms! And won't the soldiers look handsome when they're shooting us down in the streets! Mowing us down with machine guns because we dare to ask for justice and freedom, because we have the face to ask to be treated like human beings! But if any of you feel that you're capable of living heroically, like real men and women, not like machines and beasts of burden, not like tame sheep and cringing dogs, then stay and be welcome. If you join us, I warn you, you'll be hated, you'll be persecuted, you'll run the risk of prison, perhaps even of death. I don't hide it. On the contrary, I proclaim it. The people we want are the sort of people who won't be put off by the risk, no, the danger will actually attract them. If you don't understand what I mean, then go away; we don't want you. If you do understand, then come: we need all the comrades we can get. (*There is applause.*)

BARMBY: He speaks well, doesn't he?

JOAN: (*With enthusiasm.*) He's wonderful! And, oh dear, how horribly unheroic one's life is! He makes me feel ashamed of myself.

BARMBY: What a loss to the pulpit! That's what I've always said.

JOAN: Oh, shut up, Phil! Why must you always try to make everything seem silly and ridiculous?

BARMBY: My dear, what blasphemy! Are you implying that the pulpit's silly and ridiculous?

JOAN: You meant it to be.

BARMBY: Not at all. I genuinely think they ought to have made him a bishop. (*He lifts his hands trumpet-wise to mouth and calls.*) Walter! Walter! (**CLOUGH** *looks round, smiles, makes a gesture of greeting.*) Come down and talk to us!

CLOUGH: (*Shouting back.*) Later! (*He bends down to speak to people who have come crowding round up to his platform. In the course of the following scene he climbs down; somebody takes the board with the communist emblem and marches off with it.*)

BARMBY: You'll like him, I think, not much manners. But that's on principle, because of his politics. Those are idiotic, of course.

JOAN: What, the politics?

BARMBY: Yes. I've no patience with that kind of pedantic romanticism. Marxism is just a kind of fairy story—but a fairy story told by a professor. Jack and the beanstalk in words of ten syllables. The long words are supposed to make the wish-fulfilments sound like scientific facts.

JOAN: (*Astonished.*) But . . . But I always though you were a communist yourself. I mean, I've heard you arguing with Daddy as though you didn't believe in his system.

BARMBY: Of course I don't believe in his system. But is that any reason why I should believe in Walter's system? One's as absurd as the other. (*Changing his tone.*) Oh, what a pity! The lunatic's packing up to go. (*In effect, the LUNATIC has come down from his perch, which he is folding up preparatory to carrying it away.*) One of my favorite characters. He comes here every Sunday. I wish you'd heard him. There's a moment in his discourse when he talks about his enemy the Pope; it's really sublime. (*To the LUNATIC, who is walking out carrying his perch, towards the right.*) Good night, Professor.

LUNATIC: (*Smiling with pleasure.*) Thank you. (*He shakes* ***BARMBY'S*** *hand.*) And you too, my dear young lady. (*He shakes* ***JOAN'S*** *hand.*) Thank you a thousand times.

JOAN: (*Embarrassed.*) Oh, not at all. I mean . . .

LUNATIC: Your sympathy is a great consolation. I don't know whether you're acquainted with all the details of my unhappy case. If not, I may as well . . . (*He makes as if to set up his perch again.*)

BARMBY: (*Resolutely interfering.*) Well, good-bye, Professor. It's a thousand pities you've got to go. (*He leads him away towards the right.*)

LUNATIC: But I assure you ...

BARMBY: No, no. We would not think of detaining you. We know how precious your time is.

LUNATIC: (*Pleading.*) Just a moment! Only one little moment!

BARMBY: No, no. We can't have you making such a sacrifice for us. Absolutely not.

LUNATIC: Really . . .

BARMBY: Another time, Professor. And now you must hurry or you'll be late for your appointment. (*Looks at his watch.*) Goodness me! You must fly.

LUNATIC: Must I?

BARMBY: (*Pushing him out.*) As fast as you can possibly go. Good-bye. (*Exit LUNATIC. BARMBY turns back to JOAN.*) Well, that was rather masterly, I think; don't you?

JOAN: Poor old thing!

BARMBY: (*Offering her one of the green chairs which stand in front of the right hand shrubbery and himself sitting down on another.*) Oh, don't waste your

sympathy. He's far happier than we are. It's absurd to feel sorry for the hero of a romantic novel. Keep your pity for the sane. Some people aren't attracted to romantic novels; they're condemned to inhabit reality. And reality is this. (*He makes a comprehensive gesture.*) This dank and melancholy park; this huge black stinking town with all its millions and millions of dull, unhappy, hideous people. The professor lives in a private paradise all his own. How he enjoys being persecuted by the Pope! Really, I envy him. I should love to be slightly dotty. Not too much, of course. Just a tiny bit cracked. (*Enter, from behind the shrubbery, **WALTER CLOUGH**.*) Ah, but here's Walter. Walter, you were magnificent. A loss to the pulpit as I was saying to Joan. Whom, by the way, you don't know. Joan, this is Mr. Walter Clough. Miss Joan Lidgate. (*They shake hands.*) Yes, Walter, simply magnificent.

CLOUGH: Oh, shut up.

BARMBY: We came, I admit, to mock. But we stayed to pray.[41] Didn't we, Joan?

JOAN: Honestly, Mr. Clough, I did think it was awfully fine, the end of your speech. That was all we heard. I wish we'd been in time for the rest.

CLOUGH: (*Laughing rather grimly.*) I don't know that you'd have enjoyed it much. You're the daughter of Arthur Lidgate, aren't you? (*She nods.*) I hadn't been too complimentary about your father and his friends. (*To **BARMBY**.*) I hear you're his secretary now.

BARMBY: No, not secretary, exactly. Court fool.

CLOUGH: Typical Barmbyism! I see you haven't changed, Philip. Have you noticed that trick of his, Miss Lidgate? That trick of anticipating any criticism you might make by calling himself all the bad names that he thinks you're going to bestow on him?

JOAN: Well, I've noticed he doesn't seem to have a very high opinion of himself.

---

[41]"came to mock . . . pray." Allusion to Goldsmith's "The Deserted Village", (1770), "And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray" (l.180).

CLOUGH: That's where you're wrong. He has an immensely high opinion of himself. So damned high that he can't bear to listen to criticism. That's why he's always running himself down. If you say hard things about yourself, people take your side against you. They're forced to pay you compliments in order to make up for your own unkindness to yourself. It's a very clever trick, really. But then our friend, Philip Barmby, is a very clever man.

BARMBY: Go on, go on. Don't bother about me.

CLOUGH: Oh, I assure you, I'm not bothering about you.

BARMBY: (*Looking at his watch and getting up.*) Anyhow, I've got to go in a moment, I'm afraid.

CLOUGH: You see, Miss Lidgate, he's always looking for excuses and justifications. Justifications for living as he does. Excuses for not doing what he ought to do.

JOAN: What do you think he ought to do?

BARMBY: Join the communist party, of course.

CLOUGH: Not that necessarily. All I ask is that a man should put his money on something. I've no patience with people who want to make the best of both worlds. Either you're too brainless to criticize the present system; in which case you're perfectly justified in conforming to it. Or else you have the intelligence to criticize; in which case it's your duty to act in accordance with your thoughts. To criticize and then do nothing—that's just mental self-indulgence and moral cowardice. (*While he is speaking these last word the SINGERS have begun a new hymn.*)

SINGERS: Soldiers of Christ arise,
And put your armour on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies
Through his eternal Son.[42]

---

[42]"Soldiers of Christ! arise." Hymn by Charles Wesley (1707-1788).

BARMBY: (*Singing softly and beating time as he does so.*) "Soldiers of Christ arise and put your armour on." (*To JOAN, still beating time while he speaks.*) Joan, I'm going to desert you. Do you mind? (*JOAN shakes her head.*) I have to drink tea with my aunts. It's one of the horrors of the sabbath day. (*To CLOUGH.*) You'd like me to go and play that harmonium, I suppose.

CLOUGH: There you go again: Wriggling out under cover of a joke. But, I tell you, Phil, I respect these old creatures, in spite of their idiocy. At least they don't mind making fools of themselves in public. They've got the courage of their convictions—you haven't.

BARMBY: For the good reason that I have no convictions. You've got to be pretty stupid to have convictions—and stupidity isn't my strong point, I'm afraid.[43]

CLOUGH: Hence you're perfectly justified in doing nothing but sit and smoke Arthur Lidgate's cigars and drink his brandy.

BARMBY: Which aren't, incidentally nearly so good as you think they are, or as, indeed they should be. *Au revoir mes amis.* Mustn't keep the aunts waiting for their tea. (*He hurries out.*)

JOAN: *Au revoir.*

CLOUGH: You ought to have laughed, you know.

JOAN: What at?

CLOUGH: The joke about your father's brandy and cigars. That was a bit of Phil's famous cynicism.

---

[43]"Stupidity isn't my strong point". Huxley is quoting Paul Valéry (1871-1945), "La bêtise n'est pas mon fort", the opening words of *La soirée avec Monsieur Teste.* Huxley also recalls the words in *Beyond the Mexique Bay*, p. 100, and in *The Devils of Loudon*, p. 266.

JOAN: Does he expect one to laugh at that sort of thing? I find it only makes me sad.

CLOUGH: Sad? It puts me in a rage. I hate cynicism. It's the basest way of saying yes to the world as it is. I don't mind the people who say yes, because they genuinely think the world's a nice comfortable place. But the people who know the world's a pigsty and accept the sty and go and glory in their swinish acceptance—no, those I can't stand. In so far as Phil is one of those people, I really hate him.

JOAN: And yet he's nice.

CLOUGH: Oh, I know. I hate him, but I'm also fond of him.

JOAN: I wish you didn't hate my father.

CLOUGH: I don't; I only hate what he stands for.

JOAN: So do I really.

CLOUGH: (*Smiling.*) Do you?

JOAN: (*Not noticing the smile, very serious.*) Yes, I really hate all that money-grubbing business. It's awful when a nice person stands for something bad.

CLOUGH: And it's equally awful when a beastly person stands for something good. You've got to get used to both of those things if you're a working revolutionary.

JOAN: If only it were possible to make all the beastly people stand for all the beastly things!

CLOUGH: Yes, that *would* simplify matters.

JOAN: One wouldn't mind throwing bombs then.

CLOUGH: Wouldn't one? Bombs are pretty messy, you know.

JOAN: Yes, of course one would mind really. But it would be easier. If all financiers were like Sir Thomas Lupton, for example. Do you know him? Ugh! But some are like my father. What is one supposed to do?

CLOUGH: One's got to go on making the revolution all the same.

JOAN: I believe you'd get on well with my father.

CLOUGH: Quite probably.

JOAN: He's rather like you, in a way. He's got a lot of life and power—the same as you. Only I wish he used them the way you do. It seems such a waste, spending all that power just to make a lot of money. Why? So that we can live in Monmouth House. But who wants to live in Monmouth House anyhow? (*She sighs. There is a silence.*) You know, I can't help thinking of your speech.

CLOUGH: (*Smiling.*) Can't you? You should try.

JOAN: But I like thinking of it. It was a wonderful speech.

CLOUGH: *Merci, mademoiselle.*

JOAN: No, don't laugh. That's like Phil. I'm serious. It *was* a wonderful speech. At any rate, it was for me. It made all sorts of vague feelings suddenly come clear and definite in my mind. It made me understand things about myself—things I'd never properly realized before. (*Pause.*) I want you to tell me something: what would you do, if you were me?

CLOUGH: If I were you? But I don't know what you are.

JOAN: Well, look at me. You'll see soon enough. (*They look at one another for a moment, then, overcome by a sudden embarrassment, drop their eyes. JOAN laughs nervously.*) Not much to see, I'm afraid. Young; silly; fairly pretty; disgustingly rich. What *would* you do?

CLOUGH: What you're doing, I suppose, I'd enjoy myself.

JOAN: I'm not enjoying myself. Not really. Not under the surface. Underneath I really loathe it all. Just how much I loathe it, I only realized this moment, while you were speaking. Loathe the whole silly business, and myself into the bargain.

CLOUGH: That's bad. You mustn't loathe yourself.

JOAN: But I deserve to be loathed. Or perhaps I don't even deserve that—only to be despised. You can't loathe futility; it's merely contemptible. And people won't understand when I tell them it's all futile. Not even my father. What *shall* I do?

CLOUGH: Why do you expect *me* to know?

JOAN: Well, it's difficult to say. Somehow I feel . . . I feel as though you had some kind of authority. The way you spoke to that crowd about being heroic. And the things you said to old Phil. And then, after all, in a way, you're responsible.

CLOUGH: Me?

JOAN: You brought it all to a head. If I hadn't listened to your speech . . .

CLOUGH: It wasn't my speech; it was the way you happened to react to it.

JOAN: No, no; you can't get out of it like that. You may not want to admit it; but you *are* responsible. Whether you like it or not. That's why you've got to help me. What *do* you think I ought to do?

(*Enter from the left, during the latter part of this speech, the DUKE OF MONMOUTH. He dodges round a perambulator, collides with an old lady; then at last catches sight of JOAN. He hurries up to where she is sitting.*)

MONMOUTH: Joan darling! Found at last. They told me at the house you were supposed to be here. I've been hunting for the last half hour. My dear, the Church Armies and the anarchists! Deafening! And what innumerable *canaille*! One will probably be covered with fleas this evening. Why on earth did you come to this ghastly place?

JOAN: (*Annoyed.*) Because I like the company. (*To CLOUGH.*) By the way, I don't suppose you know one another. Mr. Clough, this is the Duke of Monmouth. He writes the gossip for the *Daily Gazette* and we live in his house. (*CLOUGH gets up and after shaking hands with MONMOUTH turns to JOAN.*)

CLOUGH: Perhaps I'd better be going.

JOAN: No, don't. *Please* don't. (*She catches his sleeve.*) What did you want, Ted?

MONMOUTH: I'll tell you. You know little Joey Goldberg—(*JOAN shakes her head.*) Yes, that American creature I was talking to you about the other day, the one who's so frightfully rich—well, he's giving a party this evening.[44]

JOAN: Well, I'm afraid that doesn't interest me very much.

MONMOUTH: But it's going to be a marvelous party. It's fancy dress, to start with; everyone's got to go either in white or scarlet. And then Joey has taken one of those enormous empty houses in Park Lane—just for this one night. There's going to be hide and seek in the dark. And of course, rivers of champagne. It'll be no end of fun. Joey asked me to dine with him first, and I promised I'd bring you along. Perhaps we ought to go at once and concoct our dresses. Peggy said she was just going to paint herself with lipstick and that's all. But I think you

---

[44]Goldberg's party. Huxley seems to be referring to a party attended by his friend Raymond Mortimer during November, 1931. According to Michael De-la-Noy, Mortimer "reported [to Sackville-West] (in a letter full of typically uncouth social references of the time) on 'a young Jew' called Jeffres, who had taken 'a vast dismantled house in Regent's Park' in order to throw a party for which he had engaged 'an excellent nigger band'. Apparently everyone had been obliged to wear red and white." In Michael De-la-Noy, *Eddy: The Life of Edward Sackville-West*, London: Bodley Head, 1988, p. 149. It is possible that Huxley may even have attended the party, for he was in London from September to December, 1931, and was in contact with Mortimer and Sackville-West at the time.

ought to go in white. I'll tell you what I'd thought of for you. White shoes and socks, white shorts, and . . .

JOAN: But I haven't the faintest intention of going to their party.

MONMOUTH: You mean, you've got another engagement?

JOAN: I don't mean anything of the sort. I mean I'm not going.

MONMOUTH: But it's going to be such a divine party!

JOAN: I don't doubt it.

MONMOUTH: I'm having a photographer sent round from the *Gazette.*

JOAN: I should have several photographers.

MONMOUTH: Everybody's going to be there.

JOAN: Except me. And now, would you mind going away, Ted? You've interrupted us in the middle of a most interesting conversation.

MONMOUTH: No, but listen here.

JOAN: Good-bye, Ted. (*She holds out her hand.*) And I do hope you'll enjoy yourself. Remember to give my love to Peggy.

MONMOUTH: Joan, Darling . . .

JOAN: (*Peremptorily.*) Good-bye!

MONMOUTH: (*Looks at her, then shrugs his shoulders.*) Oh, very well. (*He goes out.*)

CLOUGH: I'm sorry for that young man.

JOAN: I'm not.

CLOUGH: (*Smiling.*) No, I could see that.

JOAN: You know, I'm so ashamed.

CLOUGH: What about?

JOAN: That party. That disgusting, vulgar, idiotic party.

CLOUGH: I don't know why you should feel ashamed. It wasn't your party.

JOAN: It was my sort of party. After all, I was going to it.

CLOUGH: You weren't.

JOAN: No, but I probably should have if I hadn't met you. Oh, it's too stupid and revolting! But you see what I've got to put up with.

CLOUGH: Yes, I see.

JOAN: And you say that people ought to live heroically. Living heroically at Joey Goldberg's parties! (*Turning on him almost fiercely.*) Oh, why don't you tell me what I ought to do? (*They look at one another without speaking. The sound of the hymn swells louder, and the CURTAIN comes down.*)

ACT II

Scene 2

The Library at Monmouth House six weeks later. LIDGATE and BARMBY are sitting in front of the fire. BARMBY holds a book in his hand and is reading aloud.

BARMBY: Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.[45]

LIDGATE: I say, that's wonderful. May I just look? (*Takes the book from BARMBY.*) "Now more than ever seems it rich to die,/To cease upon the midnight with no pain." Curious; I've often felt like that. How extraordinarily *comfortable* it would be. One gets so damnably tired sometimes. "Darkling I listen; and for many a time/I have been half in love with easeful Death." Yes, "*easeful.*" He gets it exactly. Just what I feel, only more so, if you see what I mean.

BARMBY: That's precisely what all good art does—says just what you feel, only much more so. Whereas bad art says just what you feel only less so—all that you

---

[45]Keats was much in the London press during July 1932 as a result of the opening of the Keats Museum, during which opening the manuscript of "Ode to a Nightingale" was displayed. Huxley had been re-reading Keats for his anthology *Texts and Pretexts* (1932).

feel when you're at your worst and stupidest and laziest. Imagine how Ella Wheeler Wilcox[46] would have written the "Ode to a Nightingale"!

LIDGATE: By the way, who *did* write it actually? (*He looks at the title page of the book.*) Oh, of course, John Keats. "Ode to a Nightingale" by John Keats. I must remember that. "Ode to a Nightingale" by John Keats. But now tell me something, Barmby. You talk about good art and bad art. But how does one know which is which?

BARMBY: Well, of course, most people don't know. Even quite intelligent, well-educated people. You've got to be one of the few who happen to be born with the right kind of perceptions.

LIDGATE: That isn't very encouraging for me, is it?

BARMBY: No, it isn't. But then how few things *are* encouraging!

LIDGATE: (*With a little mirthless laugh.*) Yes, my God, how few! And yet for some reason one goes on. This accursed iron and steel business of mine, for example. I go on and on, and the load grows heavier and heavier, and the way more and more difficult to find. I don't know why the hell one doesn't just sit back and take things easy. But it seems impossible.

BARMBY: Impossible for you. But thank heaven, not for me. (*He settles more deeply in his chair, and lights a cigarette.*) I find no difficulty in sitting back.

LIDGATE: I suppose it's a question of temperament.

BARMBY: Just a matter of the ductless glands, that's all.[47] Mine happen to be more than averagely ductless. Almost hermetically sealed.

---

[46]Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1855-1919). American poet, for whose work Huxley had little regard. She is now perhaps best known for the line, "Laugh and the world laughs with you;/Weep, and you weep alone." "Solitude", Stanza 1.

[47]Ductless glands. Now more commonly referred to as the endocrine glands. Professor Starling of the University of London had recently coined the term "hormone" to describe the secretions of these glands.

LIDGATE: (*Laughing.*) I wish mine were. (*In another tone.*) Oh dear! (*He draws his hand wearily across his forehead; then gets up and walks in a nervous preoccupied way to the fireplace, where he stands, leaning against the mantelpiece.*) There's another thing that's been on my mind lately. I wanted to ask you about it, Barmby. I'm rather worried about Joan. She seems to be so restless and dissatisfied.

BARMBY: She's happens to be her father's daughter.

LIDGATE: What do you mean?

BARMBY: She doesn't know how to sit back. And you're trying to make her lead a life that consists of nothing but sitting back.

LIDGATE: I only want her to be happy, to have a good time.

BARMBY: I know; but unfortunately she's one of those people who are only happy when they're giving themselves a bad time. Only she hasn't got any worries yet. She's still looking for them.

LIDGATE: I'm ready to let her do whatever she likes.

BARMBY: But she doesn't want to do what she likes. She wants to do what somebody else likes.

LIDGATE: Somebody else? But who?

BARMBY: Ah, that's just the question. It might be St. Francis of Assisi. Or, on the contrary, it might be Sir Oswald Mosley. Or again, it might be Karl Marx. My own guess is that it'll be a mixture of Karl Marx and St. Francis.

LIDGATE: What makes you think that?

BARMBY: Oh . . . masculine intuition, I suppose.
(*During the latter part of this dialogue, SPENCE comes into the room and stands waiting for an opportunity to speak to LIDGATE.*)

SPENCE: These letters have just come in, Mr. Lidgate. And your evening call to New York is coming through this moment.

LIDGATE: Damn! Put the letters down on the table, will you. Sorry, Barmby. I'll be back in a minute.

BARMBY: (*To LIDGATE, as he goes out.*) Don't hurry. Culture can wait. It's used to waiting. Isn't it, Mr. Spence.

SPENCE: Are you trying to make fun of me, Mr. Barmby?

BARMBY: *Me* make fun of *you*?

SPENCE: I tell you frankly, Mr. Barmby, I don't like your attitude.

BARMBY: Nor do I, Mr. Spence. I think my attitude is deplorable. But it would need such an intolerable effort to change it.

SPENCE: All that what's-the-good-of-anything-why-nothing kind of talk of yours—it's wrong, I tell you. And the way you take it upon yourself to criticize everything and everyone. Wrông again. You're a young man, Mr. Barmby . . .

BARMBY: Ah, but old in vice, Mr. Spence.[48]

SPENCE: And I'm getting on; I'm nearly sixty.[49] So I feel I have the right to say it. You ought to have more respect, Mr. Barmby. I tell you, a man like you ought to show respect to a man like Mr. Lidgate. Mr. Lidgate's a good man, a high-minded man.

BARMBY: He's certainly a very rich man.

SPENCE: I've worked for him for upwards of twenty years now, and I know him. There isn't a finer man in the country, I tell you. There isn't anyone more

---

[48]"but old in vice." Huxley gives this line to the ingénue in his sketch "The Publisher", *Vanity Fair*, 1923.

[49]Nearly sixty. At first Spence is described as a little grey man of fifty.

deserving of respect. And I want you to know it, Mr. Barmby. I want you to realize who you're dealing with. I tell you I don't like your disrespectful manner towards him.

BARMBY: No, I can see you wouldn't Mr. Spence. After twenty years—obviously, you'd hate it. (*JOAN's voice is heard off saying, "And this is the library." The door opens and she comes in followed by CLOUGH.*) Hullo!

JOAN: Oh, Hullo, Phil. I was just showing Walter the house.

BARMBY: So he's actually consented to set foot in the enemy's camp. Well, well! I congratulate you, Joan.

JOAN: (*Annoyed.*) Oh, don't be a fool, Philip.

CLOUGH: (*With a studied detachment.*) It's a lovely house. I've always been very fond of this late eighteenth-century stuff.

BARMBY: Have you, indeed? Well, isn't that curious! So have I. Ever since the age of puberty. (*Getting up*). Let me do the honours. (*He takes CLOUGH'S arm and leads him to one of the portraits. Their conversation becomes momentarily inaudible.*)

JOAN: Well, Mr. Spence.

SPENCE: Good evening, Miss Joan.

JOAN: How's your sister, Mr. Spence?

SPENCE: Oh, she's moderately well, thank you, Miss Joan. The lumbago's better. But she's having a good deal of trouble with her acidity.

JOAN: Oh dear!

SPENCE: She can't touch anything fried. Simply can't touch it. The doctor was saying to me only yesterday, "Mr. Spence," he says, "she might as well eat weed killer as fried potatoes." (*The conversation continues unheard, while the others carry on the dialogue.*)

CLOUGH: (*Looking round him.*) My word, these Adam brothers knew how to make a fine room, didn't they![50]

BARMBY: And what a library! (*He pats the backs of the nearest books.*) Why anyone should take to drink or opium when there are all these lovely books in the world, I really can't imagine. Reading's so incomparably the pleasantest vice to wallow in.[51]

CLOUGH: I wish I could do a bit of wallowing for a change. (*He takes out a volume, opens it and turns over the pages, lovingly.*)

BARMBY: Well, wallow. Don't be such a puritan. I've no patience with a man who deliberately mortifies his soul with Karl Marx and statistics, when he might be reading real books.

CLOUGH: And I have no patience with a man who wastes his time indulging in literature, when he ought to be thinking how to make the world fit for human beings to live in. (*Puts the book back in its place with symbolic emphasis.*)

BARMBY: But if you're the right sort of human being in the right sort of social position, I assure you, the world is perfectly fit to live in. I find it absolutely delightful; it might have been specially made for me.

CLOUGH: Now, don't start showing off your bad qualities. It doesn't make them any more excusable. On the contrary, it makes them less excusable. "Forgive them for they know not what they do." But if they do know what they do, and not only know but boast about their knowledge, then there can be no forgiveness. You can't even forgive yourself.

---

[50]Adam brothers. Robert (1728-1792). With brother James, he developed what was called the Adam style, an elegant interpretation of neoclassicism in architecture and interior design.

[51]Pleasantest vice. See his essay for *Vanity Fair*, August, 1930, "Reading: The New Vice". The allusion is to *King Lear*. "The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices make instruments to plague us . . ." (5, 3, 171-172).

BARMBY: Quite true: you can't. But I find I can get on quite happily without my own forgiveness. (*To JOAN.*) Joan!

JOAN: Yes?

BARMBY: It may amuse you to hear that I'm making your father read Keats.

JOAN: Poor lamb! Does he mind?

BARMBY: No, he seems to like it—fairly laps up the culture. Doesn't he, Mr. Spence?

SPENCE: It all seems a lot of nonsense to me. What does he want with all this stuff? What has it got to do with his work?

BARMBY: Nothing whatsoever. If it had, it wouldn't be culture.

SPENCE: Well, if that's so then I think he'd do better to mind his own business. However, it isn't my place to criticize. I must get back to my work. Good evening, Miss Joan.

JOAN: Good evening, Mr. Spence. (*As he opens the door to go out, SPENCE runs into LIDGATE returning.*)

SPENCE: Oh, I beg your pardon, Mr. Lidgate.

LIDGATE: I'll call you down when I've looked at those letters, Spence.

SPENCE: Very good, sir. (*He goes out.*)

LIDGATE: (*His face lighting up as he sees JOAN.*) Oh, you're here, are you? (*He kisses her.*)

JOAN: You don't mind?

LIDGATE: (*Affectionately.*) Mind? I'm furious. (*Going over to the writing table.*) I was wanting to see you, as a matter of fact. I've got a little surprise for

you here. (*He has not noticed CLOUGH, who is standing with BARMBY in a corner.*) Where is it now? (*He opens a drawer and searches.*)

JOAN: I was just showing Walter Clough round the house. This *is* Mr. Clough, by the way. (*CLOUGH comes forward.*) He's very much interested in architecture.

BARMBY: (*In a whisper.*) Late eighteenth-century architecture.

LIDGATE: (*Has found what he was looking for—a green leather case. At JOAN's words, he turns round, surprised; he shakes hands with CLOUGH.*) Still more interested in economics, if I'm not mistaken. Aren't you the Walter Clough who wrote those articles in the *Daily Masses*?

CLOUGH: I'm afraid I am.

LIDGATE: They weren't very kind.

CLOUGH: They were only meant to be true.

LIDGATE: Well, they weren't even that. A lot of your facts were wrong. And then, you know, I'm not quite such a monster as you make out. Am I, Joan?

JOAN: (*Distressed.*) But Walter wasn't even saying anything personal. You mustn't imagine that. Really, Daddy. It's the system he's attacking. If the system were changed . . .

BARMBY: . . . he'd be a monster of another kind.

JOAN: Oh, be quiet, Phil!

BARMBY: A tyrannical bureaucrat instead of a tyrannical plutocrat. And what a huge improvement *that* would be!

JOAN: No, but seriously, Daddy, you mustn't think that Walter . . .

LIDGATE: (*Putting his arms round her.*) But, my dear, I don't think. And even if I did, it really wouldn't upset me. I'm used to being called names.

Extravagantly good names as well as extravagantly bad names. I don't pay much attention to either kind.

JOAN: Well, I'm glad of that. (*She presses herself affectionately against him. Then looks up, as a new thought crosses her mind, with a serious expression.*) Though I *do* think you ought to pay attention to Walter's arguments, I mean, if he can *prove* that your system is wrong . . .

LIDGATE: (*Laughing.*) You and your systems! (*He pats her shoulder.*)

JOAN: No, don't laugh.

LIDGATE: I can't help it.

JOAN: You don't take me seriously.

LIDGATE: No, I confess I don't. But now look at this. (*He opens the case and pulls out a necklace of pearls and emeralds.*) What do you think of that? (*JOAN examines it in silence. BARMBY approaches and looks at it over her shoulder.*)

BARMBY: Pearls? I must say, they're large enough. (*To LIDGATE.*) Oyster or Woolworth?

LIDGATE: Woolworth, indeed! This belonged to the Russian royal family. There was a whole mass of their stuff being sold this afternoon at Christy's. Fantastic! Like stage jewels. Quite unwearable most of them. Try it on, Joan.

JOAN: But is it . . . is it meant for me, Daddy?

LIDGATE: Who do you suppose it's meant for? Spence? Now then, let's try it on. I want to see how it suits you.

JOAN: But, Daddy, I couldn't. Really. Oh, you oughtn't to have got it for me.

LIDGATE: But don't you like it? I thought . . . Well, it seemed to me so pretty, the white and green together, like this.

JOAN: I'm so miserable.

LIDGATE: Joan, darling . . .

JOAN: You've been so sweet—and now I shall seem such a beast—so ungrateful. But, Daddy, I can't take it. I don't want it.

LIDGATE: But why not, Joan?

JOAN: I should feel so frightfully guilty, if I took it. When you think of all the people who haven't got enough to eat. It would be like hitting them in the face. And then—that's not all—then . . . Well, can't you understand? I don't want to be just rich and silly and selfish. I don't want to be always taking things; taking, taking, taking, and never giving anything at all. I want to pay for things; you know, really *pay*—not just with money; with my own efforts. Don't you understand, Daddy? Oh dear, I can't explain. And it all sounds so horribly stupid and priggish. I can't talk about it. Not now. (*Her voice trembles on the verge of tears.*) Here, Daddy. Take it. (*She hands him the necklace.*) I'm sorry. I'm being stupid. I think I'd better go away. (*She hurries towards the door, crying. There is a long silence. Slowly and methodically, LIDGATE puts the necklace back into its case and the case into the drawer.*)

BARMBY: (*Overacting the easy, natural unembarrassed manner.*) Well, if you don't need me any more this evening, Mr. Lidgate . . .

LIDGATE: (*Says nothing for a few seconds; then, giving himself a little shake, sits down briskly at the writing table and picks up the sheaf of letters left by SPENCE.*) No, I've got my letters to do now, Barmby.

BARMBY: Well, in that case, Walter, I think we'd better be going.

CLOUGH: All right. (*He goes up to the table.*) Good-bye, Mr. Lidgate.

LIDGATE: (*Looks at him for a few seconds without speaking and without making any movement to take CLOUGH'S outstretched hand. When he speaks, it is in a very low voice, that trembles with suppressed fury.*) Don't ever come to this house again. Do you understand! (*Breaking out with a sudden loud violence and striking the table with his fist.*) I won't have it. Do you hear? I won't have it. (*Controlling himself again, and speaking once more in a low voice.*) Go now. Go quickly. (*He picks up the letters once more and makes as though he were deeply

absorbed in the reading of them. CLOUGH stands for a moment, uncertain whether to answer or not; then shrugs his shoulders and walks towards the door. He and BARMBY go out together. LIDGATE picks up a pen and writes a note in the margin of the first letter, blots it and puts it into the tray on his left. Then he gets up, walks restlessly to the fireplace and stands there, his elbows on the mantelpiece, his face in his hands. After a few seconds, he returns to the writing table, picks up the house telephone, dials, rings.) That you, Spence? Come down to the library, will you. (*He replaces the receiver and goes on with his reading and annotating. Enter SPENCE, who stands near the table, waiting for LIDGATE to look up. LIDGATE makes a last note, then turns to his secretary.*) It's about those municipal loans, Spence. I've got the exact wording and lay-out for the bonds. Where the devil is it? (*He rummages in a drawer and at last produces a sheet of paper.*) Ah, here we are! I think that's quite O.K. now. You can take it down to the printers tomorrow.

SPENCE: How many copies shall I get them to print, sir?

LIDGATE: Why, as many as make up the issue. The Coventry loan's for a million and a half and the bonds are for ten thousand each; so we shall need a hundred and fifty. And a hundred and seventy-five for Portsmouth. And two hundred for Nottingham.

SPENCE: Very well, is there anything else, sir?

LIDGATE: Yes, these letters you brought me. (*He hands him the papers.*) I've made notes in the margin. You see. (*He shows him on the letters.*) "No." "Send details." "Renew for two months." "Go to hell." And so on. I leave you to concoct the rest.

SPENCE: Very good, sir. I think I can manage.

LIDGATE: Much better than I. I never could write a good letter. Not like one of yours, Spence.

SPENCE: (*Delighted by the praise.*) What nonsense, sir!

LIDGATE: I often wonder where I should be without you, Spence! Certainly in Carey Street;[52] probably in quod.[53] (*He sighs, and stretches himself wearily.*) Well, anyhow it would be nice and restful in either place. "Now more than ever seems it rich . . ."

SPENCE: I beg your pardon, sir?

LIDGATE: Oh, nothing; just a line of poetry.

SPENCE: What you need is a good holiday, sir.

LIDGATE: I know I do. But I can't take one before this damned iron and steel business is settled. By the by, Lupton said he was coming in this evening. I wish I could make out why he's started all this shilly-shallying again. It all seemed settled with Wertheim's and now . . . Goodness knows. I'm sorry now I put so much reliance on him. I could have fixed up something in some other quarter. But now it's too late. When is it exactly that my option expires?

SPENCE: Wednesday of next week, sir. Payment to be completed within twenty days of that date.

LIDGATE: And Lupton still refuses to say anything definite, damn him?

SPENCE: Shall I tell you my private opinion, sir?

LIDGATE: What is it?

SPENCE: He's after the game on his own account.

LIDGATE: What do you mean?

---

[52]Carey Street. London WC2. Law Courts entrance on South Side suggests that Lidgate meant that he would have needed the services of a lawyer, probably for bankruptcy.

[53]"in quod". Colloquial term for in prison.

SPENCE: Why, don't you see, sir? He'd like you to drop your option so that he could take it up himself. And with Wertheim's behind him—well, obviously, he'd have no difficulty.

LIDGATE: Do you think that's what he's really working for?

SPENCE: I'm sure of it, Mr. Lidgate. But hadn't you guessed, sir?

LIDGATE: (*Agitatedly walking up and down the room.*) No, it never occurred to me. I'd somehow got it into my head that the whole thing was fixed. In spite of all these shifty tricks of his. (*Pause.*) But what does he want to do with his iron and steel when he gets it? You don't see Lupton taking the trouble to re-organize an industry. He's only a speculator.

SPENCE: Well, that just what he's doing, sir—speculating. He'll push up the shares—the news of the amalgamation will send them up even without his pushing—and then he'll clear out at a profit.

LIDGATE: Leaving the industry worse off than it was before. (*With sudden vehemence. His fatigue has vanished.*) No, that can't be allowed; that simply can't be allowed.

SPENCE: It certainly oughtn't to be allowed, sir. But if he's got all the cards in his hand—and all the money in his pocket...

FOOTMAN: (*Opens the door and announces.*) Sir Thomas Lupton. (*Enter LUPTON.*)

LUPTON: (*Very genial.*) Well, Arthur, my lad, and how are you? Bearing up in spite of the weather? Evening, Spence.

SPENCE: Good evening, Sir Thomas.

LUPTON: (*Helping himself from the bottle on the table near the fire.*) I'll help myself to a spot of gin, if I may, Arthur. Just to drive the fog out of me. Well, cheerio! (*He drinks.*) What a ghastly climate! My constitution won't stand it. I'm thinking of running down to Monte Carlo for a bit at the end of next week.

LIDGATE: When you've fixed up your little deal with the iron and steel people, eh?

LUPTON: (*Taken aback.*) My little deal with... Who says I'm having a deal with them? I . . . I'm not having anything of the kind.

LIDGATE: (*To SPENCE.*) Yes, you were quite right, Spence. My God what a fool I've been!

LUPTON: What the devil are you talking about, Lidgate?

LIDGATE: I'm talking about your little scheme for robbing me of all the results of my work. That's all.

LUPTON: But, my dear chap, you're mad; I don't know what you mean.

LIDGATE: You *do* know what I mean; and I'm not your dear chap. Your *plan* was to keep me uncertain about Wertheim's up to the very last moment; then, just as my option was expiring, you meant to tell me that they couldn't advance the money. Then I'd have had to abandon the option and you'd have stepped into my place with Wertheim's cheque in your pocket. Wasn't that it? Well, let me tell you straight away: you're damned well not going to be given the chance . I'm taking the option in any case whatever Wertheim's decision may be.

SPENCE: What, sir? Do you mean to say ? . . .

LIDGATE: Kindly don't interrupt me, Spence.

SPENCE: I beg your pardon, Mr. Lidgate.

LIDGATE: If Wertheim's let me down at the last moment—and evidently that's what you've advised them to do—well, they're not the only people with capital. I shall go somewhere else—and so much the worse for Wertheim's.

LUPTON: You'll find it precious difficult to raise the money.

LIDGATE: Oh, you've made it inconvenient for me: I'm ready to admit it. But you can't put me off with a little inconvenience. I should have thought you know me well enough to realize that, Lupton.

LUPTON: Now, look here, old man, don't let's misunderstand one another.

LIDGATE: But I assure you, I don't misunderstand you. On the contrary, I understand you only too well. You want to play a dirty trick on me. Well, it's only natural in you; I ought to have known it from the first. But I don't want to have dirty tricks played on me. That's also natural.

LUPTON: You know, I believe I could persuade old Wertheim to change his mind.

LIDGATE: Yes, and change it again next Wednesday, five minutes before I sign the agreement. No thank you. I'm doing this business on my own now. Whatever it costs. I'm damned if I'm going to allow you and Wertheim to play the fool with a whole industry. All you want to do is gamble with it—gamble with the lives of hundreds of thousands of decent men and women. It's not good enough. Go to your Monte Carlo if you want to gamble. You shan't do it here. Not if I can help it.

LUPTON: Now, look here, Arthur, let's talk reason for a bit, instead of all this high-falutin nonsense. The position's perfectly simple. You want to make money, Wertheim wants to make money, I want to make money. Well, that being so . . .

LIDGATE: Ring the bell, Spence, will you. Sir Thomas is going.

LUPTON: What's that?

LIDGATE: I said, Sir Thomas is going.

LUPTON: Now, look here, Arthur . . .

LIDGATE: Good-bye.

LUPTON: I'll cable to old Wertheim at once.

LIDGATE: Ring again, Spence.

LUPTON: It'll be perfectly all right, I assure you.

LIDGATE: (*In a peremptory tone.*) Good-bye.

LUPTON: (*Shrugging his shoulders.*) Oh, all right. If you want to be a damned fool, it's no business of mine to stop you. (*He goes out. There is a silence.*)

LIDGATE: Well, Spence.

SPENCE: Well, sir.

LIDGATE: He did say one true thing, at any rate.

SPENCE: What is that, sir?

LIDGATE: That I was a damned fool. We've let ourselves in for something, Spence.

SPENCE: I'd get out, sir, if I were you.

LIDGATE: Unfortunately you're not me, Spence. We shall stay in. (*Pause.*) But it's going to be difficult. (*He makes a few calculations with a pencil on a sheet of paper.*) Damnably difficult. (*He writes for a moment longer; then leans back in his chair, meditatively frowning. SPENCE fidgets uncomfortably: at last he ventures to break the silence.*)

SPENCE: Is that all for this evening, sir?

LIDGATE: (*Without looking up.*) No, wait a minute, will you. (*He remains silent for a little longer; then, with the gesture of a man who has finally made up his mind, turns to his secretary.*) Give me the text for those municipal bonds, Spence. (*SPENCE gives him the paper.*) We'd said two hundred copies for the Nottingham issue and a hundred and seventy-five for Portsmouth, and let's see—yes, a hundred and fifty for Coventry. Well I want you to order four hundred, and three hundred and fifty, and three hundred respectively. (*He makes the corrections in pencil on the sheet and hands it back to SPENCE.*)

SPENCE: What do you want all those extra copies for, sir?

LIDGATE: I may have need of them.

SPENCE: You don't mean to say, sir . . . (*His emotion is so great that he has to sit down.*)

LIDGATE:
For a few weeks, Spence. I've got to have time to turn round.

SPENCE: But . . . but it's not right, sir.

LIDGATE: To let those people gamble away the very existence of England, Spence—that would be even less right. (*There is a long silence. SPENCE at last gets up.*)

SPENCE: Very well, sir. (*He takes the papers.*) You know best. (*He goes out. The CURTAIN falls.*)

ACT III

Scene 1

Time, a month later; place, CLOUGH'S living room. It is a small bare room, colour-washed, with linoleum on the floor. A black Victorian fireplace on the left holds a gas fire. Placed, slantingly in front of it, is a rugged old sofa. There is one table, with tea things on it, in the middle of the room and another, covered with books and papers, against the back wall, between the windows. The door is on the right. There are bookshelves on each side of the fireplace. The only pictures are a photogravure of Lenin and a reproduction of a Cézanne landscape, over the mantelpiece. A small piano, a cupboard and three or four kitchen chairs, make up the rest of the furniture. JOAN is sitting, almost lying, on the sofa, her hands under her head. CLOUGH is squatting down on one side of the fireplace, engaged in putting coins into the gas meter.

CLOUGH: . . . four, five, six, seven. (*He puts pennies into the slot and, after each insertion, turns the handle; the coins fall rattling into the meter. He dives into his waistcoat pockets for more pennies.*) I say, I do apologize for this sofa. (*With his free hand he pulls out a wisp of stuffing from a hole in the cover.*)

JOAN: But it's comfortable. Which is all that matters.

CLOUGH: (*Looking at her admiringly.*) I wish I knew how to draw. (*He traces a line through the air with his finger.*)

JOAN: Oh, dear, I know what that means. (*She straightens herself up.*) It means I'm not sitting in a ladylike position. Is that better? (*She makes a pretence to be primly rigid.*)

CLOUGH: (*Looks at her a moment in silence, then sighs.*) Yes, alas it is. Much better. (*He brings the hand out of his pocket with several more pennies.*) Let's see, how many had I put in? Seven, wasn't it? Eight. Nine, ten, eleven. Well, that'll keep us warm for an hour or two.

JOAN: It seems awfully inconvenient with all those pennies. Why don't you have your meter arranged so that you can pay once a quarter?

CLOUGH: Because the gas company wouldn't trust me. The poor don't get any credit. They have to pay on the nail—preferably in advance. *You* could get free gas for a year, if you wanted to.

JOAN: You needn't throw it in my teeth like that. How beastly you are, sometimes, Walter!

CLOUGH: Am I, Joan? (*He laughs sadly.*) I wish I could afford to be. (*He takes her hand, and very quickly kisses it.*) God, how I should enjoy doing all kinds of things I can't afford! (*Quickly changing the subject.*) More tea, Joan? Bread and butter? Buns?

JOAN: No thanks.

CLOUGH: Cigarette, then?

JOAN: All right, I'll smoke one of your disgusting gaspers. Just to mortify the flesh. (*She lights the cigarette.*) Pugh! (*She makes a face.*) I believe you get a lot of fun really out of your asceticism don't you, Walter? More than poor old Phillip gets out of his cigars and brandy?

CLOUGH: More? No. I get a different kind of fun. A better kind, I should say. But then I'm probably prejudiced.

JOAN: Did you mind much when you started giving things up?

CLOUGH: Well, there are some things that needed a bit of effort. Getting up early on winter mornings—I don't think I shall ever be fully reconciled to that.

JOAN: Poor Walter! Couldn't you make an exception for late breakfast?

CLOUGH: No, no, that wouldn't be playing the game. One's got no right to shirk something that other people have got to put up with.

JOAN: But most people do shirk, all the same. Look at me, for example. I wish I had your strength of mind, Walter.

CLOUGH: It doesn't need much strength of mind. Only strength of conviction. You've got to be convinced of the value of the cause. Then it's easy to make sacrifices for it.

JOAN: Easy, if there's nobody to consider but yourself. You never had someone standing in your way—someone you cared for as much as I care for Daddy. Oh dear, why must one always be hurting people?

CLOUGH: Because they're hurtable. It can't be helped.

JOAN: It's horrible. I only want to do what I feel is right and decent—and it makes poor Daddy unutterably wretched. And if it makes him wretched, is it still right and decent?

CLOUGH: Yes, it is.

JOAN: Oh, it's easy enough to say that when he's not there. But when I see him being unhappy . . . ! Oh dear! (*She shakes her head.*) And perhaps, after all, it's only an excuse for my own cowardice. Perhaps I secretly feel I should regret giving it all up—all the comfortable privileges.

CLOUGH: Yes, you've got a lot to give. Luckily, I never had as many privileges as you have.

JOAN: You only had the real privileges—the ones that can't be given up: your mind, your talents, your will. You know, when one comes to think of it, it is most frightfully unfair that some people should be—well—almost like dogs, so far as intelligence goes, while others should be Einstein, and Shakespeare, and Napoleon.[54] People who are strong and intelligent are shirking something that the majority of us have to put up with. If you were really consistent, Walter, you'd try to make yourself stupid and feeble.

CLOUGH: But, luckily or unluckily, one isn't consistent. If I were consistent, I should be . . . (*He breaks off, and gets up. All through this scene he has been*

---

[54]See Huxley's poem, "The Fifth Philosopher's Song," *Verses and a Comedy*, 58, 59.

looking at JOAN, and it is obvious that he is a man deeply in love, controlling his passion. He walks restlessly about the room.)

JOAN: You wouldn't be doing what?

CLOUGH: (*Shaking his head.*) Oh, nothing. (*There is a silence. He suddenly turns towards JOAN.*) Do you know what I've always found the most difficult thing?

JOAN: Do you mean, the most difficult thing to give up?

CLOUGH: No, no. Giving up things is really not difficult at all. Even one's independence. I don't like obeying—particularly people I think stupider than I am. But I'm ready to do it for the sake of the cause. That isn't really difficult.

JOAN: What is difficult, then?

CLOUGH: I'll tell you. The real difficulty is loving the men and women one's trying to help. That Christian insistence on love—I used to think it was all rather silly and sentimental. But I see now I was wrong. Loving one's neighbour is heroic. Heroic because it's so damnably difficult, the most difficult thing in the world. I've never been able to do it.

JOAN: But if you don't love your neighbour, why do you make sacrifices for him?

CLOUGH: Because I hate injustice, I hate the criminal stupidity and insensitiveness of the people who perpetrate the injustice. But as for saying that I love the men and women I want to save from the exploiters—no; it wouldn't be true. I don't. They bore me. They make me impatient. Why are their minds so limited and personal? Always, me, me, you, you: never an idea or a generalisation. And then that awful complacency and indifference and resignation! The way they put up with intolerable situations! Nobody has a right to be resigned to slums and sweat labour and fat men guzzling at the Savoy. But damn them, they *are* resigned. And then I don't enjoy their pleasures. The movies, and jazz, and looking on at the football—it bores me stiff—and, of course what *I* call pleasure they detest. It's a case of chronic and fundamental misunderstanding. Which isn't exactly the best foundation for love. But all the

same, I believe it is possible to love one's neighbour even though one may have very little in common with him. I believe there's some way of learning to love him. Through humility perhaps. (*Pause.*) Queer, the way one finds oneself using religious language. But they knew a lot about human beings, those Christians. If only they hadn't used their knowledge to such bad ends. One's got to take the good, and just ruthlessly stamp out the rest. All the disgusting superstitions and the stupid cocksure intolerance. They've got to be fought and conquered and utterly abolished.

JOAN: Don't you wish sometimes that you could abolish everything—the whole world and everyone in it?

CLOUGH: Do I wish it? Good heavens? Do you know what I've got to do tonight? I've got to go to Barcelona for a conference.[55] Four days of speech making in six languages. Four days of committee-meetings and resolutions and minutes. Awful! I tell you, there are times when I'd like to blow the whole damned thing into ten thousand million billion pieces. Bang! And then sit down and play a hymn of thanksgiving. (*He sits down at the piano and plays fifteen bars of the second theme of Chopin's Waltz in D flat. Then, breaking off suddenly, he slams the lid of the piano and gets up.*) But, of course that sort of wishing is just childish and idiotic. And Chopin's waltzes are one of the things I can't afford. Not while the world's in the present state. I wish to God it would hurry up and get better. Then I should feel justified in wasting as much time as I liked at my strumming. That was the most difficult thing to give up, if you really want to know. Playing the piano. But there's a time for everything. And, alas, this doesn't happen to be a time for music. It's a time for fighting.

JOAN: Fighting for people you don't love?

CLOUGH: Yes, fighting for people I don't love.

JOAN: (*After a pause*). But if there were one person you could love, Walter—one person who loved you—wouldn't it be—well, wouldn't it somehow

---

[55]Barcelona. Like Clough, Huxley attended a conference in Barcelona. He described it as a silly and boring Conference of Intellectual Co-operators. *Letters*, p. 320.

be easier to love the rest? (*She looks at him anxiously through a long silence. He stands in front of her, motionless, his face averted, not saying anything. JOAN suddenly leans forward and lays her hand on his sleeve.*) Walter! (*In a more insistent whisper.*) Walter!

CLOUGH: What is it?

JOAN: Kneel down there, in front of me. I can't talk to you like this. You're too far away. Kneel down, Walter. (*He kneels. She lays her hands on his shoulders.*) Walter, why are you so beastly to me?

CLOUGH: Me? But I haven't done anything.

JOAN: That's what's so beastly. You make me do it all. I'd like to kill you sometimes. (*She puts her hands to his throat and drives her nails into the skin.*)

CLOUGH: No! Stop it! It hurts.

JOAN: Good, I'm glad.

CLOUGH: But why do you want to hurt me?

JOAN: Why? You know quite well why.

CLOUGH: No, I don't.

JOAN: Well, then you're a fool. No, you're not a fool, you're a beast. You do it on purpose. Because of course you know perfectly well I love you. More than anything in the world. There, I've said it: you made me say it. And you care for me, really; you know you do. (*Suddenly covering her face with her hands and turning away sideways to press her forehead against the arm of the sofa.*) Oh, why are you so beastly to me, Walter? (*Her body is shaken with sobs.*)

CLOUGH: (*Leaning over her.*) Joan, Joan. Oh, don't cry, darling. (*He lays his hand on her shoulder.*) I've never meant to hurt you. If you knew how much I cared! Don't cry. Please. Joan, darling . . .

JOAN: It's all right. I've stopped. Lend me your handkerchief, will you? (*She pulls the handkerchief out of his pocket, and wipes her eyes.*) There. (*Puts the handkerchief back.*)

CLOUGH: (*Taking her hands in his, and kissing them.*) Joan. My darling.

JOAN: (*When he interrupts his kissing to look up at her, releases her hands and, taking his face between the palms, leans forward and kisses him on the mouth. Then looks at him at arm's length.*) Admit, it Walter: you *were* beastly.

CLOUGH: Do you think it was such fun for me? (*Looking at her gloomily, then sighs.*) Oh, dear. (*With a gesture of weariness he drops his head on to her knee.*) One gets so unspeakably tired sometimes.

JOAN: (*Stroking his hair.*) Poor Walter. Try to forget about it all for a moment. (*A silence.*) Do you believe in God, Walter?

CLOUGH: No.

JOAN: I do. Especially today. (*Pause.*) I wish *I* had curly hair, like yours. Oh, I do hope you'll never go bald! I don't think I could bear it if you were bald.

CLOUGH: Couldn't you?

JOAN: Yes, of course I could, really. I shall always love you. Always. Whatever happens. (*Pause.*) I believe it's true, what I said just now. If you love somebody a lot, it makes a kind of bridge between you and the rest of the world. You know how difficult it is to believe that other people are really there at all. You see them, you shake hands with them. But you never think of them as complete people like yourself. Well, if you love somebody, you do think of him as a complete person. That's what love is. And that opens your eyes to the rest of the world. You suddenly realize that the world's full of people, every one of them as complete and real as you are. And when you've realized that about them, you begin to love them. Listen, Walter, you say you're sad because you can't love everybody. But, I tell you, you can't expect to love everybody till you allow yourself to love somebody. (*Raising his face from her knees, so that she can look into it.*) And you've got to love her terribly much, do you hear? You've got to love her to the very limit, with all your heart and with all your soul. Oh, Walter,

say that you love me; say that you love me. (*He looks at her without speaking.*) Why don't you say it? Walter! What are you doing? (*Slowly, without speaking, he disengages her hands, he rises to his feet.*) Walter! Don't you love me?

CLOUGH: I love you too much. I had no right . . . I was weak. (*Turning on JOAN with a kind of fury.*) Can't you see it's just madness? The idea of you living here with me, feeding pennies into the gasmeter. Cooking and washing up. You! It's idiotic, I tell you. You'd be miserable before the week was out, and then your misery would blackmail me into taking your father's beastly money. And I'd consent, because I love you. And that would be the end. I'd love you so much that I'd let myself be dishonoured, and then I'd come to hate you.

JOAN: But, Walter. I wouldn't mind doing those things.

CLOUGH: But you've never tried.

JOAN: But you're insulting me, Walter. You're saying I shouldn't have spirit enough to be able to put up with a little discomfort.

CLOUGH: A little discomfort! But Joan, you've no conception what poverty is. You'd find it unbearable.

JOAN: How can you love me, then, if you think I'm such a cowardly little fool?

CLOUGH: I don't think so. I just know that you haven't any experience of the sort of life you'd have to lead, if you were to marry me. And I also know what my reactions would be if I saw you being unhappy.

JOAN: But, Walter, I wouldn't want you to give up anything for me. I wouldn't let you.

CLOUGH: I tell you, you don't know what poverty is.

JOAN: Have you so little faith in me, then?

CLOUGH: Not much in myself even. The self that loves you and desires you and needs your tenderness—no, I can't trust it. I'd promised I wouldn't tell you how much I loved you. But just now, when you said that, I was so . . . so moved:

it was like heaven, such an unbelievable happiness . . . I broke my promise. And now I've had to hurt you, and hurt myself, and behave like a cad.

JOAN: But, Walter . . .

CLOUGH: No, no. Please. Please go away. It's no good, Joan. We're only hurting one another.

JOAN: (*After a pause, in a very low voice.*) Do you really want me to go?

CLOUGH: (*Who is standing with his back to her, leaning on the mantelpiece, nods his head.*) Yes.

JOAN: (*Puts on her hat, picks up her coat, and moves towards the door. When she is almost at the door, she turns back.*) Walter! (*He makes a little sound, indicating that he is listening.*) I'm going, Walter.

CLOUGH: (*Without looking round.*) Good-bye, Joan.

JOAN: Good-bye. (*She opens the door, then looks round again. He is still standing motionless by the fireplace. She hesitates, then goes out, closing the door behind her. The CURTAIN slowly falls.*)

ACT III

Scene 2

The same evening in the library at Monmouth House. LIDGATE is telephoning as the curtain rises. SPENCE sits by, pale and fidgeting with apprehension.

LIDGATE: But that's absurd! What more do they want? . . . But they've advanced me money before on the same sort of security . . . Not so much, I agree. But I'm offering more security this time . . . Oh! I see! . . . What is the *real* reason then? . . . Rumours? What sort of rumours? . . . But that's not true; that's just a lie . . . They're fools to believe such a thing . . . Have you any idea where these rumours started? . . . Ah, I guessed as much! Lupton tried to play a dirty trick on me last month and I caught him in the act. He's trying to take his revenge. Don't they know Lupton well enough by this time? . . . But am I to be put to this inconvenience just because a scoundrel chooses to tell lies about me? . . . Raise the money elsewhere? Yes, of course I can raise it elsewhere. But it's a nuisance. I go to my old friends first because it's easier, because I expect to be treated with consideration. Instead of which, I'm received as though I were a beggar or a crook. It's insulting! . . . Very well then. If that's the case, you can tell them with my compliments that I shall never have any dealings with them again. They've done very well out of me in the past. But after this they shall never get another piece of business from me. Tell them that. Never so long as I live. Good night. (*He hangs up the receiver and turns to SPENCE, smiling.*) Always take the high line, Spence. Even when you're low—particularly when you're low. It's a great comfort to be able at least to talk as though you were God Almighty. (*Telephone bell rings.*) Damn that bell! See who it is, Spence.

SPENCE: Hullo? . . . Mr. Lidgate's secretary speaking. Who is it? . . . Oh, good evening Mr. Thompson. One moment. I'll just see if Mr. Lidgate can speak to you. (*To LIDGATE.*) It's Thompson, sir. You know; the manager of Metropolitan Electric.

LIDGATE: Give me the thing. (*He takes the instrument from SPENCE.*) Hullo. That you, Thompson? Lidgate speaking. What news of your conference this afternoon? . . . What? The men won't accept your offer? But we had the

union leaders' word for it . . . But why's that? . . . They've thrown their leaders over? . . . Agitators going behind the union, I suppose . . . Yes . . . Yes . . . Then you don't think we shall get them back to work this week, as we hoped? . . . Oh, my God! No, of course we couldn't agree to that. Out of the question . . . Yes, you're right. It couldn't have happened at a worse moment. I'm afraid it's killed our chance of getting that contract for the Danish State Railways. Who'd accept a tender from a factory that isn't even working? If we'd been able to get them back today, then there might have been a possibility . . . Oh, I know you're doing your best, Thompson. But circumstances are doing their worst, I'm afraid . . . Quite . . . Quite . . . Good-bye. (*He hangs up the receiver. To SPENCE.*) Well, there goes one more forlorn hope. If we could have got the men back, we might have got the contract. And if we'd got the contract, we could have set it off against the overdraft and got back those bonds. As it is the money falls due tomorrow, they'll put the bonds on the market, and then. . . (*He shrugs his shoulders.*)

SPENCE: It's terrible, sir, it's terrible. What are we going to do, sir?

LIDGATE: Why do you ask me, Spence? Do you think I know any better than you? (*He laughs.*) There's something rather comic about a situation, from which there's no possible issue.

SPENCE: Oh, if you'd only listened to me, sir! Didn't I tell you from the first that you ought to keep out of it? Didn't I tell you from the first it was all wrong?

LIDGATE: Yes, you did, Spence. And I told *you* from the first that it was less wrong than leaving the business to Lupton and that I was damned well going to stay in. So you see we both had warning, Spence—I from you and you from me.

SPENCE: (*His self-control progressively breaking down as he speaks.*) But what is going to happen, sir? What'll they do when . . . When they find out? This time tomorrow—Oh, I darn't think of it, Mr. Lidgate. I darn't think of it; but the thought's always there—like a clock inside my head. "Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow"—over and over again. And, each time, tomorrow's a little bit nearer. It's driving me crazy, sir. I can't stand it. I can't stand the feeling that I've done something wrong. I'd never done anything before that wasn't right. Not in all my life. It makes me suddenly feel as if I were all alone. As if everyone were against me. Why didn't you take my advice, sir? I told you it wasn't right. I told you.

And tomorrow they'll come, they'll come and take us, take us away . . . No, I can't stand it, Mr. Lidgate, I can't stand it. (*He covers his face with his hands.*)

LIDGATE: Pull yourself together, Spence. It's disgraceful to let yourself go like that. Pull yourself together, man! (*He lays a hand on his shoulder and shakes him almost angrily.*)

SPENCE: All right, sir. I'll try.

LIDGATE: In the first place, nothing whatever is going to happen to you. Whatever does happen will happen to me. *I*'m responsible here. And in the second place, even if anything were going to happen to you, it would still be a disgrace to behave as you're doing. If one's a man, it's one's business to behave like a man. Not like a scared animal. Haven't you any pride, man?

SPENCE: (*Making a great effort to recover his self-control.*) I'm sorry, sir. I'm sorry.

LIDGATE: A man's got his human dignity to think of.

SPENCE: Yes, you're quite right, sir. I oughtn't to have let myself go like that. I didn't mean to. But you know how it is: you want to do one thing, and suddenly you find yourself doing just the opposite—you can't help it. It's my nerves, Mr. Lidgate. I haven't been sleeping properly these last weeks.

LIDGATE: Not sleeping? That's bad.

SPENCE: No, sir. I just lie thinking and thinking all night long. And if ever I drop off, I have such awful dreams—such terrible dreams, Mr. Lidgate, I'm glad to be awake again. It's made me quite ill.

LIDGATE: (*Distressed.*) But why didn't you tell me, Spence? Yes, and why didn't I notice it? Now that you've said it—now that it's too late—I can see you're ill.

SPENCE: But it's nothing really, sir. Just a bit of nerves, that's all. I only wanted to explain—well, you know . . . why I carried on like that just now. Just

nerves. It won't happen again. I promise you. I'm ashamed I was so weak. I ask you to excuse me, sir.

LIDGATE: (*Deeply moved, lays his hand on SPENCE's shoulder, then turns away and speaks in a low voice.*) I'm the one to be ashamed, Spence. I'm the one who ought to be asking pardon.

SPENCE: *You* asking pardon of *me*, Mr. Lidgate.

LIDGATE: For dragging you into this—gratuitously, wantonly. I'm sorry, Spence; it was wrong. I begin to realize now how wrong.

SPENCE: But, sir, you had the industry to think of; the interests of the country were at stake. You couldn't allow that Lupton gang to smash up all your work.

LIDGATE: (*Smiling.*) Thank you, Spence. I know you don't mean to be sarcastic.

SPENCE: Sarcastic, Mr. Lidgate? But, I assure you, sir, I never dreamed of such a thing. I was only . . .

LIDGATE: . . . only telling me what I'd told you. I know. But there's where the irony came in.

SPENCE: But you had to try and save the industry, sir. It was you duty; yes, it was your duty, Mr. Lidgate.

LIDGATE: Was it? Well, even if it was, had I any right to sacrifice other people's happiness?

SPENCE: But if other people are glad to be sacrificed, sir . . . if they don't even regard it as a sacrifice . . .

LIDGATE: That only makes my responsibility heavier. But thank you all the same, Spence. (*He shakes Spence by the hand.*) And thank you for everything else. For all the hard work and the patience and the loyalty. And forgive me for everything, Spence. For all the things in the past. And now for getting you into this. But I promise you that you shan't have to suffer, I promise you, Spence.

SPENCE: Oh, sir . . . Mr. Lidgate . . . (*He looks at LIDGATE, speechless with emotion. The telephone bell rings.*)

LIDGATE: Is there never to be any peace? (*He picks up the receiver.*) Hullo . . . speaking . . . Good evening . . . Fire away then . . . Oh, is that all! But I knew that long ago . . . No, nobody told me. But I knew . . . How? Because it was inevitable; it couldn't have been otherwise . . . Oh, don't apologize. I don't mind about it, you know . . . Yes, I should have minded a few days ago. But not now, not now. What *does* it matter, after all? . . . Good-bye, and thank you for ringing up. (*He replaces the receiver and turns back to SPENCE.*) Well, you'll be interested to hear that the Danish contract has gone to Vickers.

SPENCE: For certain, sir?

LIDGATE: Yes, for certain. And what a comfort that is . . . being certain. Absolutely certain. And now, Spence, you must go straight to bed early and sleep like a log. Like a log, do you hear? And don't bother about anything. Because everything will be perfectly all right as far as you're concerned.

SPENCE: But what about you, sir?

LIDGATE: Perfectly all right as far as I'm concerned too. I'm quite contented. You needn't bother about me. And now go. And don't forget to give my kindest regards to your sister. Tell her I always wear those slippers she embroidered for me. (*During this speech he has been leading SPENCE across the room towards the door, which he opens as he pronounces the last sentence.*) Well, good night, Spence.

SPENCE: Good night, Mr. Lidgate. Are you quite sure you don't need me any more?

LIDGATE: No, no. I don't need anything now. Good night. And thank you. Thank you.

SPENCE: Good night, sir. (*He goes out.*)

LIDGATE: (*Shuts the door behind him, then walks back to his table, sits down at it, picks up a sheaf of letters lying in a wicker tray in front of him, then, with a*

little laugh, tears them across and drops them into the waste paper basket. Then he writes a note, and puts it in an envelope, which he addresses. After that he opens a drawer, takes out a revolver and a box of cartridges, loads the revolver and puts it in his pocket. He gets up, walks to one of the windows, draws the curtain and standing in the deep embrasure behind it, looks out. Beyond the panes is the early darkness of a winter evening. The silhouette of a bare tree lifts its black skeleton against the pinkish gloom of the London night sky. ***LIDGATE*** *whispers to himself.)* "Now more than ever seems it rich to die. Now more than ever . . . ." *(He relapses into silence and stands quite still, looking out. The door opens and* ***BARMBY*** *comes in; he looks round, does not see* ***LIDGATE*** *in the embrasure of the window and walks into the room as if he were alone, whistling softly to himself. He goes to a shelf, takes out a book and is moving towards the fireplace, when he sees* ***LIDGATE*** *standing motionless in the window. The shock of surprise makes him start.)*

BARMBY: Goodness! You did give me a start! But what *are* you doing, hiding there, like that?

LIDGATE: *(Stands for a moment longer with his back to* ***BARMBY****, looking out; then sighs, turns round and comes back into the room.)* I was looking at the night.

BARMBY: Looking at the night? *(He glances out and quickly turns back towards the fire.)* Well, there isn't much to see, is there?

LIDGATE: No, that's the beauty of the night: there's nothing to see. The daylight is full of all kinds of stupid restlessness. But in the night there's nothing. *(They sit down by the fire.)*

BARMBY: I came to see if you felt inclined for what Joan calls "lessons" this evening.

LIDGATE: No, not tonight.

BARMBY: *(Smiling.)* No culture?

LIDGATE: *(Shakes his head. There is a silence.)*

BARMBY: (*Making as if to rise.*) Perhaps you'd like me to go in that case.

LIDGATE: No, please don't. There are some things . . . some things I'd like to say to you, Barmby.

BARMBY: Oh, all right. (*He sits down again.*)

LIDGATE: (*After a pause.*) You'd say I was a successful man, wouldn't you?

BARMBY: Well, you've got what you wanted. Isn't that the definition of success?

LIDGATE: Yes; and then, when one's got it, discovering one didn't really want it at all—that's the result of success.

BARMBY: Still there is always the sport of getting—the fun of doing something skillfully and well. You enjoy that, don't you?

LIDGATE: I did enjoy it. But when one stops to think about it, how hopelessly silly it all seems.

BARMBY: But how hopelessly silly any kind of action is, if you stop to think about it! Moral: don't stop to think.

LIDGATE: You can't help it sometimes.

BARMBY: It's dangerous.

LIDGATE: Why dangerous?

BARMBY: Because all thinking brings you in the long run to the same place. At the end of every corridor you open the same door and find yourself looking over the edge of the same black precipice—Down into the darkness of death.

LIDGATE: How did you know it, Barmby?

BARMBY: Know what?

LIDGATE: What was in my mind.

BARMBY: Why, for the simple reason that, if you start thinking at all, you must think about death. Finally and ultimately, there's nothing else to think about. At the end of every corridor, I tell you. And when one looks into the black hole, everything else seems silly. Not only your absurd finance but my ridiculous literature and Walter Clough's idiotic communism. Yes, and even Shakespeare's poetry and Newton's science and St Francis's religion—all utterly and hopelessly silly, so far as the individual is concerned. Because, whatever he may be or do or think or feel, the individual is mortal. Condemned to death. He goes whizzing along his little rails. Full speed ahead, all clear on the line. And then suddenly the rails break off short and over he goes, into the black hole. And where there was something, suddenly there isn't anything. Finished.

LIDGATE: Are you afraid of death, Barmby?

BARMBY: Terrified, when I think of it. That's why I do my best not to think of it.

LIDGATE: And yet the comfort of death, Barmby! The simplicity, "Now more than ever seems it rich to die." Rich! Too rich, in a way. It seems rather selfish somehow—do you see what I mean? Selfish to be so su;·remely well off, when other people have to go on in their misery. It's the one thing that makes me doubt—makes me wonder whether one has the right t.. Oh! (*It is JOAN who, having entered very quietly, still in her outdoor clothes, lays a hand on his shoulder. LIDGATE looks up, startled, sees her, and a distressed, almost guilty look appears on his face.*) Oh, it's you, Joan.

JOAN: Yes, it's me. (*She sighs.*) And I wish it wasn't. (*She sits down and pulls off her hat.*) Why does one always have to be oneself?

BARMBY: (*Speaking with a trace of mockery.*) You've been a long time getting back from Walter's.

JOAN: (*Wearily.*) Yes, I walked most of the way. (*Suddenly looking up at him and in a sharper questioning voice.*) But how did you know I'd been at Walter's?

BARMBY: Because I went there to meet you. As you asked me to. At six o'clock precisely.

JOAN: Oh, of course, I'd forgotten.

BARMBY: I know you had. And next time you make me traipse up to Camden Town, I'll trouble you not to forget.

JOAN: (*With a sudden malignant little laugh.*) It served you right.

BARMBY: Served me right? What for?

JOAN: For everything. For being you. Always and hopelessly and inevitably you. (*In a changed voice, dully and miserably.*) And anyhow, it won't ever happen again. Never. (*She turns to LIDGATE.*) Oh, Daddy, why did you want to go and make all that idiotic money? What's the good of it? All it does is to cut one off from other people. (*LIDGATE does not answer, but sits shielding his face with his hand, so that she cannot see him.*)

BARMBY: You can't expect to get something for nothing. Can you, Mr. Lidgate?

LIDGATE: (*Shakes his head.*) No. But it's very easy to get nothing for something. Even if you get what you set out to get.

BARMBY: (*To JOAN.*) You rich people—You're marooned on the island of your money.

JOAN: But I don't want to be marooned.

BARMBY: Wanting's got nothing to do with it. You *are* marooned. Napoleon ended on St. Helena; but you started there.

JOAN: Well, I'm damned well not going to stay there! (*She rises and picks up her hat with a gesture of angry determination.*) Do you hear, Daddy? I give you fair warning. I'm going to escape. I absolutely refuse to be rich any more.

LIDGATE: (*Without looking at her, and in a very low voice.*) You refuse. (*He smiles sadly and imperceptibly shrugs his shoulders. JOAN moves towards the door. He hears her going and looks up with a sudden anxiety.*) Joan! Are you going?

JOAN: Yes.

LIDGATE: Without . . . without saying good night?

JOAN: (*Smiling.*) But I'm not going to escape in such a hurry as all that! I shall see you again this evening.

LIDGATE: No . . . I'm not sure . . . Perhaps I shan't be there. So we'd better . . . We'd better say good night now.

JOAN: (*Comes back and kisses him.*) Good night, Daddy.

LIDGATE: Good night, Joan.

JOAN: (*Aware through her own preoccupations that he is distressed.*) Don't think I'm cross with you, Daddy. It's the money I want to escape from—not you. (*She bends down and kisses him again, lightly and swiftly.*) Darling Daddy! (*She turns away again towards the door.*)

LIDGATE: (*Gets up and walks to the fireplace, where he stands with his back to her, while she goes out. He is painfully moved and wants to hide the fact. The door closes behind her; there is a silence. BARMBY takes a cigarette out of a silver box on the table and lights it with deliberate gusto, blowing a cloud of smoke into the air. LIDGATE suddenly turns to him.*) Listen, Barmby. I'd better tell you at once. I've . . . well, I've gambled and I've lost.

BARMBY: What, lost your money?

LIDGATE: Money—and all the rest. I took a chance with . . . well, it's turned out to be with my life. Today I'm still a respected citizen. But tomorrow . . . tomorrow . . . (*A short pause.*) I wonder if other criminals *feel* criminal. I feel absolutely the same as I've always felt.

BARMBY: But do you mean to say you've . . . you've got on the wrong side of the law?

LIDGATE: So far on the wrong side that tomorrow the world will find out that I'm one of the biggest swindlers on record.

BARMBY: (*Noiselessly goes through the movement of whistling.*)

LIDGATE: (*After a pause.*) Or rather that I *was* one of the biggest swindlers on record. "Now more than ever," Barmby. "now more than ever seems it rich . . . rich . . ." (*He turns away. There is a silence.*)

BARMBY: What's the alternative to . . . to that?

LIDGATE: Ten years . . . twelve. God knows. Fourteen, if it's one of the judges who enjoy hurting people.[56]

BARMBY: (*Shaking his head.*) Fourteen!

LIDGATE: If one could feel it were some sort of expiation for wrong-doing, yes, but I don't even feel that what I did was wrong. Not more wrong than anything else I've been doing for the last thirty years. My whole existence has been wrong. But it's not going to prison that will mend that. Prison's just a more horrible form of death, and it's only by living that I could correct the wrong—by living, by learning to live. Well, it's too late now. There's only death in front of me. Either slow, dirty, conscious death in prison; or else the clean immediate darkness. I don't see that one can hesitate in one's choice.

BARMBY: No, I suppose one can't really hesitate.

LIDGATE: (*After a pause.*) And there's Joan to think of. The trial, all the obscene publicity—I want to spare her *that* humiliation. And then God knows what I might become in prison. A sort of half-mad, cringing animal. A lot of them go that way. And that would be her father. No; better end it at once,

---

[56]Fourteen years. Clarence Hatry received a fourteen-year prison term for his swindle. See *Letters*, p. 327.

cleanly. It'll be horrible for her. Horrible. But less horrible than the other thing. Don't you think so?

BARMBY: (*After a pause, and in a low voice.*) Yes.

LIDGATE: You'll try . . . You'll try to help her a bit, won't you?

BARMBY: I'll do my best.

LIDGATE: Try to explain to her a bit, later on. Why I did it.

BARMBY: Very well.

LIDGATE: And ask her to forgive me—forgive me for not having loved her more. For having loved her too much in a way, as well. Perhaps if her mother had lived . . . (*There is a silence. Then taking a deep breath, he turns to **BARMBY**.*) I think you'd better go now, Barmby.

BARMBY: (*Gets up.*)

LIDGATE: There's a letter on the table there. But they'll find it all right. I wanted to make it quite clear that poor old Spence had nothing to do with the business. Well, good-bye, Barmby.

BARMBY: Good-bye. (*They shake hands. **BARMBY** goes out. **LIDGATE** stands for some time leaning against the mantelpiece. Then crosses the room and turns out the lights. Seen only by the glow of the fire, he walks back, across the stage and comes to a standstill by the writing table. He takes the revolver out of his pocket. The **CURTAIN** slowly descends.*

EPILOGUE

(*The same, four days later. It is morning; a London garden bounded by walls and chimney pots, is visible through the window. **JOAN** is sitting at the table writing. She is dressed in her outdoor clothes and wears a hat. **BARMBY** is standing beside her.*)

JOAN: (*Laying down the pen, and handing BARMBY the sheet of paper on which she has been writing.*) There. That's my address. If there's anything urgent, you can write or telegraph there.

BARMBY: (*After looking at the paper, folds it and puts it away in his pocket book.*) I see.

JOAN: But don't tell anyone where I am. Do you understand, Phil? Nobody whatever. Can I rely on you for that?

BARMBY: Yes, you can rely on me.

JOAN: And don't forward any letters. I don't even want to hear from anybody. (*Leaning wearily back in her chair.*) Oh, dear, how awful it is that everything goes on—goes on and on, just the same as ever! The buses and the theatres and the tea shops and all the people in the streets, and Upavon's beastly papers every morning and evening. On and on and on.

BARMBY: But, isn't it really a consolation? Life persisting and renewing itself. Even Upavon's papers are good, when you think of them in that light.

JOAN: Yes, I suppose so. But all the same it upsets me; it makes me feel uncomfortable and . . . and somehow ashamed. Ashamed of still being hungry and eating my three meals a day as though nothing had happened; and being sleepy and going to bed at night and waking up again next morning—waking up and then suddenly remembering that there's someone who won't ever wake up again. (*A silence. She looks at her watch.*) Well, I must be thinking of going. (*She gets up.*) You've been very sweet, Phil. You're a nice man, you know; a very decent man really.

BARMBY: (*Shakes his head.*) No, I'm not.

JOAN: Yes, you are. Only sometimes you don't give yourself a chance of being decent. I shan't forget what you've done for me. (*BARMBY takes her hand and kisses it. She turns away and picks up her bag and walks towards the door; at the door she turns back again.*) If you see Walter, tell him . . . (*She hesitates for a long time.*) Tell him . . .

BARMBY: Tell him what?

JOAN: Oh, I don't know! (*She makes a hopeless gesture. Her voice breaks: she turns away her face; as she goes out, UPAVON comes into the room.*)

UPAVON: Joan! Are you . . .?

JOAN: (*Sobbing.*) No, no, I can't stay. (*She hurries out.*)

UPAVON: Poor girl! I wish there was something one could do for her.

BARMBY: One can leave her alone. It's easy; and it's the only thing that she wants or that will do her any good.

UPAVON: Yes, I expect you're right. Hasn't Ted Monmouth turned up yet?

BARMBY: Not so far as I'm aware.

UPAVON: (*Looking at his watch.*) I shan't have the right to start cursing for another four minutes. (*Looks round.*) Poor old Arthur! When one thinks what he must have gone through. In this very room.

BARMBY: Yes, what he must have gone through! These people who victimize themselves for an idea—I've never been able to understand them. Particularly when it's a thoroughly bad idea. Sacrificing yourself for the greater glory of God—that's just comprehensible. But sacrificing yourself for the greater glory of the iron and steel industry—no, that's utterly beyond me.[57]

UPAVON: (*After a pause.*) What do you think of doing, now, Barmby?

BARMBY: Doing. Oh, the usual thing. Nothing in particular.

---

[57]Sacrificing self for the greater glory of iron and steel. Huxley coins the word "industriolatry", in "On the Charms of History". One should liken Lidgate to the Fordian "ascetic missionary" who dies "*ad majorem Industriae gloriam*". *Music at Night*, p. 137.

UPAVON: I've got a job for you.

BARMBY: A job? Heaven preserve us!

UPAVON: What do you say to the literary editorship of the *Daily Gazette*?

BARMBY: *Literary* editorship of the *Gazette*? Isn't it a contradiction in terms?

UPAVON: The present man's going. I need someone to take his place. Will you do it, Barmby?

BARMBY: No, I won't.[58]

UPAVON: But you don't realize. It's a good job. We pay very well on the *Gazette*.

BARMBY: I know. But after all one's got to draw the line somewhere. Besides, I could never get down to the office in the mornings. (*A footman appears at the door.*)

FOOTMAN: There's a gentleman would like to see you, sir.

BARMBY: Who? Me?

---

[58]Barmby's rejection of Upavon's proffered job as literary editor of *The Gazette* recalls Huxley's rejection of a similar post at Beaverbrook's *Evening Standard* in 1929. He writes brother Julian: "On second thoughts, I've declined Beaverbrook's offer. I didn't need the money: it wd have been pure avarice if I'd taken it. And the bother involved wasn't worth it. Writing against time once a week and—worse—having to read contemporary literature. Also the certainty . . . of quarrelling with almost all my literary colleagues. For after all, at least 99.8% of the literary production of this age . . . is the purest cat-piss." 22 February 1929, *Letters*, p. 307.

FOOTMAN: Yes, sir.

CLOUGH: (*Coming into the room.*) It's only me, Phil. Can you spare me half a minute? I'm sorry to interrupt you. But it's rather urgent. (*The footman goes out.*)

BARMBY: (*Gets up and goes to meet him. They talk standing near the door.*) What is it, Walter?

CLOUGH: I was away, when this thing happened—had to be in Barcelona for a conference, and only got back this morning. Otherwise I'd have come before. Tell me, how's Joan? It must have been too awful for her.

BARMBY: It was—horrible.

CLOUGH: Where is she? I want to see her.

BARMBY: You can't. She's gone—not five minutes ago.

CLOUGH: Where to?

BARMBY: Into the country.

CLOUGH: But where?

BARMBY: I can't tell you. She made me promise I wouldn't give her address—not to anyone.

CLOUGH: Don't be a fool! I'm not anyone. You know that quite well. Tell me where.

BARMBY: Shall I? (*Hesitates.*) All right, I'll take the risk of disobeying her. (*He looks at his watch.*) If you jump into a taxi and drive straight to Paddington, you'll be in time to catch her. She's traveling by the twelve o'clock train to Exeter. (*MONMOUTH enters the room, while he is saying this.*) You've got eighteen minutes.

CLOUGH: Eighteen minutes. That's plenty. (*He turns to go and finds himself face to face with **MONMOUTH**.*)

MONMOUTH: Ah, we meet again.

CLOUGH: (*Ferociously.*) Oh, damn your eyes! (*He rushes out.*)

MONMOUTH: What is the matter with the chap? Has he gone mad?

BARMBY: (*Taking his arm and leading him across the room to where UPAVON is sitting.*) Just a touch of temporary insanity; that's all.

UPAVON: (*Watch in hand, severely.*) Two minutes late, Ted.

MONMOUTH: I'm so sorry. You see, my taxi . . .

UPAVON: I know, I know. You had a puncture in Piccadilly. One day I shall get annoyed and give you the sack. So choose your taxis more carefully in future. (*In another tone.*) Well I've made up my mind about the house. I'll take over the rest of poor Arthur's lease. On the same terms.

MONMOUTH: Oh, that's splendid!

UPAVON: Occupation begins from tomorrow.

MONMOUTH: From today if you like.

UPAVON: All right, from today. From this moment. You're *my* guest now. I'll sign the papers as soon as your lawyer can draw them up.

MONMOUTH: I'll see that they're ready tomorrow.

UPAVON: Whenever you like.

MONMOUTH: Well, that is a load off my mind. Having the house thrown back on my hands like this—I can't tell you what a worry that was. And not the smallest prospect of getting anything out of Lidgate's estate for the rest of the lease. My word, I should have been in a hole! But you've saved the situation. I'm eternally grateful to you.

UPAVON: Oh, don't bother about eternity, Ted. Two or three weeks will be quite sufficient. Listen, Ted, I want you to go easy for a bit on the gossip.

MONMOUTH: How do you mean?

UPAVON: I'm launching our great public economy campaign tomorrow.

BARMBY: (*Under his breath.*) Oh, Lord!

UPAVON: We shall be calling for retrenchment on unemployment pay and on education—all the social services, in fact. Sacrifices all round. And one of the sacrifices will have to be you. All that stuff of yours about fancy dress parties and the Embassy and Mr. Goldberg's ivory and ebony bedroom—it's first-rate, absolutely first-rate. But not while we're running the economy campaigns.

MONMOUTH: Yes, I can see that.

UPAVON: It's out of the picture. It's irrelevant. Now listen, Ted: during the economy campaign, no parties. That's the first thing.

MONMOUTH: I'd better make a note of it. (*He takes out a small note-book and pencil.*) "No parties."

UPAVON: I don't mind a debutante's coming-out dance: that's the family; that's respectable. And of course, anything that's for charity. You mustn't miss anything charitable, do you understand?

MONMOUTH: (*He writes.*) "Except debs and charity."

UPAVON: Don't meet your friends at the Embassy. Meet them at bazaars.

MONMOUTH: (*Writing.*) "Bazaars". I see.

UPAVON: And then go down into the country and stay with people who farm their estates. That's always good. "The countess superintending work on her model farm." You'd better take a photographer along with you.

MONMOUTH: Right you are.

UPAVON: And talk a bit about the older people for a change. Old respectable people. I suppose you still know a few of those. I want the tone of the gossip column to be extremely high while we're running economy. High and pure.

MONMOUTH: (*Writing.*) "High and pure."

UPAVON: After the campaign's over, you can do what you like. But for the next three weeks, mind! (*He shakes his finger at MONMOUTH.*)

(*FOOTMAN opens the door and announces, 'Miss Endicott.' Enter PEGGY.*)

PEGGY: (*As they rise.*) No, don't get up; please don't get up. How are you, Lord Upavon? And Phil! (*She waves her hand to him across the table.*) Ted darling! (*She sits down.*) Do you know I haven't been here since . . . since it happened. It was actually in this room, wasn't it?

UPAVON: Yes, in this room.

PEGGY: Too awful! Has anyone seen Joan these last days?

BARMBY: She's gone down to the country. To hide. She doesn't want to see anyone.

PEGGY: Poor Joan! She *was* such a charming girl!

BARMBY: Why speak of her as though she were dead? She still is a charming girl.

PEGGY: (*Slightly confused.*) Oh, of course, of course. But somehow one feels . . . one feels that she's gone out of one's life. Don't you feel that, Ted?

MONMOUTH: Yes, yes. I know just what you mean.

BARMBY: I wish I did. You mean you don't think you'll go on being friendly with her because she's lost all her money—is that it?

PEGGY: No, no. Of *course* not. What has that got to do with it?

BARMBY: I should have thought it had a great deal to do with it.

PEGGY: No, it's something *quite* different. Isn't it, Ted?

MONMOUTH: Absolutely different.

PEGGY: Something—how shall I put it? Something almost *mystical.*

BARMBY: Crikey!

PEGGY: As though a whole *chapter* of one's life had come to an end with that pistol shot. (*She nods slowly and sighs.*) Ted, are you coming to help me choose my skiing clothes for St Moritz?

MONMOUTH: Yes, what fun! I saw the most ravishing sweaters in Fortnum's window yesterday. Longed to get one myself.

PEGGY: Come on, then. Well, good-bye, Lord Upavon. Good-bye, Phil.

MONMOUTH: (*To UPAVON.*) I'll let you know when the papers are ready for signing.

UPAVON: All right. And don't forget what I told you about the gossip.

MONMOUTH: No, no. "High and pure, High and pure." Come on, Peggy. *(He lays a hand familiarly on her shoulder, and they go out in a walking embrace.)*

UPAVON: I hear they're going to get married, those two.

BARMBY: Her father's rich, isn't he?

UPAVON: Yes; frozen meat.[59]

BARMBY: Frozen meat? (*He nods slowly. CURTAIN.*)

---

[59]Frozen meat. Same image appears in *EG* as symbol of grossly materialistic western society. The rationalized industry which fuelled Peggy's lavish spending-habits was The Union Cold Storage Company, a conglomerate of fifty allied companies with a capital of £20,000,000 and control of "practically the whole of the chilled-meat traffic in Great Britain." Cited by C. Marshall Hattersley, *This Age of Plenty* (1929), a book Huxley endorsed.

Endnotes:

[1]Perhaps Huxley was thinking of Macbeth's dread at the relentless advance of Birnam Wood when he described Spence's terror at the implacable advance of bond-redemption day (Act 3, scene 2, p. 229: "Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow . . . ."

[2]In the typescript of *The World of Light* (later deleted from the published text), Huxley has a character describe Wenham, Sr. as "a captain of industry" (Act 2, Scene 3, 6).

[3]Huxley quotes these lines and comments upon them in his discursive anthology, *Texts and Pretexts* (1932), p. 292. He again quotes these lines in the first chapter of *Time Must Have a Stop* (1945).

[4]In effect, though, Huxley explores his own lack of charity here, a lack he later tried to compensate for by visiting the sick in hospital until he realized that he had no such vocation and allowed his wife to take over those ministrations. See Bedford, 1, 294.

[5]Letter to the author, 9 August 1994.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES: BOOKS

Unless otherwise indicated, all references are to the first Chatto and Windus collected edition of Huxley's works, begun 1949.

Huxley, Aldous. *Antic Hay.* 1923; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Beyond the Mexique Bay.* 1934; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Brave New World.* 1932; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *The Discovery.* London: Chatto, 1925.

________. *Do What You Will.* 1929; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Ends and Means.* 1937; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Eyeless in Gaza.* 1936: rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *The Gioconda Smile.* London: Chatto, 1948.

________. *Grey Eminence.* 1944; rpt. London: Triad, 1982.

________. *Jesting Pilate.* 1926; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Limbo.* 1920; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Mortal Coils.* 1922; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Music at Night.* 1932; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *The Olive Tree.* 1936; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *On the Margin.* 1923; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Point Counter Point.* 1928; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Texts and Pretexts.* 1932; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Those Barren Leaves.* 1925; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *Verses and a Comedy.* 1931; rpt. London: Chatto, 1949.

________. *What Are You Going To Do About It?* London: Chatto, 1936.

Contributions to Magazines, Newspapers, and Periodicals:

________. "Abroad in England." *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* May 1931: 16-19, 84.

________. "Albert, Prince Consort." *Vanity Fair* Mar. 1922: 33-34, 98.

________. "The Ambassador of Capripedia." *Vanity Fair* May 1922: 61, 112.

________. "Casino and Bourse." *Everyman* 22 (8 March 1935), 525-26.

________. "A Disagreement With Mr. Shaw." *Vanity Fair* May 1929: 53, 104.

________. "Gods Propose, Men Dispose." *Harper's Magazine* 153 Oct. 1926: 646-47

________. "Greater and Lesser London." *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* Oct. 1931: 48-49, 108.

________. "How to Write a Tragedy." *Vanity Fair* May 1924: 67, 94, 98.

________. "If Christ should come today." *Hearst's International and Cosmopolitan* Apr. 1932: 170-71.

________. "John Galsworthy, Plays, Fourth Series." *Athenæum*, 4 June 1920: 733.

________. "Magic of London." *Sunday Dispatch* 16 Dec., 1928, 12.

________. "Mystery of the Theatre." *Vanity Fair* June 1924: 43, 114.

________. "Notes on the Way." [17 articles] *Time and Tide*, 13 (7 May 1932), 514-16; 13 (14 May 1932), 542-44; 13 (21 May 1932), 566-67; 13 (28 May 1932), 590-92; 15 (3 March 1934), 267-69; 15 (10 March 1934), 306, 308-9; 15 (17 March 1934), 338-40; 15 (24 March 1934), 370-72; 16 (1 June 1935), 811-12, 814-15; 16 (8 June 1935), 861-63; 16 (15 June 1935), 885-86; 16 (22 June 1935), 927-29; 16 (29 June 1935), 974-76; 17 (29 Feb. 1936), 289-91; 17 (7 March 1936), 325-26; 17 (14 March 1936), 357-58; 18 (10 July 1937), 925-27.

________. "The Pleasant and the Unpleasant." *Vanity Fair* Sept. 1925: 64, 92.

________. "The Problem of Faith." *Harper's* 166 (January 1933) 211-16.

________. "The Publisher." *Vanity Fair* Apr. 1923: 53, 116.

________. "Ravens and Writing Desks." *Vanity Fair* Sept. 1928: 46, 110.

________. "Science—the Double-Edged Tool." *The Listener* 20 Jan. 1932: 77- 79, 112.

________. "Sight-Seeing in Alien Englands." *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* June 1931: 50-53, 118.

________. "The Victory of Art Over Humanity." *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* July 1931: 46-49.

________. "Why I Do Not Go to the Theatre." *Vanity Fair* June 1927: 57, 98.

DRAMA REVIEWS, *The Westminster Gazette*, London

________. "Mary Rose." 23 Apr. 1920: 6.

________. "Shakespeare Day." 24 Apr. 1920: 6.

________. "A Worthy Experiment." 29 Apr. 1920: 4.

_______. "The Guitry Season." 12 May 1920: 6.

_______. "Why Marry?" 13 May 1920: 6.

_______. "Jean de la Fontaine." 22 May 1920: 6.

_______. "Daddalums." 16 June 1920: 6.

_______. "Tragedy of Nan." 21 Sept. 1920: 4.

_______. "La Tosca." 24 Sept. 24, 1920, 6.

_______. "Columbine." 19 Oct. 19 1920: 6.

_______. "Ignorance." 7 Dec. 1920: 9.

_______. "The Melting Pot." 9 Dec. 1920: 6.

_______. "A Safety Match." 14 Jan. 1921: 6.

_______. "The Best Brieux." 26 Jan. 1921: 4.

_______. "Volpone." 2 Feb. 1921: 6.

_______. "A Peculiar Play: The Wonderful Visit" 11 Feb. 1921: 6.

_______. "G. B. S. Season—The Doctor's Dilemma at The Everyman." 22 Feb. 1921: 4.

_______. "The Stage Society. 'At Mrs. Beam's.'" 2 Mar. 1921: 6.

_______. "The Circle." 4 Mar. 1921: 6.

_______. "'G. B. S.' at Hampstead.—'The Showing Up of Blanco Posnet' at the Everyman." 15 May 1921: 6.

_______. "Love for Love." 23 Mar 1921: 4.

UNPUBLISHED TYPESCRIPT AND LETTERS

_______. "Christ and the Present Crisis." T ms 4pp, n.d. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin. Later published in shortened form as an untitled contribution to the symposium, "If Christ Should Come Today." *Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan* April 1932, 170-71.

_______. Letter to Ralph Pinker. 4 June 1931. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

_______. Letter to Ralph Pinker. 10 October 1932. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

_______. Letter to Ralph Pinker. 19 December 1932. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

_______. Letter to Ralph Pinker. 25 May 1933. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

_______. Letter to Ralph Pinker. 11 June 1933. Harry Ransom Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

_______. Letter to Ralph Pinker. 21 November, 1933. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

_______. Letter to Ralph Pinker. 22 June 1934. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

_______. Letter to Ralph Pinker. 18 December 1934. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

_______. *Now More Than Ever* (indexed as "An Unpublished Play." T ms, corrected. 92 pp. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, Library of the University of Texas, Austin.

_______. *The World of Light* (indexed as T cc ms with autograph revisions. 94 pp.) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Agate, James. *First Nights.* London: I. Nicholson and Watson, 1934.

Archer, William. *Play-Making.* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1912, rpt. 1926.

Austin, F. Britten. "HRH—The British Mussolini?" *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* May 1931: 6-9.

Barman, T. G. "Ivar Kreuger: His Life and Work." *The Atlantic* August 1932: 238-250.

_______. "Kreuger and Toll—A Chapter in Constructive Finance." *Fortnightly Review* 780 1 Dec. 1931: 719-729.

Barnes, T.R. "Shaw and the London Theatre," 209-221. In Ford, Boris, ed., *The Modern Age.* London: Penguin, 1964.

Barrett, William. *Irrational Man. A Study in Existential Philosophy.* New York: Doubleday, 1958; rpt, 1962.

Barry, Gerald. Letter to the Editor. *Time and Tide* 28 Feb. 1931: 249.

Bass, Eben. *Aldous Huxley: An Annotated Bibliography.* New York: Farland, 1981.

Bedford, Sybil. *Aldous Huxley: A Biography, Volume One, The Apparent Stability.* 1973; rpt. London: Grafton, 1987.

_______. *Aldous Huxley: A Biography, Volume Two, The Turning Points.* 1974; rpt. London: Grafton, 1987.

Bentley, Joseph. "Huxley's Ambivalent Response to the Ideas of D.H. Lawrence." *Twentieth Century Literature* 13 (October 1967): 139-153.

Blakelock, Denys. *Round the Next Corner.* London: Gollancz, 1967.

Bolitho, Hector. *Alfred Mond. First Lord Melchett.* New York: D. Appleton, 1933.

Boyle, Andrew. *Montagu Norman: A Biography.* New York: Weybright and Talley, 1967.

Bradshaw, David. "Aldous Huxley's Ideological Development 1919-1936." Diss. Oxford, 1987.

_______. "The Best of Companions: J.W.N. Sullivan, Aldous Huxley and the New Physics, Part I." Review of *English Studies* 47 (May 1996): 188-206.

_______. "The Best of Companions: J.W.N. Sullivan, Aldous Huxley and the New Physics, Conclusion" *Review of English Studies* 47 (August 1996): 352-368.

_______. *The Hidden Huxley: Contempt and Compassion for the Masses.* London: Faber, 1994.

_______. "Huxley's Slump." In Batchelor, John, ed. *The Art of Literary Biography.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995.

Brewer, John D. *Mosley's Men. The BUF in the West Midlands.* Aldershot: Gower, 1984.

Brown, Alec. *The Fate of the Middle Classes.* London: Gollancz, 1936.

Brown, Ivor. *Parties of the Play.* London: Benn, 1928.

_______. "The World of Light." *The Week-end Review* 11 April, 1931, 537-538.

Browne, Sir Thomas. *Religio Medici. Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry.* Ed. Robert P. Tristram Coffin and Alexander M. Witherspoon. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1957.

Burtt, E. A. *The Metaphysical Foundations of Physical Science.* 1924; rpt. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Chase, Stuart. *Mexico: A Study of Two Americas.* New York: Literary Guild, 1931.

Churchill, R. C. "Cross Currents in the Fiction and Drama of the Twentieth Century," 221-231. In Ford, Boris, ed., *The Modern Age.* London: Penguin, 1964.

Clark, Ronald W. *The Huxleys.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.

Cole, Susan. *The Utopian Plays of George Bernard Shaw.* University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, 1972.

Coleman, D. C. "*Bernard Shaw and Brave New World.*" *Shaw Review* 10 (Jan., 1967), 6-8.

Collier, John, and Iain Lang. *Just The Other Day.* London: H. Hamilton, 1932.

Croft, Andy. *Red Letter Days: British Fiction in the 1930s.* London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990.

Cullen, Stephen. "The Development of the Ideas and Policy of the British Union of Fascists, 1932-1940." *Journal of Contemporary History,* Vol. 22 (1987), 115-36.

Davies, Ernest. *'National Capitalism': The Government's Record as Protector of Private Monopoly.* London: Victor Gollancz, 1939.

De-la-Noy, Michael. *Eddy: The Life of Edward Sackville-West.* London: Bodley Head, 1988.

Dietrich, Richard F. *British Drama 1890-1950.* Boston: Twayne, 1989.

Dixon, Campbell. *This Way to Paradise.* London: Chatto, 1930.

Drieu La Rochelle, Pierre. *Genève ou Moscou.* Paris: Gallimard, 1928.

Duhamel, Georges. *America the Menace.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1931.

Dukes, Ashley. "The London Scene." *Theatre Arts Monthly* June 1931, 459-60.

Dukore, Bernard F. *Bernard Shaw, Director.* Seattle: U of Washington P, 1971.

_______. *Money and Politics in Ibsen, Shaw, and Brecht.* Columbia, London: U of Missouri P, 1980.

Duval, Hanson R. *Aldous Huxley, A Bibliography.* New York: Arrow.

Einsohn, Howard. "The Intelligent Reader's Guide to *The Apple Cart.*" *Annual of Bernard Shaw Studies* 1989, 9, 143-160.

Eschelbach, Claire and Joyce Lee Shober. *Aldous Huxley: A Bibliography 1916-1959.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: U California P, 1961.

Firchow, Peter. *The End of Utopia: A Study of Aldous Huxley's Brave New World.* Lewisburg, Penn.: Bucknell University Press, 1984.

Fox, Ralph. *The Novel and the People.* London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1937.

Fülöp-Miller, René. *The Mind and Face of Bolshevism.* London and New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1927.

Galsworthy, John. *The Plays of John Galsworthy.* London: Duckworth, 1929.

_______. *The Silver Spoon.* 1926; rpt. in *The Forsyte Saga and A Modern Comedy.* London: Octopus, 1976.

_______. *Swan Song.* 1928; rpt. in *The Forsyte Saga and A Modern Comedy.* London: Octopus, 1976.

Garcia, Reloy. "The Quest for Paradise in the Novels of D.H. Lawrence," *D.H. Lawrence Review* 3, II Summer 1970, 93-114.

Ginden, James. *John Galsworthy's Life and Art.* London: Macmillan, 1977.

Goodheart, Eugene. *The Utopian Vision of D.H. Lawrence.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1963.

Graves, Robert and Alan Hodge. *The Long Weekend—A Social History of Great Britain 1918-1939.* London: Faber, 1940; rpt. 1971.

Greene, Graham. *A Gun For Sale.* 1936; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.

_______. *England Made Me.* 1935; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970.

_______. "Gold Bricks." *Spectator*, March 3, 1933, 308.

_______. *It's a Battlefield.* 1934; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962.

Greetham, D. C. *Scholarly Editing.* New York: MLA 1995.

Halpenny, Frances G. *Editing Twentieth-Century Texts.* Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 1972.

Hannah, Leslie. *The Rise of the Corporate Economy.* London: Methuen, 1983.

Hattersley, C. Marshall. *This Age of Plenty.* London: Sir Isaac Pitman, 1929.

Henderson, Fred. *The Economic Consequences of Power Production.* London: Allen and Unwin, 1931.

Henderson, Philip. *The Novel Today: Studies in Contemporary Attitudes.* London: John Lane, 1936.

Hodson, J. L. "The Brilliant Brothers." *News Chronicle* 30 Dec. 1931: 11.

Holroyd, Michael. *Bernard Shaw: The Lure of Fantasy 1918-1951.* New York: Random House, 1991.

Hopkins, Chris. "Greene's *England Made Me*: Krogh, Kreuger and English Marxist Criticism in the Nineteen Thirties." *English Language Notes* Sept. 1995: 61-63.

Huftel, Sheila. *Arthur Miller: The Burning Glass.* New York: Citadel, 1965.

Hutchison, Keith. *Decline and Fall of British Capitalism.* London: Cape, 1951.

Hutt, Allen. *This Final Crisis.* New York: International Publishers, 1935.

Huxley, Julian. *If I Were Dictator.* New York and London: Harpers, 1934.

Innes, Christopher. *Modern British Drama, 1890-1990.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992.

Jameson, (Margaret) Storm. "This Final Crisis" *Left Review* 2:4 (Jan.,1936) 156-59.

Karl, Frederick R. "The Play Within the Novel in *Antic Hay.*" *Renascence* 13 (Winter 1961). 59-68.

Keynes, John Maynard. "Dilemma of Modern Socialism," *Political Quarterly* 3. 1 (1932): 155-161.

Kierkegaard, Sören. *Either/Or.* Trans. Swenson, David and Lillian M. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1944.

"The Kreuger Tragedy." *The Economist* 19 Mar. 1932: 615-16.

Lawrence, D. H. *The Complete Poems*, ed. V. de Sola Pinto, 1964; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977.

________. *Selected Letters.*, ed. Huxley, Aldous, 1932; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1950.

Lees-Milne, James. *Harold Nicolson.* 2 vols. London: 1981. Vol. 2.

Lion, Leon M. *The Surprise of My Life.* London: Hutchinson, 1948.

Lodge, David. *Therapy.* London: Secker, 1995.

Lucas, A. F. *Industrial Reconstruction and the Control of Competition: The British Experiments.* London: Longmans, 1937.

MacCarthy, Desmond. *Humanities.* London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1953.

McDowell, Frederick P. W. "Crisis and Unreason: Shaw's *On the Rocks.*" *Educational Theatre Journal* 13.3 (Oct. 1961): 192-200.

________. "'The Eternal Against the Expedient': Structure and Theme in Shaw's *The Apple Cart.*" *Modern Drama* Sept. 1959: 99-113.

Maier, Charles S. "Between Taylorism and Technology: European ideologies and the vision of industrial productivity in the 1920s." *Contemporary History* 2 (1970): 27-61.

Massey, Raymond. *A Hundred Different Lives: An Autobiography.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979.

Masterman, C. F. G. *The Condition of England.* 1909; rpt. London: Methuen, 1960.

Martin, Kingsley. "Mr. Wells and Sir Oswald Mosley." *New Statesman and Nation* 4. 88: 517-18.

Maugham, W. Somerset. *For Services Rendered.* London: Heinemann, 1932.

Mirsky, Dmitri. *The Intelligentsia of Great Britain*, trans. Alec Brown. New York: Covici, Friede, 1935.

Mosely, Oswald. "A National Policy: An account of the emergency program advanced by Sir Oswald Mosley M.P." London: Macmillan, 1931.

_______. *The Greater Britain.* 1932; 2nd ed. London: B.U.F., 1934.

_______. *My Life.* London: Nelson, 1968; rpt. 1970.

Munro, C. K. *At Mrs. Beam's.* 1921; rpt. in *Three Plays.* London: Gollancz, 1932.

_______. *The Mountain.* London: Collins, 1926.

_______. *The Rumour.* 1923; rpt. in *Three Plays.* London: Gollancz, 1932.

_______. *Watching a Play.* London: G. Howe, 1933.

"A National Plan For Great Britain." *Week-End Review* (Supplement) 14 February 1931: iii-xvi.

Nicoll, Allardyce. *English Drama 1900-1930.* London: Cambridge UP, 1973.

"Omicron". "Court Theatre". *Nation and Athenæum*, 24 January 1925, 581.

Orwell, George. *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell.* Ed. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus. 4 vols. London: Secker, 1968.

Otto, Rudolf. *The Idea of the Holy.* London: Oxford UP, 1958.

Page, Norman. *The Thirties in Britain.* Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990.

Patmore, Derek. "Writers of Today. No. 2—Aldous Huxley." *Sunday Referee.* 25 Dec.: 6.

________. "Aldous Huxley—The Bernard Shaw of To-morrow." *The Queen*, 173 (17 May 1933), 14.

Pinder, John, ed. *Fifty Years of Political and Economic Planning.* London: Heinemann, 1981.

Pink, Maurice. *A Realist Looks at Democracy.* London: Benn, 1930.

Priestley, J. B. *English Journey.* London: Heinemann, 1934.

________. *Laburnum Grove.* London: Heinemann, 1933.

________. *Plays.* 3 vols. London: Heinemann, 1948-1958. Vol. 2.

Pringle, Henry F. "Men of Straw, Part 1: Ivar Kreuger." *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* June 1933, 6-11, 74.

Rabey, David. *British and Irish Political Drama in the Twentieth Century.* London: Macmillan, 1986.

Robert, Clémentine. *Aldous Huxley, Exhumations: Correspondence inédite avec Sydney Schiff 1925-1937.* Paris: Didier, 1976.

Roberts, John Hawley. "Huxley and Lawrence." *Virginia Quarterly Review* 13 (Autumn 1937): 546-557.

Sayers, R. S. *The Bank of England 1891-1944.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986.

Scales, Derek P. *Aldous Huxley and French Literature.* Sydney: Sydney UP, 1969.

Sexton, James, ed. *Aldous Huxley's Hearst Essays.* New York and London: Garland, 1994.

_______. "*Brave New World* and the Rationalization of Industry." *English Studies in Canada* 12 (1986): 424-36; rpt. in Meckier, Jerome, ed. *Critical* Essays on Aldous Huxley, New York: G.K. Hall, 1996.

Shaw, George Bernard. *The Apple Cart.* 1930; rpt. Baltimore: Penguin, 1956.

_______. "In Defense of Guy Fawkes." 1932, rpt. in *Platform and Pulpit*, ed. Laurence, Dan H. London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1962.

_______. *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism.* New York: Garden City, 1928.

_______. *Major Barbara.* 1907; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964.

_______. *On The Rocks. Too True to be Good, Village Wooing and On The Rocks. Three Plays by Bernard Shaw.* London: Constable, 1934.

_______. *Pygmalion.* 1916; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978.

_______. *The Quintessence of Ibsenism. Major Critical Essays*, 1931; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986

Shukla, Sheo. *Social and Moral Ideas in the Plays of John Galsworthy.* Salzburg: Salzburg UP, 1979.

Skidelsky, Robert. *John Maynard Keynes, Volume 2: The Economist as Saviour, 1920-1937.* London: Allen Lane, Penguin 1992.

_______. *Politicians and the Slump.* London: Macmillan, 1967.

___. *Oswald Mosley.* London: Macmillan, 1975.

Smith, Grover, ed. *Letters of Aldous Huxley.* London: Chatto and Windus, 1969.

Spanos, William V., ed. *A Casebook on Existentialism*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1966.

Strachey, John. *The Coming Struggle for Power.* London: Gollancz, 1932.

Sullivan, J.W.N. *Gallio, Or the Tyranny of Science.* London: Kegan Paul, 1927.

________. "Interviews With Great Scientists: VII— Aldous Huxley." *Observer* 1 Feb. 1931: 15-16.

Taylor, A. J. P. *Beaverbrook.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972.

Taylor, F. W. *Scientific Management, Comprising Shop Management, The Principles of Scientific Management, Testimony Before the Special House Committee.* 1911; rpt. New York: Harper and Row, 1964.

Taylor, John Russell. *The Rise and Fall of the Well-Made Play.* London: Methuen, 1967.

"'Tom'—Sir Oswald Mosely." *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* April, 1931: 38-39, 93-96.

Urwick, L. *The Meaning of Rationalisation.* London: Nisbet, 1929.

Vernon, Betty D. *Ellen Wilkinson.* London: Croom Helm, 1982.

Vitoux, Pierre. "Aldous Huxley at Texas: A Checklist of Manuscripts." *Library Chronicle of the University of Texas* 9 (1978): 41-58.

________. "Aldous Huxley and D. H. Lawrence: An Attempt at Intellectual Sympathy." *Modern Language Review* (1974): 501-522.

Wagar, W. Warren. *H. G. Wells and the World State.* New Haven: Yale UP, 1961.

Wasserman, Jerry. "Huxley's Either/Or: The Case for *Eyeless in Gaza.*" *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 13: 2 (Winter 1980): 188-203.

Weinreb, Ben and Christopher Hibbert. *The London Encyclopedia.* London: Macmillan, 1983.

Wells, H. G. *After Democracy.* London: Watts, 1932.

_______. *The Autocracy of Mr. Parham.* London: Heinemann, 1930.

_______. *Experiment in Autobiography.* London: Gollancz, 1934.

_______. "Imperialism, the Open Conspiracy, Lord Melchett and Lord Beaverbrook." *The Realist* Sept. 1929: 3-13.

_______. *The Open Conspiracy.* London: Gollancz, 1928.

_______. *The World of William Clissold.* London: Benn, 1926.

Wilford, R. C. "The Federation of Progressive Societies." *Journal of Contemporary History* 11 (January 1976): 49-82.

Wilkinson, Ellen. *The Town That Was Murdered.* London: Gollancz, 1939.

Williams-Ellis, Amabel. *All Stracheys are Cousins.* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983.

Woodward, James B. "The Theme and Structural Significance of Leonid Andreev's *The Black Masks.*" *Modern Drama* May 1967: 95-103.

Woolf, Virginia. *Diary, Volume 4, 1931-35.* 1982; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983.

_______. "Limbo". *Times Literary Supplement* 5 Feb. 1920, 83.

Zamiatine, Eugène. "L'avenir du théâtre." *Le Mois* May 1932, 145-150.

APPENDIX A

SELECTED ESSAYS, 1931-34

1. Gossip

[Huxley's first broadside against gossip was published in "Sight-seeing in Alien Englands," *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine*, June 1931. His second salvo is contained in the depiction of the Duke of Monmouth's gossip column in *NMTE*.]

In every English newspaper what an enormous amount of space is devoted to the doings of the upper classes! Even the official organ of the Socialist Party gives the Rich a place on its front page—not in order to abuse them; oh, no! Simply because the Rich are news, because the Great Public is supposed to take a passionate interest in other people's cash and coronets. One must go to the United States to find anything like our English preoccupation with the Upper Classes. To judge by their newspapers, the Anglo-Saxon peoples are more naively and romantically snobbish than any others. Certain Continental papers devote, it is true, a modest paragraph or two to the *mondanités*: but those pages of stuff about the Rich, all those deeply ignoble columns of Gossip, which are the standing disgrace of modern English journalism—these are unknown. And where, on the Continent, will you find three expensive and to all appearances highly prosperous weekly papers consecrated solely (not to mention several others devoted in large part) to descriptions of parties in large houses, to photographs of the Rich looking at races, of the Rich walking in the Park with friends, of the

Rich riding to hounds, or getting married, of the Rich in their bathing costumes, or playing golf on the Riviera? To the great credit of our European neighbours, you won't find such things. On the Continent, it is evident, there is not nearly so much money to be made out of journalistically exploited snobbery as in England. Perhaps it is all a question of general economic prosperity. If other countries were as rich as we are, perhaps they would support as many newspapers about the Wealthy as we do. It is quite possible. But, anyhow, the fact remains that when I read the Gossip Columns in one of our million-circulation newspapers, I *don't* feel particularly proud of being an Englishman.

2. Hyde Park on Sunday

[This essay adumbrates Act 2, scene 1 of *NMTE*. *HE*, 2 December 1931.]

Hyde Park on a Sunday afternoon—the essential England is still there, crowding in its thousands round the stump orators, making jokes, asking derisive questions, getting into absurd and heatedly illogical arguments, and then (for a humorous indifference, a highly civilized and at the same time slightly stupid tolerance, lies at the very heart of the essential England) shrugging shoulders and moving away to listen to the next speaker. At bottom, not caring.

It was that which so exasperated the Communist orator to whom I listened last Sunday under the Autumnal trees. The old civilized tolerance, the humorous and almost deliberately unintelligent indifference maddened him. He was a powerful speaker, by far the cleverest and most accomplished in the Park that afternoon.

The crowd listened, liked what he said, murmured approval of his assaults upon capitalists and the leaders of the official Labour party. But indifference was stronger, in many of his listeners, than interest. The passing of a brass band or a group of banners (the Civil Servants were publicly protesting against their wage

cuts) was enough to draw away the attention of these uncaring ones; minds and, often, feet went wandering after every distraction. On these unstable listeners the orator turned with all a preacher's indignation.

Laodiceans have never been popular with the apostles of new religions. "What's wrong with you workers," he said, "is that you won't keep your minds on anything for more than five minutes at a time; that's why you're being exploited as you are now."

His voice was bitter with an angry contempt; he despised his hearers for their slow-witted indifference; he hated them even for their virtues of humor and tolerance—the humor and tolerance that are the marks of an old, ripe, perhaps overripe civilization. I found myself sympathizing with him. Delightful as it generally is, that jocular uncaringness of the English is sometimes maddeningly out of place. Tolerance and a sense of humor are no substitute for ideas and the strong belief which leads men to act on ideas.

The Communist climbed off his perch. We moved away across the grass. The sun shone dimly through a golden gauze of mist. At a hundred yards the trees were already ghostly with extreme distance. In the shadows the haze was blue like smoke. It was beautiful and unspeakably melancholy.

Luckily, the conservative orator, within whose orbit we next found ourselves, was an uproarious joke. The interrupters were having excellent sport. Near us, in the crowd, a little Welshman was having an argument with an extraordinary being who might have stepped straight out of Dickens, so strangely shaped was his long body, so astonishingly purple his alcoholic nose. Purple-nose was an admirable dialectician; but the Welshman, whose intelligence was about on the level of a bulldog's, was also possessed of the bulldog's tenacity. He held on. Unmoved by logic, by facts, by statistics, he continued to repeat the same preposterous statement, again and again. Nothing could move him. He was magnificent—he was appalling.

Meanwhile, from a tub on our left, could be heard the voice of a Catholic Truth Society's lecturer coming in snatches through the noise of nearer argument. " The so-called Reformation divided Christendom against itself. The so-called Reformation, my friends . . . ."

"What I say," shouted the Welshman for the fiftieth time, "is that if Joey Chamberlain had brought in tariffs forty years ago, we shouldn't be where we are now."

"The so-called Reformation . . . ."

Meanwhile, on the right, a group of Salvation Army lasses had started a hymn "Eternity, Eternity! Where will you spend Eternity?" they wailed melodiously—but wailed almost to a vacuum.

Not more than a dozen people out of all the thousands who thronged the Park that afternoon seemed to want to know where they were going to spend eternity. What interested them was where and how they were going to spend time. And for an answer to that question they applied to the political speakers.

For good or for evil, eternity cuts very little ice today. There was no English revolution to match the French. Why? Because, among other reasons, Wesley had preached so successfully that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the English poor consoled themselves for their sufferings in time with thoughts of a rosy eternity.

A Sunday afternoon in Hyde Park makes it very plain that those consolations have now lost their force.

3. Forewarned is not Forearmed

[Huxley's attack on parliamentary twaddle. *HE*, 18 November 1931.]

Last February, in the House of Commons, I listened to Mr. Snowden making what was described at the time as a "historic speech." Where the historicalness came in I was never able to discover. All that the Chancellor said on that occasion had been said before, again and again.

No reader of any serious newspaper could have been unaware of the fact which he then solemnly announced: that the finances of Great Britain were in a thoroughly bad way. The country was heading for some kind of crash; facts and figures in hand, a hundred anxious economists had been telling us that for months, almost for years. Mr. Snowden was the hundred and first.

His pronouncement was made, I repeat, last February. The papers unanimously proclaimed it as "historic"—and everything went on exactly as before. England pursued unflinchingly her course towards the abyss.

And, duly, seven months later, the crash that everyone had foreseen occurred; at the moment of writing, the pound is worth a little over fifteen

shillings. The prophets were perfectly right; nothing had been done to make them wrong.

America sent through a precisely similar experience at the time of the great break in the stock market. Every sane economist had foreseen the break months before it came. The authorities were urged to take action. They did nothing, and the break took place, punctually.

The collapse of the pound, the break in the American stock market—these are but two out of many, similar cases. All point to one lesson; that it is fairly easy for a government to have foresight, but that it is exceedingly difficult, especially in a democracy, to act on that foresight, so as to falsify the prophecies of impending disaster.

Let us take a concrete example. Suppose the English government had done what simple common sense dictated—acted, that is to say, on the foresight of its economists and, at the very first danger signal, started a campaign of economy and industrial reorganization, what would have happened.

There would have been a general howl of indignation. Being economized on is an unpleasant process. The sufferers would have protested that there was no need for sacrifice. There was no visible crisis; why make people uncomfortable

for nothing? To which the government could only have replied by referring to a future contingency.

But the mass of mankind lives from week to week and takes no interest in future contingencies. If the government had started economizing in good time, it would instantly have been turned out of office. Cassandra, it will be remembered, was never a popular figure, and under democracy of governments must be popular. They lose their popularity, they lose their power.

It is only after a catastrophe that men will agree to their rulers taking the action which ought to in reason have preceded and, by preceding, forestalled the crisis. It is only in the midst of disaster that they will accept the imposition of necessary sacrifices—sacrifices far greater, in the majority of cases, than those which would have been imposed, if the advice of the prophets had been taken when it was first offered.

People shrink from doing or suffering unpleasant things in cold blood, at the call of mere reason. They need to be excited and panic-driven into heroism.

What are the alternatives before us? We may either persist in our present course, which is disastrous, or we must abandon democracy and allow ourselves to be ruled dictatorially by men who will compel us to do and suffer what a rational foresight demands.

Or, if we preserve the democratic forms, we must invent some psychological technique for inducing the electorate to act before the crash rather than after; we must provide voters with bad emotional reasons for behaving with rational foresight.

Or, finally, we may employ both these last methods together—compel and at the same time use propaganda to make the compulsion appear acceptable.

This is the present Russian method. Refined and improved, it has a good chance of becoming universal.

4. Hocus Pocus

[Huxley's remarks on spiritualism here provide useful background to *The World of Light*. *HE*, 16 July 1932.]

Bad times, it is said, are always good times for superstition. People who are out of luck naturally cast about for means to get in again; people who have seen all their industry and good-will go for nothing begin to crave desperately for miracles; people who have been frightened by calamity feel the need for supernatural protection. Magic and the lower magical forms of religion offer precisely the goods such people require.

To what extent has the present crisis led to a revival of hocus pocus? The question admits of no precise answer. On this subject, as on so many others of equal interest, it is impossible to find the significant statistics which would alone permit of such an answer. Lacking them, one must be content to guess; unscientifically, to record personal observations and private convictions.

What the exact correlation between slumps and superstition may be one cannot say.

All that one can be quite certain of is that there is a lot of superstition about at the present time. Magic and magical religion are not doing badly in spite

of the slump; perhaps, indeed, they are doing more than ordinarily well because of it.

In a French newspaper some few days ago I read an advertisement that seemed to confirm the later hypothesis. "Golden opportunity!" (So ran this naively cynical announcement.) "Offered at bargain price, an old-established business for manufacture and sale of religious articles at Lourdes. Showrooms favorably located near miraculous grotto. Large turnover. Four million pilgrims per year." And then, in capital letters, "*A Lourdes pas de crise!*" No slump at Lourdes.

In Protestant England people are not given an opportunity to work off their craving for miracles by going on pilgrimages. But they find substitutes. In the course of a recent journey through the industrial Midlands I was struck by the number of spiritualist chapels newly built or in process of building.

I should guess (though I have no figures to justify me) that spiritualism is probably doing better now than at any time since the War.

The flourishing state of other branches of magic is demonstrated by the number of books published in all countries on astrology, chiromancy, numerology, yoga, etc., etc.

In England, France, Germany and, doubtless, elsewhere you will find in many periodicals rows of advertisements of fortune tellers, Indian fakirs, professors of will power and the like. Even some of the sciences have come to be regarded as magically efficacious.

Thus psychoanalysts and, in general, all psychiatrists are men of science—more or less; but many of their patients go to them as they would go to sorcerers, in the hope of being shown some short cut to well being.

A deplorable feature of contemporary life is the fact that many intelligent and highly cultivated people have taken to a kind of high-class pseudo-philosophical hocus pocus.

What must one think, for example, of such a remark as this printed in Mrs. Luhan's recently published book on D. H. Lawrence: "When it (the water of a certain spring) was analyzed in Denver it was said to be 'highly charged with radium.' That is what we need more of on this earth, Jeffers, Radium. My instinct tells me so."

What does the instinct of the people who have contracted cancer from working with radium tell *them*? One wonders.

This notion that there are magical short cuts to knowledge by way of instinct, intuition and the like is lamentably common today. In a time of general discouragement this is natural enough.

It is so much less trouble to have instincts about radium than to learn about it by patient study or experiment.

All superstitions flatter human weaknesses. Hence their everlasting success.

5. Compulsory Suicide

[cf. Barmby's argument against capitalists' investment practices in under-developed countries. *HE*, 27 August 1932.]

The Chinese managed to preserve their monopoly in silk for the best part of three thousand years. First domesticated, according to ancient tradition, about 2500 B.C., the silkworm was not introduced into Japan till A.D. 300, and was smuggled into Europe only in A.D. 550. Their corner in worms must have been, for the Chinese, a source of incalculable wealth.

In the early nineteenth century England possessed what was virtually a monopoly of the newly-invented power-driven machinery. For a generation this monopoly remained almost unbroken, and for two more generations it persisted as a partial monopoly, shared with but few competitors. Today there is no shadow of a monopoly left.

The whole of Europe and North America, parts of Australia, Asia and Africa have been, and are still being, more or less intensively industrialized.

Why was it that the English did not take a leaf out of the Far Eastern book? Why, having hit on their new principle of mass production, did they not

guard the immensely profitable secret with the same zealous care as was shown by the Chinese in respect to their worms?

The answer is that they simply could not have preserved their monopoly, even if they had wanted to; the financial system under which they worked—under which the whole industrial world still works—did not allow it.

Our financial system is such that every successful industrial country is constantly *compelled* to finance new rivals—is compelled to transform one-time consumers into competing producers—is *compelled* to close against itself the external markets of which it has so urgent a need—is compelled, in a word, to commit what is, in the existing circumstances, economic suicide.

President Hoover has explained the reasons for this strange state of things in a few clear sentences. "We have an equipment and a skill in production that yields us a surplus of commodities for export beyond any compensation we can usefully take by way of imported commodities." ('We' of course, are not only the American people, but every successful industrial nation.) "There is only one remedy, and that is by the systematic permanent investment of our surplus in productive works abroad. We thus reduce the return we must receive to a return of interests and profits."

In other words, every industrial country produces more than it is able, under the existing financial system, to consume; its producing power is greater than its purchasing power. It has a surplus which it exports. But it is unable to take imports in full exchange for its exports; for, lacking purchasing power to buy its own surplus, it equally lacks purchasing power to buy the equivalent of that surplus from abroad.

Therefore, it must use the product of its export sales in "systematic permanent investment abroad." And that is why all the more successful industrial countries are "creditor nations."

So far, so good. But at this point President Hoover's clear-sightedness seems to fail him. For he calls this process of investing the national surplus abroad a "remedy"—when in fact it is, quite obviously, an aggravation of the disease from which our whole industrial civilization is now suffering.

For what exactly does "investment in productive works abroad" mean? It means simply this: lending money to agriculturists in order that they may blossom into industrialists—financing the consumers of your industrial products so that they may become producers on their own account.

Thus we see that every successful industrial state is compelled, as things now are, to spend its surplus money in restricting the existing outlets for its

exports and financing rivals to compete with itself in such diminishing markets as remain.

President Hoover's "remedy" turns out to be simply compulsory suicide all round. Certainly, a drastic remedy!

But under the existing system of ownership and distribution of wealth, it would seem to be the only remedy.

6. Swindlers and Swindlees

[Another journalistic reference to Ivar Kreuger. ***HE*****, 1 March 1934.]**

Recent events have somewhat shaken the popular faith in inevitable and universal progress. But doubters may console themselves with the thought that there is at least one field in which the reality of progress is undeniable: our swindles are bigger and better than ever before.

Kreuger was obviously a man of genius and, if greatness is to be measured by results, his most recent successor, Stavisky, has proved to be even more Napoleonic.

But all this is by the way. For my theme is not the result of swindling. I am concerned with the psychological conditions in our society which make swindling possible. There can be no swindlers without their complementary swindlees.

Now the most remarkable fact revealed in all the big swindles that come to light is this: the victims are just as likely to be "hard-headed business men" as soft-headed business men" as soft-headed old ladies or country bumpkins with a stocking full of savings. Indeed, where the swindler works on a large scale his

victims must necessarily be "hard-headed business men"—for the obvious reason that only hard-head business men dispose of enough money to permit of large-scale financial operations.

For crooks of the first magnitude old ladies and bumpkins are useless. Working with millions they naturally turn to the people who can supply these millions—to bankers, to stock brokers, to directors of issuing houses and insurance companies. And the extraordinary things is that they hardly ever turn in vain. With the most punctual regularity these "hard-headed business men" hand over huge wads of cash.

Having never, most fortunately, been in a position to dispose of millions I have never received the attentions of a swindler. But I have no doubt whatever that if it were worth anyone's while to swindle me I should fall an instant victim to his wiles.

Beggars with plausible stories always get money out of me. Swindlers are just bigger beggars with better stories—beggars who arrive in Rolls Royces and who promise you thirty per cent on your capital. Obviously, they are irresistible. I, for one, should be as wax in their hands.

The evidence made public at every trial for fraud shows that business men are hard-headed (and hard-hearted) only towards inoffensive and respectable citizens, not towards persuasive rogues.

But the real criminal, the man who ends in jail or with a bullet in his brain, goes to the same inflexible manager, outlines his latest scheme for the rationalization of the turtle soup industry, asks for a million or two to put it into operation and receives the money.

Such are the rewards that go to rapacity when combined with impudence, a persuasive gift of the gab and the right brand of physical charm. Brooding over our latest rebuff at the hands of the bank manager, we respectable citizens are filled with a resentment like that felt by the virtuous girl towards her pretty and successful rival.

7. Idolatry

> [With the exception of Barmby, every major character worships an idol, be it Marxism, Freudism, Imperialism, or Fordism. *HE*, 16 July 1934.]

Idolatry is ranked by the authors of the Bible as one of the major sins. The fact, I remember, always puzzled me. Those thunderous denunciations seemed, to my childish mind, a waste of moral energy—much ado about very little. Idolatry? But I couldn't imagine that anyone in the world I knew could be tempted to bow down before the statues of calves or fishes. And in the second place I couldn't see why, if people were thus inexplicably tempted, they should not be allowed to indulge in what seemed to me a bit of harmless imbecility.

With age and the increase, if not of wisdom, at least of experience and knowledge, I have learned to understand the significance and point of that age-long campaign against idolatry recorded in the Bible. I have come to realize that the temptation to behave idolatrously is just as strong today as it was in the time of Moses or of Solomon, and that its results are so deplorable that—on the principle of trees being known by their fruits—it richly deserves its high place in the hierarchy of sins.

Literally, idolatry is just the worship of images; but it has come to carry more than its merely etymological significance. In this larger sense idolatry may be defined as the worship, not of the Creator, but of a creature, or of the creation of a creature.

Our own age has witnessed a huge and violent recrudescence of idolatry. The old transcendental religions, with their worship of the Creator, their insistence on universal spiritual values, have been replaced in large sections of modern society by the worship of such man-made organisms as the State, the Nation, the Class, the Party. Particular national values, class values, party values have usurped the place of universal values. The material symbols to which respect is paid are such things as flags and badges; the images hung up in public places and in the icon-corner of the home are those, not of saints, but of the local politicians. These last, in certain cases, are made the object of a cult hardly distinguishable from that which was paid in antiquity to the successors of Alexander the Great, to the generals and administrators of republican Rome, and later, with a wealth of elaborately organized rites, to the Roman emperors.

Here are two typical quotations from inscriptions and letters dating from the great age of man-worship—the centuries immediately preceding and following the beginning of our era. "The council and People of Ephesus honour Caius

Julius Caesar. God manifest and Universal Savior of Human Society." "The Providence which orders the whole of human life has conferred upon life its most perfect ornament by bestowing Augustus, whom it fitted for his beneficent work among mankind by filling him with virtue, sending him as a Saviour for us and for those who come after us, one who should cause wars to cease, who should set all things in fair order." And so on.

We smile; but language only slightly less fantastically blasphemous is being used at this present moment about the various dictators now engaged in "saving society" in Europe and elsewhere. All the resources of modern propaganda—the press, the radio, the movies—are being used to disseminate this idolatry of men and nations. The sin, if we continue to practise it, is bound to bring its own punishment. To make gods of politicians and the nations they represent is merely suicidal. For the only prayer these gods can answer is a prayer for war.

8. Christ and the Present Crisis.

[This essay clarifies the existential concerns of Clough and Barmby. ***Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan,*** **April 1932.]**

"It is mistaken and vain," writes an eminent theologian, "to look in the recorded teachings of Christ for rules to guide men in circumstances which he did not contemplate, and in particular in respect of political and economic problems which were non-existent in his time." Even on such political problems as did exist in his time Jesus made no pronouncement. "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's;" that was his final word on politics and economics.

To spiritually gifted men politics are always a matter of indifference. Their minds are congenitally unsuited for dealing with political problems. Their gift is for religion and morality, which are concerned with individuals; politics and economics are concerned with groups. Between the group-world and the individual-world, there is, as Jesus insisted, a gulf. For in the sphere of life, as in that of matter, a large difference in quantity can actually produce a difference in quality. Electrons are radically unlike the tables and chairs of our daily experience—do not even obey the same natural laws. And yet tables and chairs are simply electrons in large numbers. Euclidean geometry is correct when we are

dealing with small distances and small masses of matter, but incorrect when distances and masses are very large, as in the stellar universe. So with human beings. The sub-individual world explored by modern psychology and fiction is qualitatively different from the world of souls, which is the world of religion and morals. And this world of souls is qualitatively different from the world of groups, which is the world of politics and economics. In the world of souls there is free will, there is moral judgment; in the world of groups, determinism and the brute facts of statistical averages.

Jesus was concerned with individual souls. Even when he seemed to be talking about politics or economics, he was always really talking about souls. Consistently, he left to Caesar the things that were Caesar's. This does not mean, however, that these things are unimportant. However Christian and spiritual men might become, they would still have to organize the elaborate machinery of social life. But this means politics. And politics mean codes, schedules, statistics, 'the letter of law.' But 'the letter killeth.' From the point of view of the soul, this is quite true. Nevertheless, it is only in terms of the letter of the law that large groups of individuals can be organized in a civil community. How can we reconcile the conflicting claims of letter and spirit? The answer is that we can't. Jesus was right on his plane; but so were Moses and Caesar on theirs. Let us

frankly admit that, if he were now to return, Jesus could do little to solve our political and economic problems. Spiritual intuitions are not substitute blue prints.

His ministry, if he were now to return, would be in the world of individual souls—a world as urgently in need of salvation as the world of politics. This world, as Jesus would immediately find, is being invaded by a variety of powerful enemies. Spiritual values are being assailed, from the one side, by those whose aim is to politicize the soul out of existence, from the other, by those who are dissolving it by analysis. The Communists are the most active enemies of spiritual values; but they are only the leaders of a great host. Consciously or unconsciously, all the representatives of advancing industrialism are embattled against the individual soul. Meanwhile, the psychologists' insistence on the importance of their newly discovered sub-conscious constitute what is almost a denial of individual will, conscience, moral responsibility—of all the things which a religious teacher holds to be uniquely significant. Jesus would certainly resist this invasion of his chosen world and would probably have little difficulty in driving back the psychologists to their proper place. The other enemies of the soul he would find more formidable. For they are the representatives and inevitable products of powerful economic forces. How far can religious preaching

prevail against such economic forces? The answer returned by history is not very encouraging.

Inculcated by every religious teacher, abnegation and the voluntary limitation of possessions are perhaps the indispensable conditions of a certain type of spiritual living. Jesus's preaching of them was consonant, at the time, with sound economics as well as with sound spirituality. The pre-industrial age was an age of under-production. A religion which preached under-consumption was therefore economically admirable. Ours is an age of over-production, and the first duty of the good citizen (at any rate in normal times) is over-consumption. Abnegation is spiritually wholesome and Jesus, if he returned, would certainly preach it. Would his preaching prevail against the economic forces encouraging unlimited acquisitiveness?

Turn now to the similar problem of chastity. Like voluntary poverty, it is spiritually bracing. Jesus would preach it—preach it to the world that reads Freud and uses contraceptives. In an age when license led to illegitimate children and social disgrace, chastity was good policy as well as good spirituality. Contraceptives have completely altered the circumstances. For how long can an ethic survive in circumstances which have robbed it of its material (though not, of course, of its spiritual) significance?

Finally, Jesus would be faced with the problem of finding adequate metaphysical reasons for his teaching. This he did in the past by invoking the will of a personal God. Modern science makes it impossible to believe in a personal God. In the last resort, the only adequate reason for a transcendental ethic is to be found in the human psyche. Certain states of being, felt to be supremely desirable, can be reached and held only by those who practise a certain kind of behaviour. This is the ultimate justification for that behaviour. I believe that a second Jesus would have to justify his preaching in terms of a fundamentally humanistic philosophy. His task would be to make this philosophy as attractive and compelling as the old metaphysic based on the idea of a personal God. It is a task of almost superhuman difficulty--one which only a spiritual genius of the first order could hope (at any rate in the space of a single life-time) to achieve.

APPENDIX B: HUXLEY'S SIGNIFICANT TYPESCRIPT DELETIONS

Huxley's 92-page typescript contains many deletions and emendations. Any that might bear on theme or characterization I preserve in this appendix, enclosed in square brackets, sometimes following a short cue for the reader's convenience.

All bold-faced page references are to this edition; numbers in parentheses refer to the 92-page Texas typescript, except for the first entry, where all parenthetical references after the first, are to A. J. P. Taylor's biography of Beaverbrook.

Page 152 (1)

Huxley deleted his first description of Upavon, (originally called Tom, later, Jack) who was originally on stage with Lupton in the opening moments of the play. Perhaps he felt the stage directions made a too-recognizable portrait of Beaverbrook. It originally read:

(*A footman ushers in Lord Upavon. He is a quick, active little man with an intelligent, ugly face. There is something mischievous and gnome-like about him. He has a way of suddenly grinning with malicious mockery* (1 Ts). Compare this description with that of Beaverbrook, by his biographer, A. J. P. Taylor: "Everyone spoke of him as 'the little man' . . . the impression of slightness . . . was inescapable" (252). Taylor also refers to his habitual "quickness of movement" and "mischievously Puckish face." The ugliness is suggested by Taylor's description of his "enormous mouth" (8).

Page 156 (6)

LUPTON: I don't think much of these ducal chairs of yours [Why do the stately homes of England have to be so damned uncomfortable? . . . .

UPAVON: Because they *are* stately. You can't combine sprawling with being dignified. Comfort's an invention of the new rich: of people who have no position to keep up. I respect those old aristocrats who sat up as though they'd swallowed a ramrod.]

Page 157 (7)

LIDGATE: . . . Closer than anyone thinks. They've got to come in . . . Circumstances are on my side.

[**UPAVON**: And so am I. Don't forget me. You've followed the campaign I've been running in the *Morning Gazette*? Those articles on administrative rationalization?

LIDGATE: Yes, very good stuff. Very good stuff, indeed.

LUPTON: But what's the good of putting good stuff into the middle of one of Upavon's papers? It just gets drowned in the tripe. People may read the serious articles—but they read them in the same spirit as they read the Gossip Column, or the Beauty Hints, or the tame parson's weekly sermon about the Modern Girl. It's all the same. Just so many thousand words of tripe to pass the time between Surbiton and Waterloo.

UPAVON: (*Stung on the raw*). Oh, it's easy to criticize. Particularly if you've had no experience in newspaper work. If you had any experience, you'd know that the public won't swallow its pills without jam.

LUPTON: Won't swallow its onions without tripe, you mean.

LIDGATE: Now, now, now! Let's stick to the subject. Tom's [Jack's] articles are excellent. He's quite right. The manufacturers in every industry have got to come together.]

Page 160 (9)

UPAVON: . . . What's it to be this time?

[**LIDGATE**: Well, as soon as I've got this iron and steel business fixed up, I shall explore the possibilities of cotton. Cotton's simply waiting for somebody to come and bring some sort of order into it. The component parts of the industry are all right; it's the organization of the whole that's so hopelessly inefficient. And that's just what I can put straight . . . .]

Page 161 (10)

BARMBY: Only from the caricatures.

[**LIDGATE**: Which isn't the best introduction to a man.

UPAVON: On the contrary, Arthur, you couldn't have a better. People who have seen your caricature know the worst before ever they meet you. If they get a surprise, it's generally an agreeable surprise. They discover that, after all, you *do* show *some* traces of humanity and intelligence.]

....

LIDGATE: . . . I shouldn't know where to begin. [Only a man with an education can make proper use of a library like this, and an education is what I never had. I went to work when I was sixteen, and I've been too busy ever since to make up for the lost time. I'm an uneducated man, Mr. Barmby.]

Page 164 (12)

UPAVON: I wish I could say the same for men like you, Arthur, or like myself. We shall just have our throats cut. [They might take you on as an organizer and me as a propaganda engineer. But I don't feel at all confident.]

Page 173 (18)

BARMBY: You can't help it. Deep calls to deep. There's no escape. [You have so many interests in common with them. I mean, you can't expect *me* to listen very sympathetically while you pour out your feelings about the delinquencies of the third footman.

LIDGATE: No; but I shouldn't talk to you about such things.

BARMBY: All the same, such things are profoundly important, if one's rich. You'll feel the need of talking about them to somebody. That's why you've got to associate with the other rich. Don't delude yourself.]

LIDGATE: . . . invite your friends to the house here. Could you do that?

BARMBY: Give them food and drink, and there'll be no holding them back. [True, they aren't quite so gluttonous as the very rich. Supper during a dance in a really grand house—it's like the miracle of the Gadarene swine. Rushing down a steep place—but *rushing*! The highbrow poor only trot towards the caviar and champagne. Still, it's a determined trot. You can always rely on them to turn up when the bell rings.]

Page 175 (20)

Enter Joan Lidgate. [About twenty. With a distinguished, eager face.]

Page 192 (35)

BARMBY: . . . The professor lives in a private paradise all his own. [He's already installed in the place where those poor old hymn-singing spinsters are only desperately hoping to get to. Even Walter Clough's happy proletarians—they're in the future; the professor's millenium is here and now.]

Page 195 (39)

CLOUGH: Bombs are pretty messy. [I saw them during the war.]

Page 201 (45, 46, 48)

LIDGATE: How extraordinarily *comfortable* it would be. [to put one's head in a gas oven. A complete and permanent holiday from everything. Everything. It's a most luxurious idea.] (45)

....

You talk about good art and bad art. But how does one know which is which?

BARMBY: Well, of course, the great majority of people simply don't know. [which is which. They just have no sense of the quality of things. Even quite intelligent and well educated people like Prime Ministers and distinguished schoolmasters—they simply don't know. You get a headmaster of Eton publicly admiring *The Rosary*. You get Mr. Asquith giving testimonials to *If Winter*

Comes. You get Mr. Baldwin going in at the deep end about Mary Webb. And yet all these people had read any number of real good books. In spite of which, they were completely incapable of distinguishing good literary art from bad.] (46, 48)

Page 203 (47)

BARMBY: . . . she's one of those people who are only happy when they're giving themselves a bad time. [Like you, in fact. You give yourself a hideously bad time over your industrial reorganization business, but you wouldn't be happy unless you did.]

Page 209 (54)

LIDGATE: (*Laughing*) You and your systems! (*He pats her shoulder.) [then turns to CLOUGH.*) At bottom, Mr. Clough, aren't we really trying to do the same thing? Trying to bring a little sense into the muddle—a bit of order and tidiness.]

Page 217 (64)

SPENCE: You don't mean to say, sir . . .

LIDGATE: For a few weeks, Spence. [As security at the bank. All I need is time to turn round. In a month I can find the money to pay back the overdraft and we'll burn the extra copies.]

Page 219 (66)

JOAN: . . . I wish I had your strength of mind, Walter. [Look at this beastly coat! (*She picks up the fur coat that is lying over the arm of the sofa.*) Daddy was furious when I told him I didn't want to have a new one this winter. I tried to argue with him, but it was no good. He just went out and bought this thing—bang! Like that, on the spot. Said he'd never speak to me again if I didn't wear it. So here I am, landed with two hundred pounds worth of summer ermine. And not only that: it's a hideous coat and I look an absolute fright in it.]

Page 229 (76)

SPENCE: But it's nothing really, sir.

LIDGATE: [Human pride, human dignity. But what about human sensitiveness? God, how stupid, how hopelessly stupid I've been.]

Page 230 (77)

LIDGATE: . . . But that's where the irony came in. [There's nothing more sarcastic than the repetition of your own words after you've discovered that you were talking nonsense.]

SPENCE: But you had to try and save the industry, sir. It was your duty, yes, it was your duty, Mr. Lidgate.

LIDGATE: Was it? [Well, perhaps it may have been. But all the same, one has no right to sacrifice realities for abstractions. And that's what I've been doing all these years; Barmby was quite right. Sacrificing living realities to the abstractions of money and power, to a theory of industrial efficiency, sacrificing my own life—sacrificing other people's lives, which is worse.]

Page 233 (80)

BARMBY: . . . don't stop to think. [Act. Or if you must think, think only within the sphere of the action. If you think beyond it, you always and inevitably come to the same thing.] At the end of every corridor . . . .

LIDGATE: . . . when other people have to go on in their misery. [On and on, like prisoners on the mill.]

Page 237 (83)

LIDGATE: . . . but I don't even feel that what I did was wrong. Not more wrong than anything else I've been doing for the last thirty years. [Stupider, that's all.] My whole existence has been wrong. [Destroying life, real life—my own life and other people's—sacrificing it all for the sake of abstractions—yes, that was hopelessly wrong.]

Page 238 (84)

LIDGATE: And ask her to forgive me—forgive me for not having loved her more. [I thought I loved her; but I see now that I sacrificed her to the abstractions—sacrificed her like everything and everyone else.]

Page 239 (85)

BARMBY: Even Upavon's papers are good, when you think of them in that light. [Like leaves that fall and sprout again. The leaves of the tree of our civilisation. Ugly, dirty leaves, no doubt; but still alive and growing. And that's good; that's as it ought to be.]

Page 240 (86-87)

BARMBY: . . . no, that's utterly beyond me. [And yet there's never any lack of martyrs, even for causes much less worthy than boots and shoes. Armies of martyrs. Poor Lidgate was one of them. There was a man who gave up all the pleasures and all the refinements of life—and finally life itself. Why? In order to work for a completely fallacious theory of industrial efficiency. He lived for his idea and he died for it. Died a criminal and lived an ascetic. He couldn't have done more if he'd been an early Christian.

UPAVON: Yes, he lived an ascetic; you're quite right. Do you know, Barmby, I believe he never had anything to do with a woman after his wife's death. My feature-editor on the *Sunday Gazette* was almost in tears about it this morning. He wanted an exclusive story from the mistress. 'Arthur Lidgate's Secret Life With Me'—you know the kind of stuff. He'd have paid three thousand for it. 'You can offer ten thousand,' I told him, 'but you won't find anyone to give it to.' He wouldn't believe me; but I was right. Day and night, ever since he killed

himself, the best private detectives in London have been looking for Arthur's mistress. And they haven't found her. For the good reason that she doesn't exist. My feature-editor won't get his story.

BARMBY: Well, let's thank God for small mercies.]

Page 244 (90)

UPAVON: It's out of the picture. It's irrelevant.

BARMBY: [Irrelevant! Not a bit of it! The less you take from the rich for social services the more they can spend on champagne and ivory bedrooms. It's obvious.

UPAVON: Now, Barmby, stop confusing the poor boy. Besides, it's my paper and I'm going to have what I want in it.] Now listen, Ted . . . .